



## Business Plan

2021 and Beyond - Response and Recovery



## Why our work matters

Reading is nothing short of life changing.

“Reading can achieve something teachers and policymakers have been attempting for decades: to lessen or even eliminate the impact of early life disadvantage.”

Department for Education, 2021<sup>1</sup>

Children who read for pleasure are more likely to do well in school<sup>2</sup>, have a managerial or professional job<sup>3</sup>, have better paying jobs<sup>4</sup>, and better health and wellbeing<sup>5</sup>. For children living in poverty or at risk of adverse childhood experiences, reading can be a literal escape route<sup>6</sup>: offering both immediate relief and alternative pathways in life.

A disadvantaged child who reads will outperform an advantaged child who doesn't<sup>7</sup>.

Reading for pleasure serves more than academic and professional success. It can play a significant role in tackling our burgeoning mental health crisis. Research shows the positive benefits reading for pleasure has on the emotional health of people of all ages, especially children, alleviating symptoms of stress, isolation and depression<sup>8</sup>. Reading also enhances social engagement and personal development<sup>9</sup>.

However, reading for pleasure is being squeezed out of our children's lives: the school day is busy (and sure to get busier post-pandemic), and 'downtime' is often dominated by technology and social media. Children and young people are reading less than before, with fewer than a quarter of 0-17 year olds reading nearly every day, and 21% never or rarely reading for pleasure<sup>10</sup>.

Children are spending more time on screens outside of school and more time on the National Curriculum in school. While schools have the tools to support children to read fluently, Read for Good has the complementary tools to motivate children to read, particularly outside of school hours. With an education system that will take another 50 years to close the gap between rich and poor pupils if it continues at the current pace<sup>11</sup>, there is clearly an urgency to leverage reading for fun as an accessible, affordable and effective way to improve life chances for our nation's young people.

**As a national charity dedicated to improving the lives of children in the UK, it is incumbent on us to respond with purpose to aid the recovery, addressing the impact COVID-19 has had on the education, social development and the emotional and mental well-being of our nation's children.**

## Read for Good's work is especially important for post-pandemic recovery

For decades, Read for Good has been making a difference to children's future lives by helping them to develop a love of reading at a young age and throughout school.

In recent years, we have been building on Readathon's long heritage to develop alternative ways to reach children and stimulate a love of reading - from citywide initiatives to providing Brilliant Boxes of Books, from the launch of Track My Read™ (think Strava for reading!) to an accessible storytelling training programme for medical or other professionals to use storytelling to improve their clinical encounters working with children.

