EVALUATION OF PRIMARY EDUCATION READING PRACTICES (UNITED KINGDOM)

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1. INTRODUCTION: THE PRIMARY SCHOOL SYSTEM AND THE STATE OF READING IN ENGLAND

All children in England between the ages of 5 and 16 are entitled to a free place at a state school. Primary education relates to children aged 5 – 11. State schools receive funding through their local authority or directly from the government. The most common types of schools are:

- community schools, which are sometimes called local authority maintained schools - they are not influenced by business or religious groups and follow the National Curriculum (2013)
- foundation schools and voluntary schools, which are funded by the local authority but have more freedom to change the way they do things - sometimes they are supported by representatives from religious groups
- academies and free schools, which are run by not-for-profit academy trusts, are independent from the local authority - they have more freedom to change how they run things and can follow a different curriculum.

In addition, there are independent schools– these are registered schools which do not receive government funding. They often charge fees for pupils to attend.

The majority of state primary schools are mixed sex schools. There is a greater number of single sex schools in the independent sector.

The Primary School Population

In January 2019, the total number of children being educated in state-funded primary schools was 4,727,090. 1.6 million primary aged children (32%) were attending academies and free schools.

In primary schools, 15.8% of pupils are known to be eligible for and claiming free school meals. This is a measure for disadvantage. In 2019, 30% of pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 were classed as disadvantaged. Entitlement to free school meals is determined by the receipt of income-related benefits. The proportion of pupils from minority ethnic origins has been rising steadily over recent years. In primary schools, 33.5% of pupils are of minority ethnic origin. The proportion of pupils with English as an Additional Language (EAL) has increased steadily over recent years and in 2019, the proportion of EAL pupils in state funded primary schools was 21.2% (Department for Education, 2019a).

Standards in Reading

A review of the 2016 Progress in International Reading Literacy Study (PIRLS), identifies England as 'one of the top performing countries in Europe' (McGrane et al, 2017:12) with an average score of 559. This is significantly higher than the average score of 539. The PIRLS 2016 marked the first cycle of being able to evaluate the connection between outcomes in the Year 1 Phonics Screening Check introduced in 2012 and outcomes in PIRLS. The Year 1 Phonics Screening Check and other statutory national testing will be discussed in more detail in this section, however, findings have shown that there is a direct correlation between achievement in the Phonics Screening Check and PIRLS performance.

National statutory testing (SATS) in English and Mathematics at age 11 are important for school accountability and to monitor standards across the country. SATS results are published annually with provisional results in September of each year.

Test results in Reading for 2019 show that 73% of pupils reached the expected standard. This is down by 2% on 2018. The gender gap in reading remains with 69% of boys meeting the expected standard compared to 78% of girls. The gap between disadvantaged pupils and others remains stable. There is also a reading gap for children whose first language is not English (EAL). 69% of EAL children reached the expected standard compared with 74% of children for whom English is a first language.

The Phonics Screening Check

The Phonics Screening Check is taken individually by all children in Year 1 in England in June. It is designed to give teachers, parents and government information on how children are progressing in phonics. It helps to identify children who may need additional support at this stage so that they do not fall behind in this early reading skill.

Each child will work individually with their teacher to complete the test, which consists of reading 40 words. The words are presented in two sections of 20 words.

Section 1

The words in section 1 will have a variety of simple word structures (for example CVC, VCC, CCVC and CVCC) using:

- single letters (a, b, c, d, e, f, g, h, I, j, k, l, m, n, o, p, q(u), r, s, t, u, v, w, x, y, z)
- some consonant digraphs (ch, ck, ff, ll, ng, sh, ss, th, zz)
- frequent and consistent vowel digraphs (ar, ee, oi, oo,or)

Section 2

The words in section 2 will have a variety of more complex word structures (for example CCVCC, CCCVC, CCCVCC and two syllable words) with some:

- additional consonant digraphs (ph, wh)
- less frequent and consistent vowel digraphs, including split digraphs (a-e, ai, au, aw, ay, ea, e-e, er, ew, i-e, ie, ir, oa, o-e, ou, ow, oy, ue, u-e, ur)
- trigraphs (air, igh).

