

Doncaster Schools Reading Pledge 2020

Guidance document

Context

Doncaster Stories is a community driven campaign to promote the importance of literacy, reaching the very heart of Doncaster's literacy needs. The campaign was launched last year and is delivered by The National Literacy Trust in partnership with Doncaster Opportunity area.

Over the next 10 years, Doncaster Stories will deliver an array of engaging educational projects across the town to instil a love for reading. We work with local people, schools and community groups to develop localised solutions to Doncaster's literacy challenges. The campaign targets areas of deprivation to change the life stories of disadvantaged primary school children and their families.

The signing of the Schools Pledge represents a shared commitment between Doncaster Stories, its partners and Doncaster schools in tackling low literacy in 2020 and beyond. It is also a recognition that change can only occur when we all commit to make it. Through this engagement we will identify, share and celebrate good practice across Doncaster schools, as well as supporting settings in areas which have been prioritised as needing development. Schools will also have access to resources, support and professional development through the National Literacy Trust.

The following document sets out how to use the Schools Pledge to put reading at the heart of school strategy, both in the community and in the classroom.

Building a Doncaster Stories Literacy Pledge

The following section highlights the different aspects of the pledge that we are committing to develop together. These are divided into three areas: strategic, community and in-school. The Schools Pledge is made up of 10 steps which form the basis of the literacy development.

Every school has its own strengths and challenges, so we have therefore left a degree of fluidity in the various steps. For example, 'promote reading for pleasure' could incorporate a range of initiatives and partners, allowing you to build something bespoke. A copy of the pledge certificate is included for you to print, sign and display in reception.



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Strategic

These steps will help build your unique literacy strategy

- 1. Complete an annual review of school reading provision, through [National Literacy Trust membership](#).** Good literacy skills underpin academic success. Identify key literacy priorities based on the needs of your pupils and establish how these will be addressed in your school improvement plan.
- 2. Complete the National Literacy Trust's [Local Annual Literacy Survey](#).** This online survey gathers data from primary and secondary school pupils about their attitudes and behaviour towards literacy. Schools receive their own individualised report after taking part, which is a useful tool for tracking progress.
- 3. Use the National Literacy Trust [membership](#) to inform school strategy and practice.** Our membership subscription service provides access to a vast range of inspiring teaching resources, school improvement tools and CPD to support literacy throughout your school or setting. The 46 target schools that are working with Doncaster Stories have free membership with login details sent to the email address we have on record.

Community

This can be adapted depending on local priorities and existing activities

- 4. Remind parents/carers, on a termly basis, of the importance of reading and support them with ways in which they can do this.** The home learning environment and parental attitudes to reading and learning have a huge influence on children. There are plenty of helpful resources available, for example our parent-facing [Words for Life](#) website.
- 5. Have a dedicated space on your school website to encourage and support reading.** School websites are an excellent space for promoting reading, sharing reading activities that are happening in school and encouraging parents and carers to read with their children.
- 6. Make reading materials available in public waiting areas in the school.** Having books and magazines in waiting areas reinforces the message that reading publicly helps promote its importance to children. This is a simple way to highlight the importance your school places on reading (and also provides a way to pass time whilst people are waiting for appointments).
- 7. Promote the [Summer Reading Challenge](#); and create a close working relationship with the library service.** The Summer Reading Challenge is a free initiative that encourages children to make use of their library service and read books outside of school time. Your school can share information about the initiative with children and parents, encourage pupils to become library members, and organise library visits.

In-school

This can be adapted depending on local priorities and existing activities

8. Engage in reading celebration events and reward good reading habits. Celebration events and reward schemes can help motivate children to develop good reading habits. For example, as well as promoting the Summer Reading Challenge before the summer holidays, your school could celebrate pupils who completed the initiative on their return to school.

9. Provide all pupils with a rich, varied and enjoyable reading curriculum. Reading forms a key part of all curriculum areas so finding creative and engaging ways of exploring reading across the curriculum can help children to find reading more accessible and ultimately more enjoyable.

10. Identify a school governor to have special responsibility for reading. A governor with specific responsibility for reading can keep it high on the agenda and be in touch with staff and the community about local reading activities as well as keeping abreast of regional and national activities.

