

September 2023

Dear Parents/Carers,

Re: Story Time in EYFS & KSI

As the new academic year begins, we wanted to share with you a reading initiative which has run successfully throughout the last 2 academic years and we would like to get some further feedback from our stakeholders before continuing this year.

It is common in primary schools for older children to read with younger children, modelling their love of reading and instilling this in our younger cohorts. Our Y6's love this! It gives them an opportunity to feel empowered and successful, as they read to the younger children and the feedback from the year 6 pupils is that this is something they thoroughly enjoy. As part of our curriculum, we continue to reflect on our community and our aim for children to see themselves represented in the resources we use. As part of this recent work, the books being read all celebrate diversity and inclusion. Whilst many of them feature anthropomorphic characters (e.g. a crayon, or a worm), others feature a wide variety of characters with varying height, skin tones, hair styles etc. Some of the books include 'Picnic in the Park', 'It's Okay To Be Different', 'Stella Brings the Family'. It is incredibly important that children see themselves in characters in popular stories, as this can help them relate to those same characters. A general theme throughout all the books is kindness and acceptance for all people.

In terms of how we implement this, children from our Year 6 Youth Pride Network volunteer to be readers and a rota is created by an adult. The Year 6 children then take it in turns to read to Reception, year 1, and year 2 classes once per week. This normally occurs towards the end of the day, at approx. 3:10pm when the children would have their scheduled story time. There is always an adult present during story time.

As a state funded school, it is our responsibility to ensure we promote British Values, and deliver a robust PSHE curriculum. The PSHE curriculum we follow, JIGSAW, is the same program followed by a large number of schools in the local area. These story time sessions are simply one way in which we meet several of the statements within the PSHE curriculum.

On the back of this letter there is a full, and comprehensive list of the books which we have chosen. These books have been read by our Senior Leadership Team. Since beginning this reading initiative, we have had visits from our School Improvement Partner, a One Day Review, and several visits from governors, and all have praised the provision and reflective curriculum. As a school community, we are all in agreement that these books are appropriate and serve the purpose as outlined above.

We will be giving you the opportunity to come in and discuss these further as a parent community as we are aware of some discussions which have taken place, both within the parent group and with our senior leaders. We feel it is helpful to be transparent about what this is all about, to answer questions and receive feedback so we can proceed positively with the next round. For now, you can familiarise yourself with the reading materials if you feel inclined to do so, and we will share further details with you in due course.

Yours sincerely,



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List of Books

Tadpole's Promise – Jeanne Willis & Tony Ross (2-5 years)
What Wesley Wore – Samuel Langley-Swain & Ryan Sonderegger (4-6 years)
Uncle Bobby's Wedding – Sarah S. Brannen & Lucia Soto (3-5 years)
Nen and the Lonely Fisherman – Ian Eagleton & James Mayhew (6-7 years)
Peanut Goes for the Gold – Jonathan Van Ness (4-8 years)
Grandad's Camper – Harry Woodgate (2-7 years)
Neither – Airlie Anderson (1-8 years)
Stella Brings the Family – Miriam B. Schiffer & Holly Clifton-Brown (5-8 years)
I'm a Girl! – Yasmeen Ismail (2-6 years)
Pink is for Boys – Robb Pearlman & Eda Kaban (4-8 years)
Families, Families, Families! – Suzanne Lang & Max Lang (3-7 years)
Tough Guys (Have Feelings Too) – Keith Negley (3-5 years)
Dogs Don't Do Ballet – Anna Kemp & Sara Ogilvie (3+ years)
Worm Loves Worm – J. J. Austrian & Mike Curato (4-8 years)
Julian is a Mermaid – Jessica Love (4-8 years)
Pearl Power and the Girl with Two Dads – Mel Elliot (4-7 years)
Rainbow Village – Emmi Smid (3+ years)
Made by Raffi – Craig Pomranz & Margaret Chamberlain (6-8 years)
And Tango Makes Three – Justin Richardson & Peter Parnell & Henry Cole (3-8 years)
It's Okay To Be Different – Todd Parr (2-6 years)
Something Else – Kathryn Cave & Chris Riddell (2-6 years)
My Shadow is Pink – Scott Stuart (3-9 years)
Anna and Otis – Maisie Paradise Shearring (3-7 years)
They, She, He, Me: Free To Be! – Maya Christina Gonzalez & Matthew Smith-Gonzalez (6-9 years)
Mister Seahorse – Eric Carle (3+ years)
The Girls – Lauren Ace & Jenny Lovlie (6-8 years)
Picnic in the Park – Joe Griffiths & Tony Pilgrim & Lucy Pearce (3+ years)
Red: A Crayon's Story – Micheal Hall (3-7 years)