The check takes 5-10 minutes. It checks that the child can:

- Sound out and blend graphemes in order to read simple words
- Read phonetically decodable one-syllable and two-syllable words, e.g. cat, sand, windmill
- Read a selection of nonsense words, which are referred to as pseudo words.

(Standards and Testing Agency, 2019)

Initial findings following an evaluation of the first screening check in 2013 found that 'pupils with EAL perform significantly better…than their native English speaking counterparts' (Walker et al, 2014: 69). Children considered to be 'able' readers performed less well than expected as they tried to make sense of the pseudo words included in the test. Teachers began to include pseudo words during phonics sessions in order to remedy this situation (Walker et al, 2014; Douglas and Lawton, 2016).

Children who performed well in the phonics screening check also did well in the key stage 2 SATS reading test. Of the children who reached the phonics standard in year 1 in 2014, 85% went on to meet the expected standard in the KS2 reading test in 2019. Of the pupils who met the expected standard in phonics by the end of year 2 (but not in year 1), 56% went on to meet the expected standard. Of those children who did not reach the expected standard by the end of year 2, 23% met the expected standard. (Department for Education, 2019b:7)

UK Policy related to the teaching of reading in England

There has been a Primary National Curriculum in England since 1988. The most recent version, Primary National Curriculum (NC) (2013: 6) provides 'an outline of core knowledge around which teachers can develop exciting and stimulating lessons to promote the development of pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills as part of the wider school curriculum.' Teachers should develop pupils' spoken language, reading, writing and vocabulary as integral aspects of the teaching of every subject. English is both a subject in its own right and the medium for teaching; for pupils, understanding the language provides access to the whole curriculum.

Each subject area in the NC has its own Programme of Study. The Programmes of Study for English are set out year-by-year for Key Stage 1 (Years 1 and 2) and two-yearly for Key Stage 2 (Years 3 and 4; Years 5 and 6). Each Programme of Study has statutory requirements related to both reading (word recognition and comprehension) and to writing (transcription and composition). All schools are also required to set out their school curriculum for English on a year-by-year basis and make this information available online. The NC outlines what schools should teach but not how to teach. In addition, the NC clearly states that 'Pupils should be taught to read fluently, understand extended prose (both fiction and non-fiction) and be encouraged to read for pleasure. Schools should do everything to promote wider reading…and set ambitious expectations for reading at home' (2013: 10).

Reading in Year 1 – the beginning of primary education

Year 1 Programme of Study for Reading (NC, 2013: 20)

Reading – word reading

Statutory requirements
Pupils should be taught to: • apply phonic knowledge and skills as the route to decode words • respond speedily with the correct sound to graphemes (letters or groups of letters) for all 40+ phonemes, including, where applicable, alternative sounds for graphemes • read accurately by blending sounds in unfamiliar words containing GPCs that have been taught • read common exception words, noting unusual correspondences between spelling and sound and where these occur in the word • read words containing taught GPCs and –s, –es, –ing, –ed, –er and –est endings • read other words of more than one syllable that contain taught GPCs • read words with contractions [for example, I'm, I'll, we'll], and understand that the apostrophe represents the omitted letter(s) • read aloud accurately books that are consistent with their developing phonic knowledge and that do not require them to use other strategies to work out words • re-read these books to build up their fluency and confidence in word reading.

Reading – comprehension

Statutory requirements
Pupils should be taught to: develop pleasure in reading, motivation to read, vocabulary and understanding by: • listening to and discussing a wide range of poems, stories and non-fiction at a level beyond that at which they can read independently • being encouraged to link what they read or hear read to their own experiences • becoming very familiar with key stories, fairy stories and traditional tales, retelling them and considering their particular characteristics • recognising and joining in with predictable phrases • learning to appreciate rhymes and poems, and to recite some by heart • discussing word meanings, linking new meanings to those already known understand both the books they can already read accurately and fluently and those they listen to by: • drawing on what they already know or on background information and vocabulary provided by the teacher • checking that the text makes sense to them as they read and correcting inaccurate reading • discussing the significance of the title and events • making inferences on the basis of what is being said and done • predicting what might happen on the basis of what has been read so far participate in discussion about what is read to them, taking turns and listening to what others say explain clearly their understanding of what is read to them.

