



“The more you read, the more things you will know. The more that you learn, the more places you will go!” - Dr Seuss

Last week each class held an assembly with a focus on READING, which featured discussions around our Dr Seuss reading motto. This quote could not be more relevant in the current climate as reading gives us the chance to still embark upon adventures, visit new places and meet new people despite being in a national lockdown.

At Blackpool Gateway Academy, we place a huge emphasis on the teaching and learning of reading as we are aware of the enjoyment that can come from reading and the importance reading plays in a child’s education throughout the curriculum. To support the development of reading in our school and local community, we are working in partnership with the National Literacy Trust as part of the ‘Get Blackpool Reading’ project as it is recognised Blackpool is an area in which children need to read more! For further information on this, please visit <https://literacytrust.org.uk/communities/blackpool/>.

It is our goal at school to ensure all pupils leave school reading with fluency and comprehension and we group and teach children in line with their current ability. Typically, this journey consists of learning sounds and to blend sounds through the teaching of ReadWriteInc Phonics before moving onto VIPERS. Those children reading at a greater level than their age will also have the chance to have Novel Study sessions. For more information on each stage, please visit our school website.

WHY DO WE TREASURE READING SO DEARLY? & WHAT ELSE CAN WE DO TO SUPPORT OUR CHILDREN ON THEIR READING JOURNEY?

‘Being in a word-poor context at a young age can have far reaching negative consequences for our children. A restricted vocabulary as a young child goes on to correlate with factors in later life such as employment, pay and even health and wellbeing as an adult.’ Alex Quigley

‘The reading gap emerges early, before pupils attend school, typically worsening over time without significant intervention. At points of transition, such as between primary and secondary school, the gap can become more acute and problematic.’ Alex Quigley



Lots and lots of research has been carried out over the past 10 years with some eye-opening findings. The quotes and image show us just how much impact we can have just by reading to our children each day and by giving them the opportunity to read each day, in terms of their vocabulary, speech and language development.

During our assembly last week, we looked at all the exciting things to look forward to at Blackpool Gateway Academy!



BUG CLUB

In the absence of libraries and the restrictions on items coming to and from school, we recognise the difficulty in reading to your children daily so we have bought a subscription to an online platform (Bug Club) where your children will have access to lots of books suited to their ability. Class teachers will send out more information on ClassDojo and passwords will also be shared with the children.



Reading Certificates

Each Friday during our virtual celebration assemblies, one child per class will receive our certificate for their reading effort that week. This could be how hard they work during lessons, how often they read on Bug Club, or if they are bringing their reading books into school. If your child is in KS2, we will also be looking at the children’s reading journals and these may also give your child a chance of winning a certificate!



Reading Badges

In KS1, as well as certificates, we also have a range of reading badges to be won and worn with pride. Children will earn these badges for reading at home and bringing in their reading books. This is tracked by the Year 1 and Year 2 teachers, so if your child reads each week for a half term, they will earn a badge!



Bookworm Reward Scheme

As your child enters KS2, they will start their journey on the Gateway Reading Reward Scheme, in which they will work their way up to becoming a gold level bookworm! Each child will be given a reading passport that will stay in school and will be stamped for each day they are in school and read. These passports will travel with them through the school as they work their way through the reward scheme to the top!

AMBASSADOR

Reading Ambassadors

Congratulations to Ben, Ethan, Emma and Lilly-May in Y6 for being our first Reading Ambassadors at Blackpool Gateway Academy. I am looking forward to working with you and developing some ideas to inspire some of our younger readers. To our younger students, these children will be your role models and hopefully inspire you to be future reading ambassadors.

Class Librarian!



We are currently in the process of reshaping our school library and I need some assistance. We are also developing 'covid-safe' measures to ensure books from the library can be accessible to our pupils with 72 hour resting periods between returning books after use.

If you are interested in becoming a school librarian, please either write a letter, record a video or create a poster explaining why you would be a good candidate. I am looking for one librarian per class! Entries can make their way to myself via ClassDojo or by your class teacher.

Closing Date: Friday 27th November

Reading Photo Challenge!



For the chance to win a book, some hot chocolate and some sweets... please send in a creative picture of your child reading one of their books! Pictures can be sent in on Class Dojo!

Closing Date: Friday 27th November

Still to come...

Look out for the announcement of our 'Reading Champion' at school.
Hint: it's a local author who might make a few virtual visits.



Thank you all for taking the time to read this letter. Your ongoing support is essential and appreciated as we look to ensure all children leave school as capable readers of fiction, non-fiction and poetry with a lifelong love and enjoyment of reading.

Mr Walch