Reading Schools Framework

This framework details the Key Areas that we consider crucial to building and sustaining a whole-school reading culture.

Key Area: All areas
Level: Core, Silver, Gold
Resource created by Scottish Book Trust

scottishbooktrust.com

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About this resource

This framework was updated August 2023 to provide greater clarity on key themes.

About Reading Schools

Research proves that reading for pleasure has positive impacts on learners' attainment across the curriculum, health and wellbeing, critical thinking, creativity, empathy and resilience.

Reading Schools aims to help every school in Scotland build and sustain the **whole-school reading cultures** that foster these impacts.

Reading Schools offers:
- An **accreditation for every school**, recognising the great work you're doing to support reading for pleasure
- A **coherent structure** for all your reading initiatives and activities, providing focused and clear direction
- A framework mapped to HGIOS 4, supporting **school improvement** and HMIE inspections
- Professional **development and leadership** opportunities for your staff

- A way to develop **learner voice**, leadership skills and confidence
- Opportunities for **collaboration** within and between schools
- Pathways to **engaging your families** and the **wider community**
- **Training and support** from Scottish Book Trust for all schools taking part

This framework

This framework details the Key Areas that we consider crucial to building and sustaining a whole-school reading culture. The Key Areas are mapped against How Good is Our School? 4. Under each of the Key Areas we detail the actions necessary to become a Reading School and advance to Silver and Gold level.

- The Core Reading School accreditation comprises the foundational work key to building a reading culture in school and is focused around reading routines and the school environment.
- Reading School: Silver is based around schools providing additional opportunities to broaden their learners' experiences, such as engaging with authors, visiting libraries, and bringing in other outside expertise.
- Reading School: Gold involves schools sharing the enthusiasm and expertise they have developed as a Reading School with their communities through, for example, working with other schools in their cluster, intergenerational projects in their communities, partnership with local businesses etc.

Accreditation process

In order to be accredited as a Reading School, a school must provide evidence of how they have achieved the standard described under each of the Key Areas.

- Schools applying for the Core **Reading School** accreditation must provide evidence of how they have achieved the standard described under each of the Key Areas in the first column.
- Schools applying for **Reading School: Silver** must provide evidence of how they have achieved the standard described under each of the Key Areas in first **and** second columns.
- Schools applying for **Reading School: Gold** must provide evidence of how they have achieved the standard described under each of the Key Areas in **all three** columns.

Once awarded, a school's accreditation will last for three years. At the end of this period, schools will need to apply for re-accreditation.

Once an accreditation has been achieved, schools may apply for a new level of accreditation, for example go from Core to Silver or Gold, at any time. If they do this within one year, we will only ask to see evidence for the new level of accreditation. For example: a Core level school that wished to progress to Silver and applied within a year would not have to resubmit their Core level evidence, they would simply add their new Silver evidence. If they applied for Silver in years two or three they would need to submit Core AND Silver evidence.

1.2 Leadership of Learning

Key Area 1.2.1 – Reading Leadership Group

Form a reading leadership group who input into your action plan and meet regularly to discuss progress and ideas, ensuring learners are at the heart of your Reading Schools development, all year groups have some sort or representation, staff and learners work together to discuss and implement changes.

Reading School	Reading School: Silver	Reading School: Gold
The leadership group **must**: • Include learners and the school librarian, if the school has one. It can also include teachers, support staff and Senior Management Team • Meet regularly to discuss and implement plans	Sustain Core activity.	Sustain Core activity and: • At Gold level we expect Reading Schools to invite families or partners from within the community to join your leadership group, e.g., local public librarian, local bookshop staff, local religious figure, etc

Key Area 1.2.2 – Learner role modelling

Learners visibly sharing reading with each other, peers supporting each other to develop their reading identities, peers sharing reading recommendations.

Reading School	Reading School: Silver	Reading School: Gold
Learners should act as reading role models in **one of the below ways, or in another way that suits their setting**: • Wearing 'Ask me what I'm reading' badges / lanyards • Talking about reading materials they've read in assembly / at whole-school occasions • Creating learner-led recommendation lists for display • Making learner-led shelf labels or signs • Putting recommendation notes / bookmarks in reading materials • Making recommendation videos	Sustain Core activity and: Learners should support one another in more formal ways in **one of the below ways, or in another way that suits their setting**: • Taking part in a paired reading project • Acting as reading mentors • Sharing storytelling videos / activities with reading buddies • Leading a reading club	Sustain Core and Silver-level activity and: Learners should act as reading role models through interactions with members of the wider community in **one of the below ways, or in another way that suits their setting**: • Being Book Doctors and giving out *'prescriptions'* • Participating in a reading flash mob • Communicating through community media, e.g., local newspaper, radio etc.