Progression to Year 6 – the final year of primary education

Years 5 and 6 Programme of Study (NC, 2013: 43)

Reading – word reading

Statutory requirements
Pupils should be taught to: apply their growing knowledge of root words, prefixes and suffixes (morphology and etymology), as listed in English Appendix i, both to read aloud and to understand the meaning of new words that they meet.

Notes and guidance (non-statutory)
At this stage, there should be no need for further direct teaching of word reading skills for almost all pupils. If pupils are struggling or failing in this, the reasons for this should be investigated. It is imperative that pupils are taught to read during their last two years at primary school if they enter year 5 not being able to do so. Pupils should be encouraged to work out any unfamiliar word. They should focus on all the letters in a word so that they do not, for example, read 'invitation' for 'imitation' simply because they might be more familiar with the first word. Accurate reading of individual words, which might be key to the meaning of a sentence or paragraph, improves comprehension. When teachers are reading with or to pupils, attention should be paid to new vocabulary – both a word's meaning(s) and its correct pronunciation.

Reading – comprehension

Statutory requirements
Pupils should be taught to: maintain positive attitudes to reading and understanding of what they read by: • continuing to read and discuss an increasingly wide range of fiction, poetry, plays, non-fiction and reference books or textbooks • reading books that are structured in different ways and reading for a range of purposes • increasing their familiarity with a wide range of books, including myths, legends and traditional stories, modern fiction, fiction from our literary heritage, and books from other cultures and traditions • recommending books that they have read to their peers, giving reasons for their choices • identifying and discussing themes and conventions in and across a wide range of writing • making comparisons within and across books • learning a wider range of poetry by heart • preparing poems and plays to read aloud and to perform, showing understanding through intonation, tone and volume so that the meaning is clear to an audience understand what they read by: • checking that the book makes sense to them, discussing their understanding and exploring the meaning of words in context • asking questions to improve their understanding

Statutory requirements
• drawing inferences such as inferring characters' feelings, thoughts and motives from their actions, and justifying inferences with evidence • predicting what might happen from details stated and implied • summarising the main ideas drawn from more than one paragraph, identifying key details that support the main ideas • identifying how language, structure and presentation contribute to meaning discuss and evaluate how authors use language, including figurative language, considering the impact on the reader distinguish between statements of fact and opinion retrieve, record and present information from non-fiction participate in discussions about books that are read to them and those they can read for themselves, building on their own and others' ideas and challenging views courteously explain and discuss their understanding of what they have read, including through formal presentations and debates, maintaining a focus on the topic and using notes where necessary provide reasoned justifications for their views.

The Programmes of Study highlight the shift from word recognition processes to language comprehension processes as children move through the primary phase of education. Word recognition has a dominant focus in Key Stage 1. In addition, children are exposed to a range of genres throughout the primary phase. This genre-based approach to teaching involves translating linguistic theory into teaching practice (Martin, Christie and Rothery, 1994) and has strongly influenced national policy since the mid-1990s. Genre-based theory categorises texts into 'types,' or 'genres' and highlights the common organisational, grammatical and cohesive features of each text type, for example, procedural texts such as recipes. If children are all taught the same thing relating to a particular text type, this genre-based approaches should ensure an equity of the curriculum and in so doing, empower those children from disadvantaged backgrounds who may not otherwise encounter such a variety of genres (Rosen, 2011).

The following comments, relating to the teaching and learning in primary settings in England, reflect the practices of teachers in:

- 1 infant school (ages 2 – 7) in a socially disadvantaged area
- 1 primary school in a socially disadvantaged area
- 6 primary schools in more affluent areas
- 1 independent school aged 7 – 18.

All had some children for whom English is not a first language.