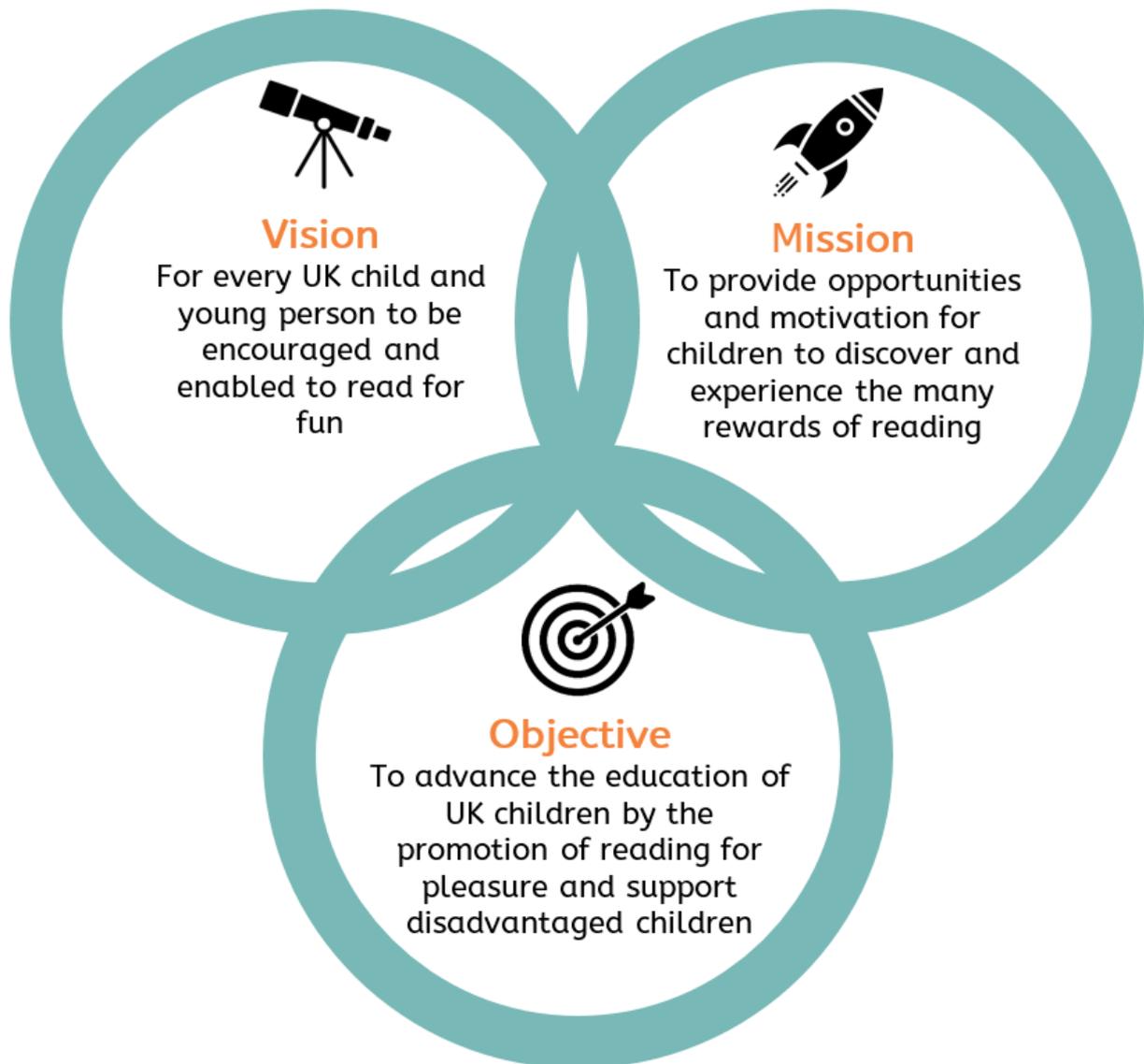
These initiatives were already important and underway prior to the pandemic, but the impact of COVID-19 means that for millions of children, their health, wellbeing, and educational attainment have worsened:

- “The loss of learning, which is more likely to affect the most disadvantaged children, is likely to have significant long-term effects, both at the individual and societal level.”<sup>23</sup>
- “Addressing the challenge of language and reading skills is essential in order to prevent short-term impacts becoming long-term problems.”<sup>24</sup>
- “The burden of the indirect consequences of the pandemic will fall disproportionately on children, but we are alarmed at how little attention their needs are receiving.”<sup>25</sup>

There is an urgent need to expedite delivery of our work to aid children's recovery by helping them to develop a love of reading. With disadvantaged pupils experiencing up to a seven-month dip in achievement as a result of the pandemic, and a widening gap with their more advantaged counterparts<sup>26</sup>, it will be the activities that children and young people choose to do in their free time that will make the difference between catching up and remaining behind.



