

Our Journey on the One Education Reading Award

The District C of E Primary School, Newton-le-Willows

The District CofE Primary School in Newton le Willows, is a flagship school for the One Education Reading Award. This is for their amazing understanding of the importance in 'Reading for Pleasure' and the provision that is in place for such an amazing reading culture within the school. The District CE Primary School has been innovative and revolutionary in its approach to raising the profile of reading. The Year of Reading project aimed to show the pupils the value the school gives reading. The aim was to utterly drench the pupils in reading. They succeeded in waves, and this has continued beyond the year of reading so much so that it has become the culture of the school.

The District understand the research which shows reading is the key to success, not just for reading but for the whole of the curriculum (check out their twitter page for the STEM-sational science project that the school completed). Yet, the school goes further than understanding the research and the importance of reading for children. There is a huge passion for building a love of reading in ALL children. Like many schools, The District believe that there is a book (or newspaper, or comic, or sports programme...) for everyone. However, they are so set on finding the hook to get everyone reading, they will stop at nothing. If it takes a film to get their interest, if it takes baking cakes to get their interest, if it takes robots, nail polish, rugby or dinosaurs....they don't care if it helps to hook children into becoming lifelong readers.

The whole school oozes reading, creating an environment that shouts 'books, books, books'! Inspiring reading quotes are all around school. The fantastic 'story-steps' are the talk of any visitor Neil Bushnell, the school's Patron of Reading couldn't wait to pose on them. You have to visit to believe it. Just try saying 'District Reader' to any pupil, and be sure you'll have several smile and shout back, 'Lifetime Achiever!' This motto is worn on the wrists of pupils on trendy wristbands. The project started as it meant to go on with #TheBigBedtimeStory. The school community drew together: families, all generations. The hot chocolate flowed and the camp fire glowed. It was stories, snuggles and smiles galore. The overwhelming response set the tone for what was to be an astounding year! These book nights have continued across the year. A particular favourite was the magical transformation of the school hall into Hogwarts. The young wizards arrived through platform 9 and $\frac{3}{4}$ and were dazzled by floating candles and so much more. These events have inspired pupils and breathed life into books.

The school were well on their journey with creating a culture of reading when they came across the One Education Reading Award. The District's Headteacher at the time, Diane Bate, saw that the Reading Award criteria, resources and access to CPD would be a way in which to continue to ignite a passion for books so that the children continued to progress further, whilst looking at ensuring skills in 'Reading for decoding' and 'Reading for understanding' were the best that they could be. The data from The District reflects this, showing fantastic increases in progress and attainment in all year groups.

The District want every child to associate reading with a smile, so they show a confidence and desire to read. At The District, #ReadingRocks, and the pupils regularly tell visitors just that! The Year of Reading has a wonderful legacy but it was definitely only the beginning...