2.   METHODOLOGIES AND READING STRATEGIES FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF READING COMPETENCE IN PRIMARY EDUCATION STUDENTS (6-12 YEARS OLD)

The Teaching of Reading

The UK Government recognises the fact that we live in a society, which makes increasingly high demands on its members in terms of their literacy skills. Becoming a reader can add to an individual's sense of human worth, academic self and dignity (Crampton and Hall, 2017; Meek,

1991), as the reader is able to access information and engage with the world around them. Those children who achieve a good start in the first few years of reading are very likely to have accelerated progress in their attainment throughout school as they engage with the curriculum (Crampton and Hall, 2017). In addition, they are also very likely to achieve the skills valued by employers (Gibb, 2011). There is no doubt that reading can change lives; it can create opportunities which may otherwise be denied. Engaging with texts can deepen the imagination and transform thinking (Fisher, 2001, 2013; Reedy, 2018). Reading is a powerful, life-enhancing skill, which is the entitlement of every child. No child should be denied access to the full range of learning, to the joy of engaging with literature and poetry, to fulfilment. Therefore 'learning to read is a fundamental part of a child's education' (Gibb, 2011) and tackling reading failure is an urgent priority for the Department for Education who 'want to encourage children to experience the rewards of reading and develop a lifelong love of books' (Gibb, 2011a).

There was a change to Government policy related to the teaching of reading during the period 2006 – 2013, with the period 2010-2013 showing an accelerated change. The publication of the Rose (2006) report entitled 'Independent Review of the Teaching of Early Reading', made a number of recommendations that resulted in important changes in the teaching of reading in nursery and primary schools in England. The report proposed the 'Simple View of Reading' as a model of the reading process, with its two axes of word recognition and language comprehension processes. The model suggests that children must first 'break the code and decipher the strange marks…[before moving on to] understand the many meanings the words convey' (Fisher, 2006:3). The report concluded that the most effective approach to the teaching of early reading is through a structured, systematic programme of synthetic phonics. An understanding of the English Alphabetic Code is essential, as modern synthetic phonics teaching is rooted in the Code (Hepplewhite, 2012).This begins in the Early Years and continues into Primary education.

The Simple View of Reading

The 'Simple View of Reading' (Gough and Tumner, 1986) was adopted by the Rose Reviews (2006; 2008) – see figure 1 below - and forms a central part of the Government's view of early reading development. This is shown by the NC (2013) and the programmes of study for reading at Key Stages 1 and 2, which consist of two dimensions:
- word reading
- comprehension (both listening and reading).

Although heavily criticized (Clark, 2014; Palmer and Jarvis, 2016), the 'Simple View of Reading' (*fig 1 below*) matrix assumes that phonic decoding can and should be taught and assessed as a separate set of skills i.e. word recognition processes, from the beginning of literacy learning (Grundin, 2017).

