

## Reading Plus Case Study 2016-2017

Folkestone Academy, a school with a higher than national average percentage of pupils eligible for Pupil Premium funding, has successfully combined the Reading Plus programme with the current national curriculum.

The result? Their SATs pass rate in Reading went from 60% to 93% in just one year. Folkestone Primary Academy's Acting Headteacher, Sarah Uden, explains how...

### Working out your pupils' abilities

When the Folkestone Primary Academy opened in 2009, too few pupils were reading at the [age related expectation](#). Over the years, we invested in reading resources and the pupils made good improvements. However, in 2016 when the new KS2 SATs Reading test commenced, we were very disappointed to achieve 60%. I was given a book called Reading Reconsidered written by Doug Lemov which prompted me to look further into how we were teaching our children to read. The book talked about 'Lexiles' and, upon further investigation, I found that [Reading Plus gave an approximate Lexile Range as to where a pupil was reading at](#).



We started to map the Key Stage 2 children, understanding what their Lexile Range was. In Year 5, many children were working at a Lexile rate of 230-420 and gap analysis indicated that they needed to be higher than this. We then looked at the correlation of the children's Lexile levels from Reading Plus with the results from previous SATs papers. [That data gave us an insight into what level the children needed to reach to be reading at the expected standard](#).

 Folkestone All Age Academy

For example, the data demonstrated that in order to be comfortably working at the new National Standard or above, children needed to get an old-fashioned '4A' on an old SATs paper. From our analysis, we know that the children reading at a '4A' minimum last year, were reading at a Lexile level of 950+, ideally 1000. To add further impact, we then tracked back through the year groups and have put milestones in place. This means that myself and our teachers know where pupils in Year 3, 4 and 5 need to be by the end of each academic year to be reading at their expected level for their age. [This work has meant that we can really keep an eye on the progress of our KS2 children and are in a better position to identify and help those children that are struggling or falling behind](#).

### How we used Reading Plus

We've used Reading Plus for a long time but now use it to far greater effect. Having made the Lexile analysis and correlation, we wanted to use the programme combined with other methods – specifically one-to-one reading with a teacher or TA.

We increased [Reading Plus sessions in KS2 to three times a week and got teachers more involved](#) – walking the room, looking over shoulders and really ensuring that the comprehension of each session they did was as good as it could be. We really bought into the concept that when it comes to Reading Plus, you really do have to be a cheerleader to get success.

We also carried out frequent assessments and the teachers updated the spreadsheet with the Lexile levels termly. Anyone that hadn't, at that point, moved forward were identified and given extra sessions or focus by the teacher.

In addition to the focused sessions we also created a [Champion Board](#) that was displayed prominently in school so that the children could see it when they came out of assembly. The teachers could nominate the 'Stars' of that week, whether they were someone that had got much higher percentages than before or had moved up a level etc. In addition, we also run inter-class Cupcake Challenges. This creates excitement and really encourages and motivates the children to want to do well. We even have children asking to do extra sessions and to go onto Reading Plus during wet play break times!

## Don't be afraid to test your children

Our children hadn't done any formal testing the year before as we had decided not to use the old SATs tests due to the new curriculum. We changed this so that the children get exposure to unseen texts.

Every single time the children completed an old SATs paper, we put together a PowerPoint that demonstrated to the children why they had missed out on a mark, or why they got a question wrong.

