


# Schoolreaders

improving literacy • increasing life chances



## **Schoolreaders: Information for Schools**

**Over a decade of providing  
free reading support  
to primary schools**





**More than  
27,000 children  
supported  
each week.**



**More than  
1,300 Partner  
Schools  
Registered.**

**More than 7,000  
hours of free  
reading support  
delivered in schools  
each week.**



## Welcome

As educators, you will know that one in four children are currently leaving primary school unable to read to the expected standard. These children are then unable to fully access their secondary education, which will have a lifelong negative impact on their opportunities.

For over ten years, Schoolreaders has been providing primary schools with dedicated reading volunteers. By going into school each week to listen to children read, our volunteers provide that vital one-to-one reading time with an adult, which many children, through no fault of their own, do not have access to.

We provide this to schools completely free of charge. All the school needs to do is pay for their volunteer's DBS check and manage their relationship with them. Within the leaflet you will learn more about how Schoolreaders can support your school's literacy.

*Sally*

Sally Wrampling – CEO



**1 in 4 children leave primary school unable to read to the expected standard.<sup>1</sup>** Without reading skills, a child is denied the gateway to learning. They cannot access their secondary education fully and their job and life opportunities will be diminished.

**Schoolreaders is addressing childhood illiteracy at primary school age. This is improving the life chances of thousands of children, positively impacting on families, communities and wider society.**



# Vision, Mission and Model

**Our Vision:**  
For every child to read well.

**Our Mission:**  
To improve literacy across the nation by creating a network of volunteers who listen to children read in their local primary schools.

## The Schoolreaders Model

Schoolreaders recruits, places and supports volunteers to go into local primary schools to give children one-to-one reading support on a weekly basis. Our unique live mapping system underpins our volunteer recruitment and placement process.

Priority is given to support the most disadvantaged children in the most deprived areas.

The Schoolreaders model of improving child literacy is simple, scalable, proven by annual impact research in partnership with the Institute for Research in Education, and cost effective (a low staff to volunteer ratio of 1:130). **Demand for our volunteers is extremely high: 1 in 6 primary schools in England have registered requesting our volunteers.**

Partner schools have confirmed that face-to-face, in-school reading support with an adult on a one-to-one basis is preferred to digital support. A 2022 survey of our partner schools showed that 99% consider in-school volunteering to be the 'gold standard' and most effective form of one-to-one reading support.<sup>1</sup> Additionally, children benefit enormously from Schoolreaders volunteers being positive role models in their school community.

<sup>1</sup> Schoolreaders State of Reading School Survey conducted July – Sep 2022 in conjunction with the Institute for Research in Education at the University of Bedfordshire

# Why become a Schoolreaders partner school?

Becoming a Schoolreaders partner school is free and easy.  
Here are some of the benefits to schools from joining the scheme:

## Free to Schools

The Schoolreaders scheme is available to schools completely free of charge, so that we can provide literacy support to all children, regardless of the school's financial situation.

## Safeguarding

Safeguarding is a core priority at Schoolreaders and our partner schools, with the safety of children paramount. All new volunteers complete a mandatory online safeguarding course, in addition to their school's individual safeguarding training requirements and a DBS (Disclosure and Barring Service) check, which is run by the school.

## Trained staff interview trusted volunteers

All potential Schoolreaders volunteers are interviewed by a trained team of staff, including ex-teachers and TA's.

They will determine a volunteer's experience, personality and aptitude. Our team will create a detailed profile, ensuring we have as much information as possible before introducing them to a school. Many of our volunteers are from an educational background.

## Flexibility

Schools are able to specify the days and times they need support. Schools can request additional volunteers at any time. Volunteers can be deployed to meet the individual needs of the school in terms of age group and support any children the school feel would benefit from additional one-to-one time.

## Ongoing support

We want to ensure that our volunteers have a positive experience, while providing your school with a high-quality additional resource. The Schoolreaders team are always available to help with any questions and share best practice and advice on working with your volunteer/s.



Scan our QR code to start your application today!

## The Partner Process

Complete on-line application form to become a partner school – specifying number of volunteers required

Schoolreaders begins volunteer recruitment

Potential volunteer profile sent to school contact

School decides whether to proceed with volunteer

Schoolreaders connects volunteer and school

School meets with volunteer and starts their induction and DBS process (DBS cost is covered by the school)

Volunteer starts supporting reading in your school.