Reading School	Reading School: Silver	Reading School: Gold
• Making book trailers / vlogs • Making learner-led reading materials lists for staff		• Creating reading podcasts / videos to share with the community via social media • Displaying reading materials they are currently reading / would recommend in their windows

Key Area 1.2.3 – Staff being seen as readers themselves

Staff sharing the things they enjoy reading, staff across the school demonstrate how they are readers themselves, the normalisation of reading for pleasure as an activity for everyone.

Reading School	Reading School: Silver	Reading School: Gold
Staff should act as reading role models in **one of the below ways, or in another way that suits their setting**: • Displaying signs • Wearing lanyards or badges	Sustain Core activity.	Sustain Core activity.

Reading School	Reading School: Silver	Reading School: Gold
• Talking about reading materials they've read in assembly / at whole-school occasions • Giving learners opportunities to see them reading • Having 'guess the reader' displays with photos of staff favourite reading materials / bookshelves • Taking part in social media reading challenges, e.g., 'post a photo of your reading lunch' • Sharing reading materials recommendation videos		

Key Area 1.2.4 – Staff development

Ensuring staff across the school understand why reading for pleasure is important, building staff skill in supporting reading for pleasure initiatives.

Reading School	Reading School: Silver	Reading School: Gold
Schools should support staff development by completing **both of the below mandatory actions:** • Key contact attending a Reading Schools CLPL session / webinar • Staff are using Scottish Book Trust resources to widen knowledge around reading for pleasure	Sustain Core activity and: Schools should extend staff development by completing the below **three mandatory actions**: • Involving the staff team / teachers of other subjects / support staff in training around reading for pleasure • Reading more widely about the pedagogy and research around reading for pleasure • Engaging with colleagues and sharing work via social media or face-to-face meetings etc.	Sustain Core and silver-level activity and: Schools should extend staff development further by completing the below **three mandatory actions:** • Working in partnership with other schools • Being an ambassador school and welcoming visitors to share practice • Leading a CLPL within your local authority/area or presenting at a shared practice showcase event / Scottish Book Trust webinar

Key Area 1.2.5 – Staff knowledge of contemporary children's literature

Developing staff across the school's knowledge of contemporary children literature, helping staff to be able to recommend and discuss a range of reading materials relevant to the needs, interests and experiences of all their learners.

Reading School	Reading School: Silver	Reading School: Gold
Schools should make staff aware of contemporary children's literature by completing the below **mandatory action**: • Making staff aware of contemporary children's literature through signposting to new book lists and other appropriate resources	Sustain Core activity and: Schools should ensure that staff have access to contemporary children's literature to read in **one of the below ways, or in another way that suits their setting**: • Inviting your local librarian in to talk to staff about new reading materials available to them and ensuring they have a library card • Gifting contemporary children's reading material to each staff member, encouraging them to share across the team	Sustain Core and silver-level activity and: Schools should create opportunities for staff to explore, share and discuss contemporary children's literature in **one of the below ways, or in another way that suits their setting**: • Introducing a staff book club • Providing physical areas for discussion, e.g., an interactive display board in the staff room • Providing online spaces for discussion • Taking part in local authority staff book clubs

Reading School	Reading School: Silver	Reading School: Gold
	- Having a 'borrow box' in the staff room with regularly updated contemporary children's reading materials - Arranging a staff trip to a local bookshop to speak to booksellers about contemporary children's titles	

1.3 Leadership of Change

Key Area 1.3.1 – Whole-school action plan

Submitting an action plan detailing the aims for progressing the reading culture, giving a structure to your Reading Schools development, ensuring learners are fully involved in the choices made, monitoring progress against chosen areas.

Reading School	Reading School: Silver	Reading School: Gold
The action plan **must**: • Be agreed by the reading leadership group • Confirm that reading for pleasure is a school wide priority, e.g., adding it to the school improvement plan • Include plans to check progress	Sustain Core activity.	Sustain Core activity.

Key Area 1.3.2 – School environment

Creating pleasurable and relaxed areas for reading enjoyment in partnership with learners, demonstrating visually that reading for pleasure has high status in the school.