## Read for Good's vision



## Our Values



### Creating and delivering resources and services that benefit all involved:

- Operational excellence
- Pragmatic solutions
- Clarity of impact



### Whilst providing a great place to work:

- Each member of our team knows their value
- Recognising the importance of a healthy work/life balance
- Working with agility, efficiency, productivity
- Synergistic teamwork - we are more than the sum of our parts



### Innovative and curious:

- Fostering an innovative and creative environment
- Being curious and reflective
- Complementing the work of other organisations; working in partnership where possible
- Culture of passion and optimism in all that we do

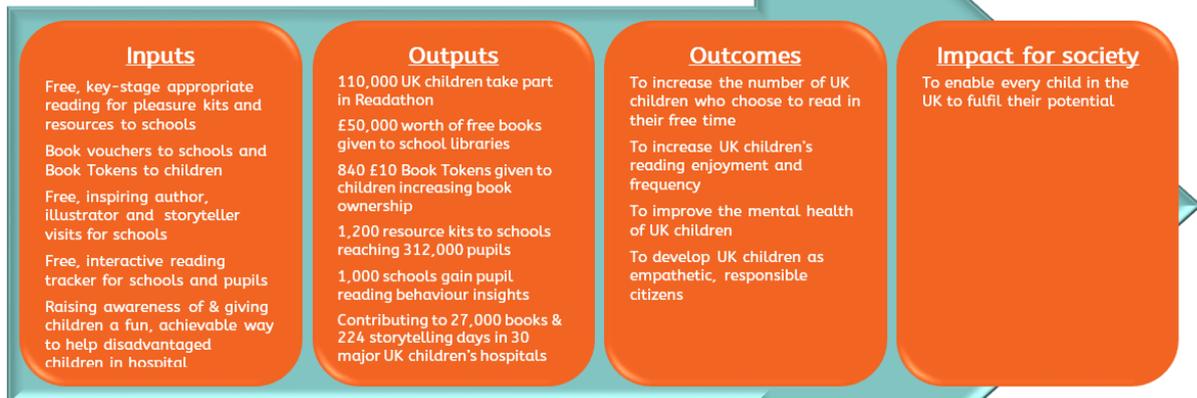


### Putting the child at the heart of all that we do:

- Considering our services from the child's point of view
- The safety and well-being of children underpins all that we do

# The outcomes and impact of our flagship programmes

## The impact of Readathon for children and young people in the UK

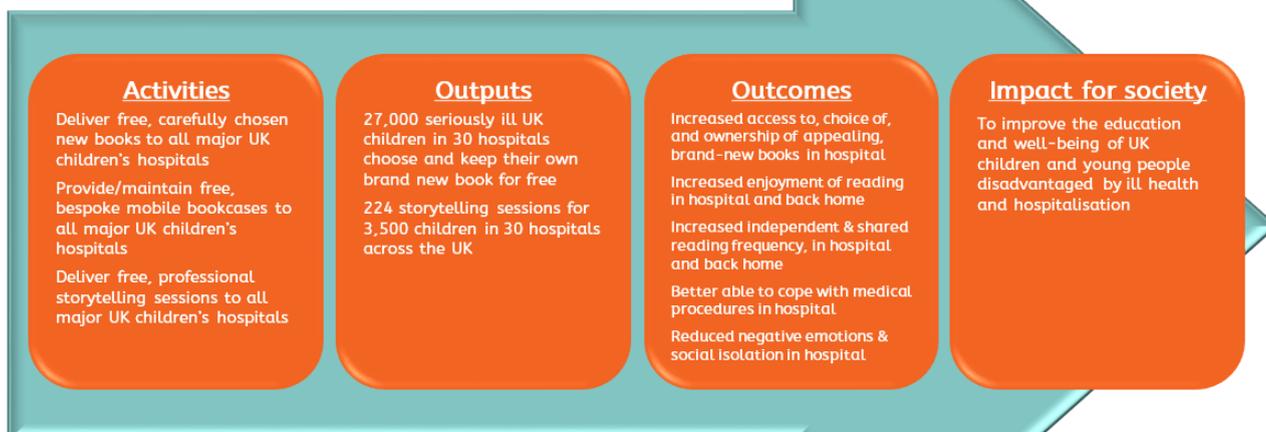


*Facilitated by:*

- Readathon kits
- Teachers and librarians
- Scholastic Book Clubs
- National Book Tokens
- Children's publishers, authors and illustrators
- Professional storytellers
- Philanthropic support
- Professional storytellers



