

## Reading and Phonics

Many of the children and young people who attend Mountjoy School love to look at books and have texts and stories read aloud to them. Some revel in the delight of experiencing sensory stories while some will go on to become fluent readers. For many of our children and young people however, reading, for them, is about reading the environment, understanding the space around them, accessing signs, symbols etc. With these varied needs, abilities and levels to engage in mind, Mountjoy School approaches reading in a variety of ways.

There is a daily whole school initiative where children and young people have access to reading. This established daily event is an opportunity for children and young people to choose books, comics, and magazines, alongside this some pupils benefit from Toe By Toe, others from listening to sensory stories and others research information through digital means.

Our children and young people routinely visit the school library and are encouraged to join their own library and compete in set challenges.

The formal teaching of reading is presented through synthetic phonics and is a method of teaching reading which first teaches the letter sounds and then builds up to blending these sounds together to achieve full pronunciation of whole words. This happens during the young people's phonics sessions as well as in 1:1 learning time where appropriate. The learning of letters and sounds is a process accompanied by props and sensory related resources as well as IT devices, games and activities to ensure our young people are engaged and that learning is generalised.

Mountjoy School has a range of age appropriate reading schemes which are appropriate to the age of the child or young person accessing them.

For our young people for whom reading is not appropriate, we teach Signalong and PECs, symbols, Toby Eye Gaze and switches to enable them to communicate, to "read" the communication of others and to also use to make their own needs, thoughts and opinions known.