Reading School	Reading School: Silver	Reading School: Gold
Schools should provide appealing and relaxing reading areas in collaboration with learners, and use displays to promote reading in **one of the below ways, or in another way that suits their setting**: • Having appealing reading areas throughout the school, e.g., in shared spaces / corridors / within your school library area • Creating classroom book corners / reading areas designed by learners (possibly as part of an enterprise project) • Providing learners with cushions / encouraging them to turn over	Sustain Core activity and: Schools should create opportunities for learners to read outside the classroom in **one of the below ways, or in another way that suits their setting**: • Having reading sessions outdoors • Having reading spaces in the playground, e.g., a reading bench or storytelling chair • Having a playground library • Incorporating reading into breakfast clubs / after-school clubs • Incorporating reading into school events and celebrations	Sustain Core and Silver-level activity and: Schools should make reading visible in their community in **one of the below ways, or in another way that suits their setting**: • Creating displays in community spaces • Introducing a Book Fairies project • Creating book 'pavement quotes' or window signs • Introducing a community Book Trail

Reading School	Reading School: Silver	Reading School: Gold
their chairs and relax when they're reading • Creating themed displays of reading material • Displaying new reading material suggestions, e.g., 'Hot Books' / 'Bookflix' • Having displays about the power of reading		• Creating a community reading area, e.g., a reading bench or garden

Key Area 1.3.3 – National events and celebrations

Build on reading routines to generate excitement around reading by taking part in national reading celebrations and prizes.

Reading School	Reading School: Silver	Reading School: Gold
Not required for the Core Reading School accreditation.	Schools should generate excitement around reading by taking part in **one of the below initiatives, or in another that suits their setting**: • Book Week Scotland • World Book Day / Night • National Poetry Day • Other local reading events/prizes/festivals • Incorporate reading into other international events/days/celebrations, e.g., Black History Month, International Women's Day, Empathy Day, Eid, Diwali, Earth Day, Pride Month etc	Sustain Silver-level activity.

1.5 Management of resources to promote equity

Key Area 1.5.1 – Access to high-quality reading materials

Ensuring learners have access to a wide variety of up-to-date reading materials relevant to their needs, interests and experiences, encouraging learners to try new things and gathering learners' opinions about the types of reading materials they would like to see in the school.

Reading School	Reading School: Silver	Reading School: Gold
Schools should make sure that learners have access to contemporary and diverse reading materials relevant to their needs, interests and experiences by completing the below **four mandatory actions**: • Providing learners with access to a school or public library – this could take the form of class / group book boxes or a 'personal shopping experience' using library catalogues • Involving learners in the auditing and selection of books and other reading materials	Sustain Core activity and: Schools should extend access to contemporary reading materials by completing the below **mandatory action**: • Providing all learners with the opportunity to join the local public library for access to books, other reading materials, eBooks and audiobooks	Sustain Core and Silver-level activity.

Reading School	Reading School: Silver	Reading School: Gold
• Regularly updating reading materials to ensure they are contemporary, diverse and relevant to the needs, interests, languages, cultural identity and experiences of learners • Encouraging learners to broaden their reading experience through a wide variety of genres (you could use Bookzilla App on iPads)		

2.2 Curriculum

Key Area 2.2.1 – Regular opportunities to read for pleasure

Ensuring that regular reading for pleasure takes place, reading is integrated into the school day/week and not just used to fill time or to reward good work, demonstrating that reading is considered important within the school.

Reading School	Reading School: Silver	Reading School: Gold
Schools should ensure that all learners have regular time to read texts of their own choosing in **one of the below ways, or in another way that suits their setting**: • Having regular reading at registration / transition times / other times as appropriate • Holding spontaneous DEAR time (Drop Everything and Read) • Including reading for pleasure time in home learning	Sustain Core activity.	Sustain Core activity.

Key Area 2.2.2 – Interdisciplinary book projects

Ensuring that readers are able to respond to books in creative and cross-curricular ways and demonstrating to learners that reading for pleasure is relevant and useful outside of literacy / English.

Reading School	Reading School: Silver	Reading School: Gold
Schools should use book projects to inspire classes to read by completing the below **mandatory action**: • **Primary** – ensuring every learner does one interdisciplinary project per year • **Secondary** – ensuring every learner in S1–3 does one project per year (this can be in English lessons)	Sustain Core activity and: Schools should extend their book projects by completing the below **mandatory action**: • **Primary** – providing an opportunity for classes to share their book projects across the school • **Secondary** – introducing one cross-curricular project per year involving other subject departments or external creative practitioners	Sustain Core and Silver-level activity.