## The benefits of books and stories for children and young people in hospital



*Facilitated by:*

- Hospital teachers, play specialists and volunteers
- Grants from trusts and foundations
- Sponsorship raised by schoolchildren reading for pleasure
- Scholastic Book Clubs
- Children's book publishers, author and illustrators
- West Country bookcases



## 2021 / 2022 Delivery plan

<p><b>Readathon in Schools</b> Readathon has a track record of getting pupils reading for fun. Our high quality, free resource kits make the sponsored read really easy to run, and motivating for all involved</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1,200 resource kits to schools reaching 312,000 pupils</li> <li>• 420 schools and 112,000 children reading to get books and storytellers to kids in hospital</li> <li>• £50,000 worth of free books donated to schools</li> <li>• 840 National Book Tokens, growing book ownership</li> </ul>
<p><b>Hospital programme</b> Providing a regular supply of brand new books and regular storytelling visits (in person or virtually) to all 30 major children's hospitals</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 30 UK children's hospitals</li> <li>• 26,880 new books reaching children doubly disadvantaged through illness and missed education</li> <li>• Supported by over 200 storyteller sessions</li> </ul>
<p><b>Liverpool citywide</b> This Spring, we're challenging the city of Liverpool to read 2 million minutes ! Schools, homes and organisations across the city will unite in two weeks of reading for fun culminating in a spectacular "Drop Everything and Read"!</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Engaging 100 schools and 20,000 pupils</li> <li>• Giving over £14,500 worth of books and book tokens to schools and children in need</li> <li>• Visits from best-selling children's authors &amp; illustrators</li> <li>• Year-round provision of books and storytelling visits for Alder Hey Hospital</li> <li>• Delivery partner for World Book Day: getting their £1 books to schools with the most disadvantaged children</li> </ul>
<p><b>READ Gloucestershire!</b> The second in a two-year campaign bringing together, promoting and celebrating a plethora of reading initiatives across the county from January to July 2022. This year, we are extending the programme to include tailor made programmes developed in partnership with specialists to support the most disadvantaged children in the county</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reaching over 100 schools and 20,000 pupils with free resources and programmes to grow reading for pleasure</li> <li>• 65 schools participating in immersive reading campaigns</li> <li>• Resident author/illustrator M.G. Leonard delivering a series of workshops inspiring teachers and pupils</li> <li>• Delivery partner for World Book Day: getting their £1 books to schools with the most disadvantaged children</li> <li>• Reaching 210 of the most disadvantaged children with tailored resources</li> </ul>
<p><b>Brilliant Boxes of Books</b> Children tell us what they choose to read when they take part in Readathon or Track My Read, so we feel uniquely placed to help schools get the very best reading for fun books that kids will want to read. Our Brilliant Boxes, given to schools in need, free up book budgets to buy set texts and reading scheme books</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• With partner investment, we plan to deliver books to reach 50,000 children this year</li> <li>• In addition, thanks to generous donations from publishers, book awards, authors and illustrators, we hope to reach a further 27,000 children with wonderful new books</li> </ul>
<p><b>The Secrets of Storytelling Training</b> We launched this free training during lockdown recognising that while our storytellers can't visit hospitals, training professionals who work daily with children in the storytelling techniques will have long-term benefits</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1,000 professionals who work with children, primarily in medical settings, will access our training gaining quick-to-learn and easy-to-apply techniques that will improve their clinical encounters with children</li> </ul>
<p><b>Track My Read</b> Created during lockdown, Track My Read is a free tool for schools to motivate pupils to read for pleasure regularly, whilst at the same time providing invaluable reading behaviour insights, to inform parents evening, pupil progression, lesson plans, book buying choices and topics.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Launch of improved Track My Read</li> <li>• 1,000 schools actively using it to record hundreds of thousands of reading sessions</li> <li>• Generating insights that Read for Good can use to inform its work, and share more widely in the literacy and education sectors</li> </ul>