Poor		Good
Word Recognition		Word Recognition

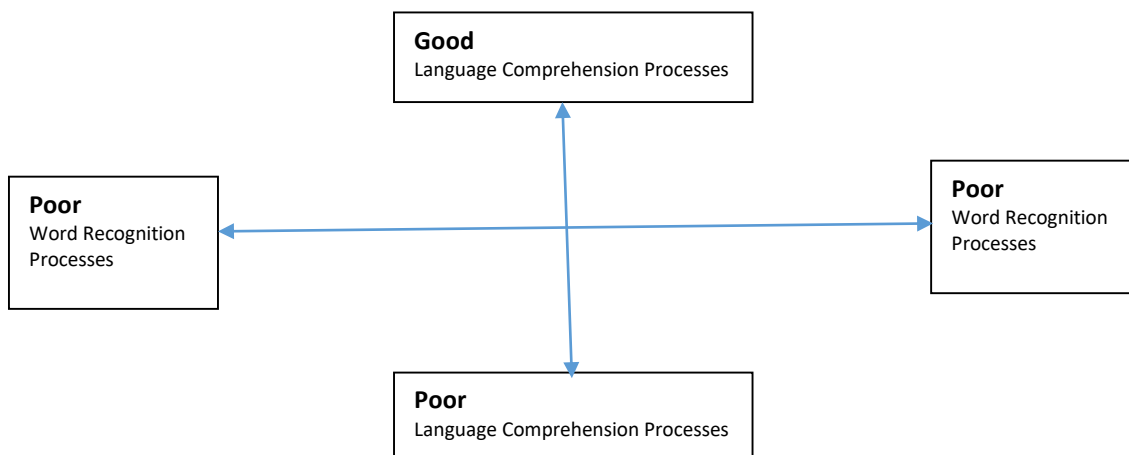**Simple View of Reading Matrix**

Figure 1

The Teaching of Phonics in Primary Schools

In Key Stage 1, emphasis is placed on word recognition skills, and the ability to decode words for reading and encode words for spelling. The systematic, synthetic phonics approach to reading begins in the Early Years Foundation Stage and continues through the transition into primary education. By the time children enter Year 1 they are familiar with the meta-language associated with phonics and the structure of lessons. A child moving from Reception to Year 1 within the same school is likely to continue with the same structure i.e. 20 minutes daily phonics or a longer lesson forming part of the literacy curriculum. Unlike learning in the EYFS, primary age children are not given the opportunity to play and to practise their learning through continuous provision.

During phonics teaching, children become familiar with the English alphabetic code. They begin by focussing on a simple code before moving to more complex letter patterns to represent the 44 approximate phonemes in the English language e.g. ay, ey. a_e, ai, eigh. During lessons children will learn a new phoneme and be given opportunities to read/decode words (sound out and blend), and to write/encode words (sound and write using the relevant grapheme). Children will practise decoding and encoding real and pseudo words in preparation for the statutory Year 1 Phonics Screening Check, which takes place in June towards the end of Year 1. Schools will follow their preferred Phonics Teaching and Reading Scheme chosen from a list recommended by Government. Some schemes encourage children to be grouped by ability, following an initial assessment, whilst others follow a whole-class mixed ability approach.

The Phonics Screening Check helps to identify children who are struggling to decode. Those children will be placed on a reading intervention programme and will res-sit the Phonics Screening Check at the end of Year 2. There are also age appropriate catch-up interventions for

children who still struggle with reading at Year 5. Those schemes are suitable for years 5 – 8, therefore covering transition to secondary school e.g. Fresh Start.

Transition from Early Years – Reporting to Primary Staff
The Government has set clear policy on how Early Years progress is reported to schools, which is as follows:

> An EYFS Profile document must be completed for each child moving from the Foundation Stage to Year 1. This must be completed no later than 30 June. The Profile provides parents and carers, practitioners and teachers with a well-rounded picture of a child's knowledge, understanding and abilities, their progress against expected levels, and their readiness for Year 1. The Profile must reflect: ongoing observation; all relevant records held by the setting; discussions with parents and carers, and any other adults whom the teacher, parent or carer judges can offer a useful contribution. Each child's level of development must be assessed against the early learning goals. Practitioners must indicate whether children are meeting expected levels of development, or if they are exceeding expected levels, or not yet reaching expected levels ('emerging'). Year 1 teachers must be given a copy of the Profile report together with a short commentary on each child's skills and abilities.

2.1. PSYCHOPEDAGOGICAL PRINCIPLES AND READING LEARNING METHODOLOGY

Teachers plan questions to support shared and guided reading sessions. In addition, they plan dialogic teaching sessions in which children are encouraged to frame their own questions. In some schools, 'Big Picture' boards are displayed in the classroom. They summarise what the children will be learning in English and the text types and titles that will be used for the term. Children will present work as part of a lesson plenary. The plenary is being revived as it forms part of the reflective process which is important for learning.

Families are involved, for example in World Book Day. In more deprived schools staff, will work with children to create costumes for book characters and use the opportunity to teach reading. Parents are also encouraged to attend assemblies. In the schools in the socially deprived areas, literacy classes are offered at adult level and parents are also helped to engage with their children's reading.

2.2. ORGANIZATION OF ACTIVITIES (PROGRAMMING OR PLANNING, TIMING, STUDENT GROUPING)

Reading in both Key Stage 1 and Two is organised as follows.
Shared reading – either a full text or extract is shared with the whole class (average class size 28). The teacher models the reading process and will focus on one aspect of language e.g. text, sentence or word level. The teacher will encourage children to respond to the text and to draw on prior knowledge/understanding. The teacher will ask questions and encourage class discussion. Texts will often support teaching in other curriculum areas e.g. an explanation text

for how light switches work, or a travelogue to support autobiographical writing and a geography project looking at a particular part of the world.

Guided reading – children work with the teacher in small ability groups (4-6). The aim is to teach reading by selecting texts that challenge the children. These sessions should be carefully planned with clear objectives and planned questions, but some teachers report not having the time to do so.