# All About Schoolreaders

National school provision

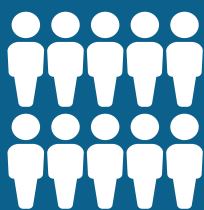
1 in 6 schools are registered with us across England

## Our volunteers

Schoolreaders volunteers are the gold dust of the charity. They provide a unique relationship and opportunity for children to improve their reading ability and enjoyment. They are not a teacher or a parent, but another adult taking an interest in each child. They are dedicated to giving their time to help children develop a love of reading.



Our volunteers come from a wide range of backgrounds, and **34% have a background in education**. We even have rocket scientists and children's authors reading in schools!



Our volunteers read with an average of **10 children each week**

On average, our volunteers dedicate around **100 hours each to their schools per academic year**



**£1.5 million**

The **combined value of our volunteers' time**, at every level of the organisation, is valued at more than **£1.5 million per year**



All of our volunteers commit to their schools for a minimum of a year, and **some have been reading in school for almost 10 years**



## Summertime Book Review Competition

Our Summertime Book Review Competition keeps children reading over the Summer, and schools can win incredible author talks from the likes of Alan Macdonald (Dirty Bertie) and A F Steadman (Skandar).

You can also win free books for the School library.

## Our partners

We partner with a range of organisations to recruit committed volunteers, spread awareness of the importance of good literacy, and to ensure we are providing the highest quality service



What on Earth! Magazine

## School Forums

We host regular online 'School Forums' to allow you to connect with other Schoolreaders partner schools.

These are a chance to discuss best practice, ask any questions about Schoolreaders, our volunteers, training and share feedback.





# Why schools choose Schoolreaders



Headteachers and educators across the country are signing up their school to the Schoolreaders programme. One in six schools in England are now registered with us. Moreover, the volunteers provide a vital free resource to schools, with most volunteering 2.8 hours a week in term time.

Many children miss out on essential reading time at home. By introducing dedicated Schoolreaders volunteers, schools can offer pupils the vital one-to-one reading time they need to grow in confidence and develop their reading skills. These volunteers become a valuable part of the school community, giving personalised attention and bringing a warmth that helps children feel nurtured and valued.

Here's what headteachers and school staff have to say about the positive impact of Schoolreaders:

It's someone coming in who isn't a teacher, isn't a parent, and who the children can engage with and experience in a really positive way.

Headteacher

The Schoolreaders are really good at having those mini conversations, lifting the children's confidence, and just finding time to listen to them when they're in a big class.

Senior Teacher

The volunteers have that beautiful time to just sit together with a child and actually talk about what's going on in their lives, talk about the book.

Headteacher

It has made such a huge difference to us to have volunteer readers at the school.

We have gone from being in the lowest 10% of schools to being above national for the phonics test with only two children not passing by the end of year 2.

We still have 17 children in year two who can read, but not fast enough to gain meaning. These will be children who will need to read to an adult regularly to build their fluency. As our children very rarely read at home or have access to books at home, the volunteer readers make a huge difference.

Senior Teacher

# How can our service be free to schools?

We have a small dedicated fundraising team who raise over £1m annually to cover the running costs of the charity and support our operational staff to recruit and place volunteers in schools across the nation.

There is no requirement for partner schools to fundraise for Schoolreaders. However, if you would like to, there are lots of ways to get involved! We host events such as our Annual Race for Reading, The Big Give Christmas Challenge, and much more. You can also create your own school fundraiser – just contact [funding@schoolreaders.org](mailto:funding@schoolreaders.org) for ideas, or why not try the below?



Create a  
"Dress as Your  
Favourite Book  
Character" Day

Invite students to come to school dressed as their favourite book character for a small donation. This fun event can be a great way to raise awareness of the joy of reading and support Schoolreaders simultaneously. Why not tie it in with your existing non-uniform day plans?

Organise a  
Sponsored  
Readathon

Encourage students to read as many books as they can within a set timeframe, with friends and family sponsoring each book or page read. This not only raises funds but also promotes a love of reading among students.

Host a  
Bake Sale

Invite parents, carers and families to 'Bake a difference' to children's literacy by donating baked goods to sell. Teachers, staff and volunteers could get involved too!



# Our research

Measurement of the impact and outcomes of our provision is of key importance. We therefore conduct annual research with The Institute for Research in Education at the University of Bedfordshire.



## Where do we work?

Schoolreaders is proud to have volunteers providing children with reading support in every county in the country across more than 1,300 primary schools.

It has improved our struggling readers' confidence, especially in boys. The children's love for reading has improved as well as their fluency and comprehension."

