World Book Day 2022
I am a reader in Allanton Primary School

Our journey started at the beginning of the new term. We identified Reading, in particular Reading for Pleasure as a priority both in Literacy and Health and Wellbeing. All areas of the curriculum have been impacted by the pandemic but we realised that these two areas should and must be regarded as priorities.
In September 2021 we applied to The Scottish Book Trust to become a Reading School and we had our Core Level application approved in October.

Unfortunately during the October break we learned that our school building required immediate repair work. We were therefore decanted to a neighbouring school.
Our friends at Dykehead Primary could not have been more welcoming and our Reading Schools project continued.

We held competitions amongst our P5-7 children in order to find a name for our initiative, a logo, reward system and a time for us all to read together. We also began to create library spaces in our new surroundings and asked the children to identify books that they'd like to read. We also spent time discussing our feelings towards reading and the barriers that we might need to overcome.

The senior classes led the initial stages of planning and preparation. They learned about the importance of marketing, the use of logos and creating clear and effective tools for recording our reading success. We wrote to our local shops and supermarkets to ask if we could have their unsold magazines and papers. Then we contacted our local library to seek support and guidance from Susan our link librarian. In light of our recent location move and continued Covid restrictions, this project provided the children with a fun and exciting opportunity to lead their learning.

READ was created by a P4/5 pupil. Her vision, Read Everyday and Dream has become our mantra and the children are embracing it.

As a staff team we identified the need to reward the children and celebrate their success in this project and Literacy as a whole. We created certificates that the children could aim to receive and the children created Golden Tickets as their reward for reading books. As a collective a system of recording how many books have been read and a scheme called, "Dream and Redeem" was created. This allows the children to exchange or save their tickets. Every Friday the P6/7 children open their shop and the children go and exchange their tickets for pens, pencils, bookmarks, notepads etc.

At the end of October we gathered funds that we'd ear marked for the project and went shopping to our local book supplier. We bought the books that the children had asked for and sought advice from the book shop owner. A variety of genres, books of various length, picture books and some favourite classic tales were purchased. We then made secret gift boxes for every class as a surprise to launch Book Week. In each box were some banners, inspirational book quotes, the new titles, a book review file, reading records and A5 wallets for every child to be used as a golden ticket holders and book mark.

The children and staff prepared for and enjoyed Book Week event in November. The excitement and anticipation was clear to see. The P1-3 classes receiving and exploring their Read, Write, Count and Book bug bags, the children keen to show you their library spaces to the chat that inside their beautiful gift boxes was perhaps a puppy! The older children loved sharing their learning at assembly, discovering new books while reminding us all to embrace READ time by setting iPad alarms beeping for 10am every morning.

In December we introduced Dreamy our Reading Elf and he could be found hiding around the school reading different types of Christmas books throughout the month. We encouraged each class to take on the role of both author and illustrator by creating their own class memory book. This would remind us in years to come of this special Christmas in light of our new location as well as the continuing pandemic.

In the new year and at the start of a new term we reflected and evaluated. READ was originally set for 10am every morning, before interval. However following consultation with the staff and pupil voice we established that we had to be more flexible and responsive. Each class now identifies the point(s) in each day that best suit them. The children enjoy READ time in their own library space or at their desks. Books, magazines, audio books and the use of QR codes are shared. Staff read their own books in their own space or support children who require some help to read.

The impact on the children and staff has been overwhelming. A sense of calm, quiet and peacefulness descends in the older classes and the children immerse themselves in print. Children who at first felt this to be "uncool" are now talking about their favourite author and asking staff for new titles. Those who were reluctant to review a book have now found ways to recommend a title effectively through post its, digital means like Chatterpix or by talking about their book with a friend.
Of course calm can't always describe the younger, infant classes but their enthusiasm is infectious.

We actively seek new Literacy based learning and teaching ideas but we are mindful that we mustn't overwhelm the children and staff with too many activities. We must not lose sight that this is the time is to read for pleasure for both staff and children. We have introduced author of the month displays and focussing most recently on Lisa Thompson, Julia Donaldson and David Walliams.

Although we couldn't visit the library for a while, we loved the virtual tour that we shared on World Book Day and some of us are now participating in after school clubs. Our nursery class are also about to begin a series of visits and Book bug sessions.

We have shared the READ progress with our families via Twitter and our school newsletter and seek their opinions through pulse surveys. We are very much looking forward to welcoming our families back into our school building as soon as possible to read together in our class library spaces indoors and out.