These programmes are underpinned by a well-governed, high functioning organisation. We work efficiently and effectively to target our programmes and resources where they can have most effect, collaborating with expert partners where appropriate, to increase impact. We prioritise the welfare of our team, and their own work-life balance, which in turn results in excellent charitable delivery.

## Building on our strengths to diversify our reach

	<b>WELL-BEING:</b> The power of reading for escapism and mental health	<b>COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT:</b> Harnessing the power of communities	<b>MOTIVATION:</b> Motivation to read through choice and empathy	<b>INCREASING ACCESS:</b> Essential access to great books and comics to stimulate a love of reading
<b>Hospital programme</b>	Books and storytelling in all 30 UK major children's hospitals	Supported by children reading in school via Readathon	Regularly replenished bookcase, that wheels right to a child's bedside	26k books a year; 224 storytelling days
<b>Readathon</b>	Facilitating reading for pleasure for 250k children in schools each year	Reading to help get books to children in their nearest major children's hospital - empathy and citizenship	Encouraged to read what they want, to help others	Free book vouchers to boost their library and £10 National Book Token - over £1m worth to date
<b>The Big Read</b>	Targeted reading for pleasure intervention to reach disadvantaged children	Reading to help get books to children in their nearest major children's hospital	Encouraged to read what they want, to help others	Participating schools receive a free curated box of books and comics
<b>Track My Read</b>	Encouraging regular and diverse reading for pleasure	Uniting communities in a shared target	All reading is valued, and contributes to the school's total	Generating essential insights into what and how kids like to read
<b>City / county wide campaigns</b>	Encouraging reading for pleasure	Uniting communities in a shared reading campaign	Strength and effectiveness in doing the same thing at the same time	Participating schools receive a free curated box of books and comics
<b>Brilliant Box of Books</b>	Providing great books	Encouraging sharing of great books	Brand new, curated collection of books designed to excite young readers	20/21 Nealy £200k worth of books given to schools and hospitals in need
<b>Storytelling training</b>	Improved clinical encounters between medical professional and child	Encouraging sharing of stories with others	Helping children (and professionals) think about the role and power of books and stories	Freely available training
<b>Empowering professionals</b>	Providing professionals with the reasons WHY reading for pleasure will improve a child's life, and resources to help them deliver it	Enabling professionals to tailor the message to their own service users	Sharing why reading for pleasure is important and how to encourage it, with practical tools	Reading journeys / have you tried... suggestions - helping children discover the books they might love

## 2023 and Beyond

During the pandemic, we realised that the determination we have to improve the lives of children in hospitals through the magic of books, is essential for all children in the UK. COVID-19 is now a part of their story, and we believe reading for pleasure can aid their recovery.

- Our flagship hospital programme will continue to provide a wonderful range of books and stories that entertain, distract, comfort and reassure children in hospital, as well as helping to bridge the education gap these children experience.
- Readathon will continue to be a trusted tool for teachers and school librarians to create excitement around reading for pleasure, whilst developing empathy and citizenship skills in young people.
- We want Track My Read to be used by schools, organisations, individuals and groups across the country, perhaps one day capturing a whole life-time of reading for fun - from a baby's first tactile books through to 600 page novels!
- Our ambition is to develop and grow our intensive regional initiatives, that unite the wider community in a mass reading for pleasure even.
- We will continue to complement these activities with the provision of appealing books and comics, book vouchers and book tokens, helping to boost book ownership and book accessibility in schools, hospitals and households across the country.