2.3 Learning, Teaching and Assessment

Key Area 2.3.1 – Modelling reading behaviours

Facilitating opportunities for learners to hear stories being read aloud, modelling of reading mechanics for inexperienced readers and allowing access to texts currently beyond their reading level, group immersion in great stories/texts and opportunities for discussion and new book discovery.

Reading School	Reading School: Silver	Reading School: Gold
At **primary level** schools should complete the below **mandatory action**: • Class teachers to be routinely reading aloud to their class At **secondary level** we recognise that it may be logistically difficult for staff to routinely read aloud to learners, but would like to see evidence of staff supporting learners to access the joy of reading and stories in one of the below ways, or in another way that suits their setting:	Sustain Core activity and: • **Primary only** – we expect schools to be inviting members of the community in to read, e.g., mystery readers, public library staff, sportspeople, local figures, other role models etc.	Sustain Core activity.

Reading School	Reading School: Silver	Reading School: Gold
• Teachers reading aloud to learners when possible • Sharing stories / reading aloud to learners online • Providing access to audiobooks, videos etc. • Holding special storytelling events		

Key Area 2.3.2 –Staff led meaningful conversations around books

Getting to know learners reading habits and preferences, ensuring staff are able to recommend a range of relevant reading, developing staff-learner book-centred dialogue, encouraging learners to try new things.

Reading School	Reading School: Silver	Reading School: Gold
Staff should ensure they know about learners' interests and have regular conversations with them about their personal reading in **one of the below ways, or in another way that suits their setting**:	Sustain Core activity.	Sustain Core activity.

Reading School	Reading School: Silver	Reading School: Gold
• Chatting with individual learners during whole-class reading time / other times as appropriate • Supporting individual learners with strategies for choosing reading material they might like during library periods • Providing regular reading recommendations for individual learners in line with their interests		

Key Area 2.3.3 – Creating learner social networks

Developing peer-to-peer reading chat, encouraging learners to discuss and evaluate texts amongst themselves, developing individual reading identities and helping learners to share reading materials they enjoy.

Reading School	Reading School: Silver	Reading School: Gold
Schools should allocate time for all learners to chat about reading materials with each other in **one of the below ways, or in another way that suits their setting**:	Sustain Core activity and: Schools should give learner social networks more formal structures in **one of**	Sustain Core and Silver-level activity.

Reading School	Reading School: Silver	Reading School: Gold
- Having a set time for peer discussion following ERIC time / other times as appropriate - Introducing book speed-dating - Playing Book Jenga to spark conversations around books - Pairing up learners to chat about what they are currently reading – this could include famous character duo cards to randomise pairings	**the below ways, or in another way that suits their setting**: - Offering interest-based clubs or groups during break times / free lessons / breakfast or after school clubs, e.g. reluctant readers, manga group, ASN, poetry groups, non-fiction, Sci-Fi, EAL etc. - Holding regular reading networking events for learners, e.g., a reading café or reading quiz - Hosting online book club sessions – these could include learners from other schools - Providing book club boxes for learners to take home, including a shared notebook for comments / questions	

Key Area 2.3.4 – Opportunities for learners to respond to what they're reading

Allowing learners to express and share what they think about their reading and creative expression of individual reading identities.

Reading School	Reading School: Silver	Reading School: Gold
Schools should allow all learners to respond to what they're reading in a variety of engaging and innovative / creative ways that best suit their needs in **one of the below ways, or in another way that suits their setting**: • Reading journal / drawing • Blog / vlog / book trailer • Social media post • Book review / recommendation for school newspaper / website • Creative writing piece • Use of expressive arts, e.g., drama, music, dance etc.	Sustain Core activity.	Sustain Core activity.

Reading School	Reading School: Silver	Reading School: Gold
• Enterprise project, e.g., creating a school recipe book based on favourite books		

Key Area 2.3.5 – Access to authors

Giving all learners the opportunity to engage with authors (writers, illustrators or storytellers).

Reading School	Reading School: Silver	Reading School: Gold
Not required for the Core Reading School accreditation.	Schools should give all learners the opportunity to engage with authors (writers, illustrators or storytellers) in **one of the below ways, or in another way that suits their setting**: • Watching Authors Live (Live or On Demand) • Arranging an author visit or residency	Sustain Silver-level activity.

Reading School	Reading School: Silver	Reading School: Gold
	• Attending / taking part in an online book festival or other book-related event • Hosting / watching online Scottish Friendly Children's Book Tour events • Taking part in an online book chat with an author / illustrator or storyteller	

2.5 Family Learning

Key Area 2.5.1 – Raising the profile of reading with families

Family engagement, encouraging reading at home, helping parents to see the value of reading for pleasure, offering access to books at home.