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
1	Reading			Term 1	Term 3	Term 4	Term 5
2	Year 6 class 3			Lexile Range	Lexile Range	Lexile Range	Lexile Range
3	Pupil 1		2B	620-790	770-870	850-980	850-980
4	Pupil 2			850-980	950-1030	950-1030	1000-1080
5	Pupil 3		2C	850-980	950-1030	1000-1080	1000-1080
6	Pupil 4		3	850-980	950-1030	1000-1080	1060-1160
7	Pupil 5		3	770-870	770-870	950-1030	950-1030
8	Pupil 6		3	770-870	850-980	950-1030	950-1030
9	Pupil 7		2A	770-870	950-1030	950-1030	1000-1080
10	Pupil 8		2B	770-870	770-870	850-980	850-980
11	Pupil 9		2A	800-840	770-870	850-980	850-980
12	Pupil 10		2A	620-790	770-870	850-980	850-980
13	Pupil 11		3	850-980	850-980	950-1030	950-1030
14	Pupil 12		1	830-820	620-790	770-870	770-870
15	Pupil 13	SEN Support	2A	770-870	950-1030	1000-1080	1000-1080
16	Pupil 14		2A	950-1030	1000-1080	1060-1160	1060-1160
17	Pupil 15		3	1060-1160	1150-1340	1150-1340	1180-1360
18	Pupil 16		2A	770-870	850-980	850-980	950-1030
19	Pupil 17		3	1000-1080	1060-1160	1100-1220	1100-1220
20	Pupil 18		2A	770-870	850-980	950-1030	950-1030
21	Pupil 19		2A	770-870	950-1030	1000-1080	1000-1080
22	Pupil 20		3	850-980	950-1030	1000-1080	1100-1220
23	Lexile Range 1000+ for greater depth						

### Lexile measures are recognised as the world's most widely used reading metric

The Lexile Framework for Reading is an educational tool that uses a measure called a Lexile to match readers with books, articles and other levelled reading resources. Readers and books are assigned a score on the Lexile scale, in which lower scores reflect easier readability for books and lower reading ability for readers.

The Lexile framework uses quantitative methods, based on individual words and sentence lengths, rather than qualitative analysis of content to produce scores

Title	Author	Lexile	Readability
Green Eggs and Ham	Dr. Seuss	210L	Year 2
The Very Hungry Caterpillar	Eric Carle	460L	Year 3
Charlotte's Web	E. B. White	680L	Year 4
Twilight	Stephenie Meyer	720L	Year 4
Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone	J. K. Rowling	880L	Year 6
A Tale of Two Cities	Charles Dickens	990L	Year 7
The Hobbit	J. R. R. Tolkien	1000L	Year 7
Robinson Crusoe	Daniel Defoe	1360	College

Source: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lexile>

See also: <https://lexile.co.uk>

Having had feedback from a marker of the new test, it was clear that they are extremely specific on vocabulary, and the definition and meaning of vocabulary. The children have to know the definition, without question, and they can no longer be vague about it. If the child cannot nail the answer, then they don't get the mark. **The vocabulary side of the Reading Plus programme has helped enormously with this element.**

Advice to other schools? Every child reads every day - we really have built our reputation on this. We have reviewed the balance in terms of the children's exposure to fiction/non-fiction and used Reading Plus to really enhance understanding of vocabulary and general knowledge of life which is so important for our children. Very often the SATs texts relate to experiences that children haven't encountered, so by reading more non-fiction it expands their worlds and opens their minds to new knowledge and understanding.

**Reading Plus stories are so varied, it is well worth 20 minutes a day.** As much as we did one-to-one reading, there is always going to be a case of a child switching off and letting their mind wander when silent reading to themselves. With Reading Plus, they know they have to concentrate because they have to answer questions at the end and the teacher will know straight away if they have got a poor score from not paying attention. It focuses the mind better and the children are very competitive with themselves and want to get good scores.

## The outcome for Folkestone Academy

***In the 2016 cohort, 20% of our children missed the pass mark by 3 or less marks and as a result, our overall score of children achieving the expected standard was 60% for Reading. This year, 93% of the children achieved the expected standard and we were absolutely thrilled.***

***I can't say that this is solely a result of just what we did with Reading Plus but I can say that this has been a significant contributing factor. It adds depth to reading understanding, widens children's knowledge of the world around them and builds strong vocabulary.***



Contact: 0191 389 60 78 [support@readingsolutionsuk.com](mailto:support@readingsolutionsuk.com)