## Endnotes

- <sup>1</sup> Department for Education (2021) [The reading framework: teaching the foundations of literacy](#)
- <sup>2</sup> Department for Education (2012) [Research evidence on reading for pleasure](#)
- <sup>3</sup> University of Oxford (2011) [Reading at 16 linked to better job prospects](#) ScienceDaily. ScienceDaily, 9 May 2011
- <sup>4</sup> Kerr, M.E. & Franklin, J. (2021) [The economic cost of early vulnerable language skills. A report by Pro Bono Economics](#)
- <sup>5</sup> The Reading Agency (2015) [Literature Review: The impact of reading for pleasure and empowerment June 2015](#)
- <sup>6</sup> OECD (2002) [Reading for Change: Performance and Engagement across countries: Results from PISA 2000](#)
- <sup>7</sup> OECD (2002) [Reading for Change: Performance and Engagement across countries: Results from PISA 2000](#)
- <sup>8</sup> The Reading Agency, with BOP Consulting (2015) [The impact of reading for pleasure and empowerment](#) 2015
- <sup>9</sup> Howard, V. (2011) [The importance of pleasure reading in the lives of young teens: Self-identification, self-construction and self-awareness](#). The Journal of Librarianship and Information Science
- <sup>10</sup> Farshore Insight (2021) [Learnings from lockdown: Exploring new insights around the benefits, barriers and solutions to more children reading for pleasure](#)
- <sup>11</sup> BBC News, School League Tables Team (2018) [Primary school tables: Poor pupils won't catch up for 50 years](#)
- <sup>12</sup> Department for Education (2021) [The reading framework: teaching the foundations of literacy](#)
- <sup>13</sup> Department for Education (2012) [Research evidence on reading for pleasure](#)
- <sup>14</sup> University of Oxford (2011) [Reading at 16 linked to better job prospects](#) ScienceDaily. ScienceDaily, 9 May 2011
- <sup>15</sup> Kerr, M.E. & Franklin, J. (2021) [The economic cost of early vulnerable language skills. A report by Pro Bono Economics](#)
- <sup>16</sup> The Reading Agency (2015) [Literature Review: The impact of reading for pleasure and empowerment June 2015](#)
- <sup>17</sup> OECD (2002) [Reading for Change: Performance and Engagement across countries: Results from PISA 2000](#)
- <sup>18</sup> OECD (2002) [Reading for Change: Performance and Engagement across countries: Results from PISA 2000](#)
- <sup>19</sup> The Reading Agency, with BOP Consulting (2015) [The impact of reading for pleasure and empowerment](#) 2015
- <sup>20</sup> Howard, V. (2011) [The importance of pleasure reading in the lives of young teens: Self-identification, self-construction and self-awareness](#). The Journal of Librarianship and Information Science
- <sup>21</sup> Farshore Insight (2021) [Learnings from lockdown: Exploring new insights around the benefits, barriers and solutions to more children reading for pleasure](#)
- <sup>22</sup> BBC News, School League Tables Team (2018) [Primary school tables: Poor pupils won't catch up for 50 years](#)
- <sup>23</sup> Ladhani, S., Viner, R.M., Lynn, R.M. et al. (2020) [Lockdown measures reduced the risk of COVID-19 but had unintended consequences for children](#) BMJ Opinion, 6 August 2020
- <sup>24</sup> Kerr, M.E., & Franklin, J. (2021) [The economic cost of early vulnerable language skills](#). A report by Pro Bono Economics for the National Literacy Trust
- <sup>25</sup> RCPCH Global and the International Child Health Group (2020) [Impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on global child health - joint statement](#)
- <sup>26</sup> Rose, S., Twist, L., Lord, P., et al. (2021) [Impact of school closures and subsequent support strategies on attainment and socio-emotional wellbeing in Key Stage 1](#): Interim Paper 1. A report by the Education Endowment Foundation for the National Foundation for Educational Research



Motivating kids to read

readforgood.org  

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