Individual reading – children will be able to select a book or bring one from home and read it quietly to themselves. Often this takes place after lunch and whilst the teacher is working with the guided reading group. Children will work at their desk or in the class book area or school library (this is school dependent).

Class reader – usually a novel selected by the class teacher to appeal either to the interests of the class or a class topic e.g. *Adolphus Tips*, Michael Murpurgo to support the History Programme of Study for Key Stage 2 'a study of an aspect or theme in British history that extends pupils' chronological knowledge beyond 1066' (DfE, 2013: 191). The teacher will serialise the book and read it to the class. Teachers will try to ensure that they use this time to build enthusiasm for teaching by stopping reading at a point of tension.

Intervention group – children who have been identified as needing extra support are removed from lessons to work either 1 to 1 or in a small group with a teaching assistant. Schools will ensure that Teaching Assistants have appropriate training. All sessions are appropriately planned and children's progress is closely monitored.

Note: in addition dedicated phonics teaching will take place in Year 1 (see above).

In the Primary National Curriculum (2013), a key aim is for children to make connections with the texts being shared with them. For example, teachers often choose texts that are connected in some way, for example Year 2, picture books (fiction) 'A Dark, Dark Tale' by Ruth Brown and 'In a Dark, Dark Wood' by Jessica Soujami, or they will select texts that allow children to make connections between the lives they live and the lives of the characters portrayed in the text.

Children are also encouraged to compare books, films of books and different genres looking for similarities and differences e.g. an explanation text and an instruction text. Response to reading is important and teachers will organize drama, art and music activities to allow children to express their response e.g. group recitation of a poem, hot-seating a character in a novel, painting in a response to figurative language in a poem.

When reading non-fiction, children are taught how to use a contents page from Year 1. In order to teach the skills of skimming and scanning, teachers encourage children to use KWL

grids (what I **K**now, what I **W**ant to find out, what I have **L**earnt). This also ensures that children are reading for a clear purpose.

One school in our research has adopted the High Performance Learning philosophy (HPL) (Eyre, 2010) and redesigned the curriculum to meet the needs of their children in order to embed characteristics that support student success. Children are not grouped by ability; instead, teachers adapt their teaching to provide opportunities for children to develop learning characteristics and skills that help them to achieve their personal best in all curriculum areas.

2.3 SPACE, MATERIAL AND HUMAN RESOURCES (TYPE, ORGANIZATION, PARTICIPANTS, TYPE OF PARTICIPATION).

Planning for Reading
In the larger schools, staff order resources and plan the literacy curriculum collaboratively. They will decide the lesson objectives and the texts they will use. In Key Stage 2 there is a reliance on extracts from longer texts. Approaches to assessment are also included. In smaller schools, staff will work alone using the National Curriculum as a guide for lesson objectives. They will consult staff in the years above and below to ensure that there is no duplication of texts being used.

Teachers may have a limited time to cover a particular genre. For example, in one school: Year 2 had a week to cover reading and writing instructions and the children would not revisit that genre until the following academic year irrespective of their understanding and success in meeting lesson objectives.

In other schools, a 'Mastery' approach has been adopted. This is an inclusive way of teaching that is grounded in the belief that all pupils can achieve and meet a minimum expected standard. Those children who show an understanding of a particular genre are provided with extension activities to extend their thinking for example, following reading and writing instructions for a recipe they may discuss why they would recommend that recipe to a reader and present or write that. This demonstrates a deeper level of thinking. Children share their response to reading with children from other year books in assemblies, plays/productions and reading to younger children. For example, Year 5 and 6 children in one school explored repeated and patterned language in picture books for young children. They explored how text and image worked together. In pairs, they assigned themselves the role of author and illustrator and over a period of 6 weeks created their own texts (rewriting of a traditional tale

seen from a character's perspective) which were published in school. The authors and illustrators then read their books to children in the Early Years Reception class and Year 1.

Schools, even those in deprived areas have access to class sets of tablets (iPads) or laptops (Windows). Classrooms also have interactive whiteboards.

