



Pearson

Bug Club is a key part of our successful reading culture



School name:  Victoria Primary School

Number of pupils:  344

Region:  Falkirk

School type:  Primary (4–11 years)

Area type:  Town

Key points to take away

- Bug Club books are **varied, motivating** and have great **'pick up appeal'** for children.
- **Engaging parents** with Bug Club helps to **ensure it is used to best effect** outside of the school setting.
- The **embedded higher order comprehension questions** in the eBooks are **great for challenge**.

Background

Victoria Primary school serves an area in East Falkirk and has a proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals that is above the national average. The last inspection of the school in 2011 concluded that 'the quality of the curriculum, children's learning experiences and the arrangements for self-evaluation and meeting children's needs are satisfactory or better.'

“ Bug Club is a key part of the successful reading culture in our school. ”

Reinvigorating reading

Victoria Primary adopted Bug Club in 2015 as part of a wider programme to develop a reading-for-pleasure culture. **Nicola Soroka**, the school's **Deputy Head**, told us they had been using the same reading scheme for a number of years and were

noticing a drop-off in enthusiasm among the pupils: the texts weren't engaging and there was general recognition that it was time for a change. Bug Club was recommended to them by a school in their local authority, which had been using Bug Club for a while and was receiving really positive feedback from staff and pupils.

One of the factors that influenced their decision to adopt Bug Club was the online aspect – the eBooks, which they felt would be very useful in hooking in reluctant readers, and the online activities that teachers could use in class or allocate to individual children. In addition to the core Bug Club reading programme they were very impressed with Phonics Bug and the wide range of online materials available to support planning and teaching.



Implementation

Bug Club is very much a part of Victoria Primary's targeted approach to literacy. For teaching early reading and phonics, the school uses Phonics Bug in combination with the North Lanarkshire 'Active Literacy' programme. The online materials and supplementary resources are integral to their teaching of phonics and staff confirm how valuable this resource is.

For independent reading, children are allocated the Bug Club books both in hard-copy and online format. Children are given the opportunity to read eBooks and enjoy the embedded activities in class during literacy and ICT lessons every day, as well as during a lunchtime club in the computer suite. The eBooks are used in different ways: to give extra challenge to confident readers through the higher order comprehension questions embedded in the books, and, at the other end of the scale, to motivate and inspire children within the enhanced provision setting.

Bug Club books and worksheets are also used for guided and shared reading sessions. Depending on their age and stage, pupils participate in one or two guided reading sessions per week, giving them opportunities to read aloud to develop fluency.

Victoria Primary also uses the termly Progress & Assess tests, as and when children are ready, to keep track of pupils' reading progress and for the school to support its own judgements. The data is a useful reference during regular pupil progress meetings and helps to ensure that it is giving appropriate challenge at all levels.

One of the most important interventions for equity is '**Engaging beyond the school**'. From the outset, Victoria Primary worked hard to engage parents with Bug Club so that they in turn could support their child's reading at home. They gave Bug Club an official launch at a parents' evening, with a stall where parents could look at books and try them online. They have since held additional drop-in sessions for parents to explore the Bug Club online reading world. On top of providing this practical, 'functional' introduction to the platform, the school also holds literacy workshops for parents looking at, for example, different strategies for developing reading comprehension skills in relation to the Bug Club texts.



The outcome

"It is a whole school improvement priority to develop a reading culture and to have a lifelong love of reading. Bug Club has been huge part of that. It's the best resource for our needs at the moment – we would definitely make the same choice again," said Nichola.

The school has invested a lot of time, energy and creativity into making the school a reading school, including redeveloping the library, creating special reading spaces and running incentivised reading challenges.

Class teachers feel they can see that children are making progress in their reading – partly because of Bug Club and partly because of the full range of interventions. They report that children love the books. They recognise the characters from TV and film, such as *Doctor Who*, *Shrek*, and *Sarah and Duck*. They look forward to being allocated new books. The parent survey revealed that there is a preference for hard copies of the books over eBooks, but the online platform enables teachers to distribute more books to more children, and they are seeing children in the Enhanced Provision setting who really engage with the online world.

Generally, staff feel that the sheer variety of the books, the fine levelling, high design quality, the motivating 'game' aspect of the online reading world and phonics activities and the comprehensive teaching guidance all combine to help them deliver a **high quality learning experience**.

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