Reading School	Reading School: Silver	Reading School: Gold
Schools should engage with learners' families to promote reading for pleasure by completing the below **three mandatory actions:** • Providing access to reading materials to take home / encouraging families to join their local library for access to books, other reading materials, eBooks and audiobooks • Engaging with families about the school's reading projects and incorporating fun reading activities into home learning as appropriate	Sustain Core activity and: Schools should offer further opportunities to promote reading for pleasure to families in **one of the below ways, or in another way that suits their setting**: • Holding special events, e.g., an evening reading by the campfire • Involving families in reading celebrations • Inviting families to attend / take part in online author events, e.g., Authors Live or virtual book festival	Sustain Core and Silver-level activity and: Schools should actively encourage learners' families to take part in reading for pleasure activities to build their confidence and skills in **one of the below ways, or in another way that suits their setting**: • Holding book clubs for families in school / online • Having lending libraries for adults, e.g., in the reception area • Running workshops for families, e.g., Read, Write, Count or other literacy initiatives

Reading School	Reading School: Silver	Reading School: Gold
• **Primary only** – making the most of the P1 Bookbug Family Bag and Read Write Count initiatives by sharing resources and encouraging the use of the bags at home.	• **Primary only** – Inviting families into school for P1 Bookbug Family Bag and Read Write Count gifting events.	• Creating recommended reading lists for families, consulting with them on the types of reading materials they would like to try • Encouraging families with EAL to contribute to reading lists in their own language

2.7 Partnerships

Key Area 2.7.1 – Partnerships within local community

Building sustainable partnerships in the local community, sharing the benefits of reading for pleasure, sharing the expertise they have built over the course of their reading for pleasure journey.

Reading School	Reading School: Silver	Reading School: Gold
Not required for the Core Reading School accreditation.	Not required at Silver level.	Schools should build sustainable partnerships within their community, sharing expertise in **one of the below ways, or in another way that suits their setting**: • Working with the local public library on a joint project, e.g., a community reading club • Partnering with a local bookshop on a joint project, e.g., community reading picnics • Working with a local business to encourage customers to read, e.g., a 'read while you wait' initiative at the hairdressers

Reading School	Reading School: Silver	Reading School: Gold
		• Partnering with a college / university on a joint project, e.g., a reading outdoors campaign • Working with a third sector organisation on a joint project, e.g., a reading pen-pal initiative with a local care home

3.2 Raising Attainment and Achievement

Key Area 3.2.1 – Rewarding progress and recognising personal achievements

Generating excitement around reading for pleasure, demonstrating to learners that 'success' is different for each person, highlighting the quality and diversity rather than the quantity of reading, ensuring learners feel valued.

Reading School	Reading School: Silver	Reading School: Gold
Schools should reward the progress of individual learners in **one of the below ways, or in another way that suits their setting**: • Presenting certificates • Awarding small prizes such as bookmarks, stickers etc. • Awarding points through the school's individual rewards system • Having class / school awards to recognise effort, e.g. 'reader of the week' or 'reader who has made the most recommendations' etc.	Sustain Core activity and: Schools should celebrate reading in wider groups or as a whole-school in **one of the below ways, or in another way that suits their setting**: • Holding a prize-giving assembly • Having a reading party • Inviting learners to a Book Bistro / other reading event • Gifting books, e.g., for Christmas or birthdays	Sustain Core and Silver-level activity and: Schools should widen celebrations to include the community in **one of the below ways, or in another way that suits their setting**: • Inviting members of the community to take part in celebrations in school • Holding an event in a community venue • Holding a joint event with a partner

Reading School	Reading School: Silver	Reading School: Gold
		• Celebrating learner achievements in community spaces, e.g., Social media / local paper etc.

Key Area 3.2.2 – Monitoring progress

Gathering meaningful starting point data so you can compare changes later, gathering data about the impact of the initiatives, gathering learners, staff and parental viewpoints, monitoring and adapting activities.

Reading School	Reading School: Silver	Reading School: Gold
Schools should track their progress by completing the below **three mandatory actions:** • Using the Reading Schools attitude surveys to assess and monitor learners' interests, engagement and confidence within reading for pleasure • Monitoring the impact of your Reading Schools programme in ways	Sustain Core activity.	Sustain Core activity.

Reading School	Reading School: Silver	Reading School: Gold
most suited to your setting and activities • Taking part in Scottish Book Trust evaluation, which will be sent to you once your accreditation has been confirmed		