



Hillside Primary School

📍 Belstead Avenue, Ipswich, Suffolk, IP2 8NU
🌐 www.hillsideprimary.co.uk
✉️ office@hillsideprimary.co.uk
📞 01473 601402

Dear Parents and Carers,

At Hillside Primary School, we place a high value on reading and recognise the vital role it plays in children's academic success, wellbeing, and enjoyment of learning. We are increasingly aware that many children (and adults) do not read for pleasure as often as they once did, and this can have a significant impact on comprehension, vocabulary, and confidence across the curriculum. Following consultation with staff, pupils, and parents, we are delighted to share a range of initiatives that we are introducing to further strengthen our reading culture and inspire a lifelong love of books in all our children.



Reading in School

To ensure reading is highly visible, valued, and celebrated across the school:

- Classroom libraries are being redesigned to be more inviting and inspiring, with books displayed so that children can easily see and access them.
- Teachers will regularly read aloud to their classes, sharing high-quality texts and modelling enjoyment of reading.
- Children will take part in weekly "Everyone Reading in Class" (ERIC) sessions, where they can enjoy a book of their own choice.
- Teachers and pupils will regularly recommend books to one another, helping children discover new authors and genres.
- Children will have opportunities to share and read books with pupils from other year groups, encouraging reading for pleasure and a sense of community.
- Children will each have a VIPERS bookmark.



VIPERS is an acronym for a set of reading comprehension prompts used in UK primary schools to help children analyse texts more deeply.

It focuses on six areas: Vocabulary, Inference, Prediction, Explanation, Retrieval, and Sequence/Summarise.

V - Vocabulary: Understanding the meaning of words, synonyms, and why an author chose specific words.



I - Inference: Reading between the lines; understanding what is suggested but not explicitly stated.

P - Prediction: Using clues from the text to anticipate what might happen next.

E - Explanation: Explaining preferences, authorial intent, or reasons for characters' actions.

R - Retrieval: Locating key information directly from the text.

S - Sequence (KS1) or Summarise (KS2): Ordering events or summarising the main points of a text.

We are also introducing additional initiatives such as reading champions, book clubs and special reading events throughout the year.

We are excited to let you know about 'Secret Readers'. We are keen to involve our community as much as we can. We would love for one member of the community to come into school every week to read. It would be kept a secret from your child until you arrived in class!

Would you or another family member like to read to your child's class? The book would be provided for you (unless you had a particular children's book you would love to read). If so, please let us know via office@hillsideprimary.co.uk

Reading at Home



Reading at home is a crucial part of developing fluency, confidence, and enjoyment. We ask that children read at least five times per week at home. This can include:

- Reading before or after school
- Reading in the morning and/or evening
- Reading in the school library during break or lunchtime (which will count as a read from home as it is a chosen activity in their free time).

Children will be rewarded through our House Dojo system for additional reads over five per week.

Your support with your child reading at home is vital. Please continue to do this by:

- Listening to them read
- Talking about what they have read and asking questions (use the VIPERS bookmark to support with this)



- Encouraging them to read a variety of books for enjoyment as well as their reading scheme book
- Remembering to sign reading diaries as these are checked daily. Date, book title and pages read should be noted and a short comment about what has been read. Children can write this themselves if able.

Benefits of Reading Aloud to Your Child

Reading aloud to children at home builds vital literacy skills, sparks imagination, and strengthens emotional bonds. It increases vocabulary (potentially by 1.4 million words by nursery), improves comprehension, expands attention spans, and fosters empathy. This simple, regular practice creates a positive association with books, supports emotional well-being, and prepares children for academic success.



Supporting All Readers

In school, children will receive regular opportunities to read individually with an adult. Staff will ask a range of VIPER based questions and provide targeted support where needed to ensure that all pupils make progress and feel confident as readers.

Little Free Library

We also have a Little Free Library located outside the front of the school. Families are warmly invited to use this resource by taking a book and, when possible, replacing it with another suitable children's book. Donations of appropriate children's books are always welcome.

Looking Ahead

Over the coming weeks, we will be introducing:

- Reading champions and pupil voice groups
- Lunchtime book clubs for different year groups
- Dual-language reading books in classrooms
- Special reading events, including a KS1 bedtime story session



Further information about these will be shared shortly.

We are very excited about these developments and truly believe that, by working together, we can foster a strong and joyful reading culture that benefits every child.

Thank you for your continued support in encouraging your child to read regularly and for pleasure.

Yours sincerely,

Mrs Tibbitts, KS2 English Lead.