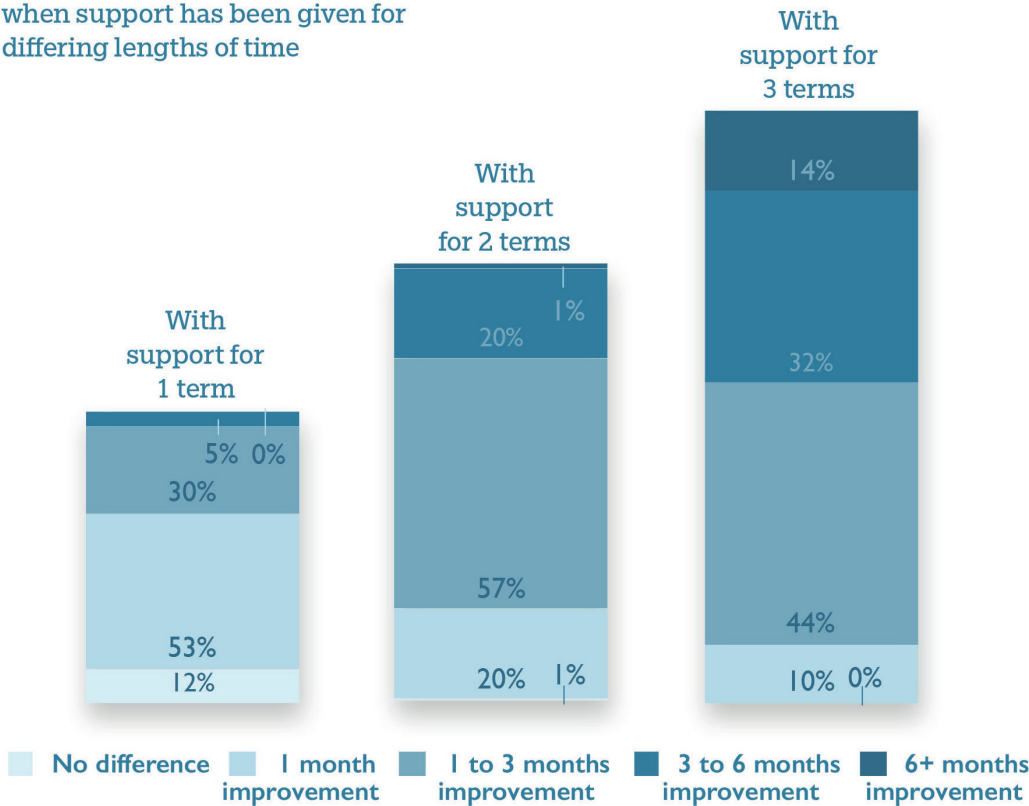
Literacy Lead, partner primary school, Essex

This map represents the volume of children currently being supported across the country every week.

There is a great demand for even more volunteers.

We are committed to continue growing to support more children in areas of deprivation with vital reading skills.

Reading age improvement when support has been given for differing lengths of time

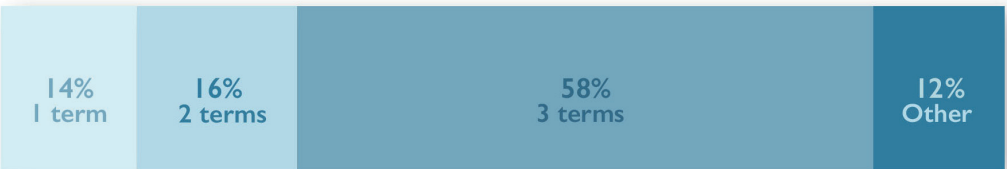


Support from Schoolreaders volunteers was shown specifically to increase the reading age of children.<sup>1</sup>

Of those children who were supported over 3 terms, **100% increased their reading age**, 46% by 3-6+ months and 44% by 1-3 months.

A key element of the success of the Schoolreaders model is that our volunteers commit to a minimum of one year's volunteering. This enables schools to tailor the length of support required for each individual child. This can be very variable, as seen in the diagram below.

For how long is each child supported?



<sup>1</sup> Schoolreaders Annual research 22/23, in partnership with The Institute of Research in Education



**Schoolreaders provides reading volunteers to primary schools for the schools to deploy flexibly to meet the needs of their children.**



The commitment and quality of volunteers is what makes the big difference, and is why we love working with Schoolreaders. It's not for the short term – it's a long-term relationship which is more valuable for the children. It's a free resource, so it's no wonder that so many schools are seeking Schoolreaders."

Headteacher,  
Priory Primary  
School, Bedford



**Learn more at [Schoolreaders.org](https://www.schoolreaders.org)**

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