With the exception of the independent school, all Key Stage 1 classes have teaching assistants, many of whom are trained to deliver Reading interventions. One school in a deprived area employed a speech therapist to help develop spoken language to then improve literacy skills.

According to a 2019 survey (BMG Research, 2019), 60% of primary schools had a visit by a poet, writer or other author in the previous year to stimulate children's interest in books and reading for pleasure.

Schools with children with EAL (one has 24%) employ teaching assistants who speak the children's home language. Resources in these areas also include dual language texts.

School Libraries

According to research carried out in 2019 (BMG Research, 2019), 85% of primary schools in England, Wales and Northern Ireland[1] have a school library area. Of these, 61% have a designated library in a separate room, while the remainder have a library area in an open plan space. Under half of primary school libraries (45%) have a designated member of staff with responsibility for the library (in around two-thirds of cases schools did not have a designated member of staff because of budget constraints).

On average, primary school libraries are open for 5.5 hours per day. The average number of physical resources in stock is 4,707 and the average annual library budget is £2,021.

2.4 EVALUATION

Assessing reading in Key Stage 1

Statutory Assessments
Year 1 - Phonics Screening Check
Year 2 – National Curriculum Assessment – Key Stage 1 – Teachers assess children's reading ability in accordance with the school's assessment policy. Teachers use the 'teacher assessment framework' to make a judgement at the end of Key Stage 1. The English Reading Framework consists of three standards or 'levels': i) working towards the expected standard ii)

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[1] Scotland was not included in this survey, but school library provision in Scotland is generally better than in other nations of the United Kingdom.

expected iii) working at greater depth. Each standard in the framework contains a number of 'pupil can' statements (Standards and Testing Agency, 2018).

Working towards the expected standard
The pupil can:
• read accurately by blending the sounds in words that contain the common graphemes for all 40+ phonemes*
• read accurately some words of two or more syllables that contain the same graphemephoneme correspondences (GPCs)*
• read many common exception words.*

In a book closely matched to the GPCs as above, the pupil can:
• read aloud many words quickly and accurately without overt sounding and blending
• sound out many unfamiliar words accurately.

In a familiar book that is read to them, the pupil can:
• answer questions in discussion with the teacher and make simple inferences.

Working at the expected standard
The pupil can:
• read accurately most words of two or more syllables
• read most words containing common suffixes*
• read most common exception words.*

In age-appropriate books, the pupil can:
• read most words accurately without overt sounding and blending, and sufficiently fluently to allow them to focus on their understanding rather than on decoding individual words2
• sound out most unfamiliar words accurately, without undue hesitation.

In a book that they can already read fluently, the pupil can:
• check it makes sense to them, correcting any inaccurate reading
• answer questions and make some inferences
• explain what has happened so far in what they have read.

* Teachers should refer to the spelling appendix to the National Curriculum (English Appendix 1) to exemplify the words that pupils should be able to read as well as spell.

Working at greater depth within the expected standard
The pupil can, in a book they are reading independently:
• make inferences
• make a plausible prediction about what might happen on the basis of what has been read so far
• make links between the book they are reading and other books they have read.

To judge that a child is working at a particular standard in English reading, teachers need to have evidence which demonstrates that the pupil meets all of the statements within that standard. The evidence informing a teacher's judgement must include the statutory end-of-key stage 1 English reading test, which does not focus solely on the key aspects in this framework but will provide evidence to support the judgement overall and assess the broader curriculum. A pupil's answers to specific questions in the test, or any other test, may also provide evidence that pupils have met certain statements.

Therefore, schools will keep detailed records/commentaries from reading assessments (running records, miscue analysis etc), summative assessments that benchmark a child's reading age e.g. NFER reading tests, as well as evidence from classroom activities in response to reading. This evidence is retained in a portfolio. In some schools this may be electronic. The portfolio will follow the child into Key Stage 2.

Throughout Key Stage 2, teachers will continue to add to the portfolio. Schools report carrying out termly/half termly summative assessments of children reading different genres of text and/or commercially produced 'benchmarking' tests relevant to the year group. In addition teachers will plan for children to respond to texts in different ways e.g. mind maps, writing (book reviews, book making, fact sheets, instructions, diary entries etc), drama activities, music, and debates and make formative use of assessing those responses.