Partners and wider opportunities to develop your pledge

Mobilising partnerships is central to our approach in all of our National Literacy Trust Hubs. We work with a diverse range of businesses, community groups, health, education, and cultural organisations to help raise literacy levels in Doncaster.

Each of the partners listed below contributes directly to one of the 10 points and schools are encouraged to explore all of the partner opportunities. From time to time, Doncaster Stories is able to broker a new opportunity or resource for Doncaster schools, and we will use this partnership to keep you in the loop with latest opportunities.

- **Doncaster Libraries Service** – There are a total of 25 libraries in Doncaster. We have developed a close working relationship with the library service who have assisted in the delivery of our campaigns, as well as hosting school assemblies. The library service are currently working towards recruiting every Y3 pupil in Doncaster as a library member. For further information visit the Doncaster Libraries website [here](#) or contact Helen Foster: helen.foster@doncaster.gov.uk
- **Doncaster Family Hubs** – Doncaster Family Hubs bring services together to work with families from conception through to adolescence, to deliver an integrated local offer. Services range from day care, education, midwives and health visitors, SEN support, working with young carers, and wider family support. There are 12 Family Hubs across Doncaster. For more information, visit the website [here](#) or contact Denise Beevers: den.beevers@doncaster.gov.uk.

- **Club Doncaster Foundation** – Working alongside Doncaster Rovers FC, Doncaster Belles and Doncaster Rugby League to bring sport into the local community. Club Doncaster supports us on World Book Day, as well as providing us with volunteers.
- **Doncaster Book Awards** – Doncaster Book Awards has been celebrating reading for pleasure since 2004. Its free annual programme runs from October to April. Children from participating schools are encouraged to read books from a long list of the best new titles alongside a specially-selected list of classics. Big-name authors speak at the launch and finale events, with many opportunities in-between for extra-curricular activities, competitions and in-school exploration of the longlisted books. For more information, visit the website [here](#) or contact Lynne Coppendale: lynnecoppendale@doncasterbookaward.net
- **CAST Theatre** – The theatre opened in 2013 and welcomes audiences of all ages. It hosts a range of workshops for primary and secondary schools in its state of the art spaces. Cast have supported our campaign work, and are due to appear as a location on our Walk & Talk trails. The theatre website is [here](#) or contact Susan Kerrigan, Cultural Education Manager at Cast on susan@castindoncaster.com for more information.
- **The Point** – also known as Doncaster Community Arts Centre. It hosts family workshops and literary themed exhibitions to bring stories to life. The Point has hosted some of our Love Reading events with our target schools and will also appear on our Walk & Talk trail. Their website is [here](#) or contact Helen Jones: helen@thepoint.org.uk .

Review and accreditation

In recognition of your efforts to improve literacy by signing the Doncaster School Literacy Pledge, the National Literacy Trust is pleased to offer the use of their 'Working with the National Literacy Trust' logo to all signatories. For more information email: schools@literacytrust.org.uk.

We will check in with you regularly to discuss your progress against each point on the pledge. This is to celebrate what is going well and identify where and how we can provide more support if needed.



Doncaster Stories Reading Pledge 2019/2020

All primary schools in Doncaster are invited to sign the ‘Doncaster Stories Reading Pledge’ and undertake these ten actions to put reading at the heart of school strategy, community engagement and the classroom. .

Strategic

1. Complete an annual review of school reading provision, using the online tools provided through your National Literacy Trust membership.
2. Complete the National Literacy Trust’s Local Annual Literacy Survey.
3. Use National Literacy Trust Membership to inform school strategy and practice.

Community

4. Remind parents/carers, on a termly basis, of the importance of reading and support them with ways in which they can do this.
5. Have dedicated space on the school website to encourage and support reading.
6. Make reading materials available in public waiting areas in the school.
7. Promote the Summer Reading Challenge and actively encourage library membership to all pupils by close collaboration with the library service.

In-school

8. Engage in reading celebration events and reward good reading habits.
9. Provide all pupils with a rich, varied and enjoyable reading curriculum.
10. Identify a school governor to have special responsibility for reading.

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Signed (Head Teacher)

.....
(School name)



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