Year 6 – End of Key Stage National Curriculum Reading Test.
All children take the test on the same day in May under exam conditions. This test consists of a reading answer booklet and a separate reading booklet. All children taking the test must be given both of these documents. Children have a total of 1 hour to read the 3 texts in the reading booklet and complete the questions in the answer booklet at their own pace. They can approach the test, which is a reading comprehension exercise, as they choose, e.g. working through one text and answering the questions before moving on to the next. Papers are marked externally by government appointed markers.

As previously mentioned, teachers summatively and formatively assess children throughout the academic year.

2.5 TYPES OF TEXT

In Key Stage 1, children will follow a phonics based reading scheme. Reading schemes offer texts in a range of genres from simple lists, to non-fiction reports, explanations and instructions. Fiction (stories), poetry and simple play scripts are also included. Schools also supplement the reading scheme with levelled, age appropriate texts. These books go home with the child.

Teachers are expected to cover a full range of texts in English lessons to meet the expectations of the National Curriculum. In Key Stage 1, the most popular texts relate more directly to the children's lives and include familiar traditional tales, contemporary literature and picture books, poetry, instructions and media texts including tourist information leaflets. In Key Stage 2 this extends to classical literature (including Shakespeare, Kipling etc.) and more specific

poetry genres e.g. narrative, haiku, epitaph, limerick etc. Teachers like to use extracts from some adult literature e.g. newspapers, travelogues (Michael Palin) to engage children in constructing arguments/debates. An example may be the reporting of a local planning application or an advert for a concert. Media texts, including film, are popular in this age phase.

From the list provided, primary teachers access all of these text types. In addition, Powerpoint or Prezzi is used for whole class input to children for lessons across the curriculum. Therefore children are familiar with reading from presentation tools.

3. THE ROLE OF FAMILIES IN READING LEARNING

Not all families have access to books in the home. However, whilst there are a small number of parents who do not engage at all, parents generally see the importance of being able to read and recognize the role that school plays in that. Children from more affluent homes do enjoy going to book shops and receiving books. David Walliams is a popular author for children in the Key Stage 2 age range. Parents also see the benefits of giving and receiving books as gifts. Parents with access to books (those in more affluent homes) will often read to children to extend their reading beyond school books. In some cases parents will continue to read to their children at bedtime throughout the primary phase.

Many parents in the more affluent areas are competitive and keen to compare their child's progress with others in the class. In Key Stage 1, this usually relates to the level of book the child is taking home to read from school and how quickly children are progressing through the school's reading scheme.

Tablets, phones and games consuls are popular forms of media. In Key Stage 2, this is particularly evident. Children will keep in touch with their friends through online gaming and Instagram. They read instructions and messages from each other. Some parents restrict the time children spend on electronic devices. Parents often to not relate environmental print and electronic media to reading.

The majority of parents will take part in activities offered by the school to support their children's reading – attending, parents' evenings, plays, performances, assemblies and completing home/school reading logs etc.

Parents are encouraged to use their mother tongue at home, this includes access to print. However, there is no evidence of devices being used specifically for second language learning (by children).

Many parents will take their children to a local public library (or in the case of older children, they may visit the library unaccompanied if there is a local library close to their home. However, between 2010 and 2016, it is estimated that 478 public libraries closed in England, Scotland and Wales (over 10% of the total number) (BMG Research, 2019). Children's services were particularly badly hit by these cuts: specialist staff were cut by 40%, children's book

budgets by 23% and opening hours by 11% (Robertson and McMenemy, 2018). This, of course, reduces opportunities for children to access books and other reading materials outside school, especially for those who have few books in their own homes. This is pertinent in terms of reading success, as according to McGrane at al (2017: 16):

> *[The]pupils in England who report having more books at home also report much higher levels of confidence and enjoyment in reading. Of those with 10 or fewer books in their homes, 42% report that they do not like reading, compared to just 12% of pupils who have more than 200 books in their home. Only a third of pupils with 10 or fewer books at home report being confident readers, compared to 73% of pupils who have more than 200 books. In England, of the pupils who report having few books at home, higher levels of confidence are also associated with higher average performance in PIRLS 2016. This is also the case for pupils with high numbers of books in their homes.*

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