



CPD OFFER 2025/26 IMPACT REPORT



Together, Barnsley schools
become a part of something more.





INTRODUCTION

Together, Barnsley schools become part of something more.

As we reflect on the 2025/26 academic year, there is much to celebrate. Barnsley has ranked among the top three local authorities nationally for Phonics Screening Check outcomes for three consecutive years and achieved second place nationally in the 2025 Multiplication Tables Check, just 0.1 points behind the highest-performing authority. More than 90% of Barnsley primary schools have engaged with the borough-wide professional development offer since 2022/23.

These achievements reflect the strength of collaboration across our school system and our shared commitment to improving outcomes for all children. Throughout the year, our professional development programme has continued to support schools to address the five strategic priorities identified by Barnsley leaders, providing high-quality, evidence-informed learning opportunities for staff across the borough.

This report highlights the reach and impact of that work, celebrating the contribution of school leaders, facilitators and practitioners who have shared their expertise and worked together to drive improvement. We hope it demonstrates the difference that can be achieved when schools learn together, support one another and remain focused on delivering the very best outcomes for children and young people.

HEADLINE DATA

We are delighted to share that the offer;

87.2% School Engagement

68 of Barnsley's 78 primary schools engaged with at least one professional development opportunity during the year.

38.5% Strongly Engaged Schools

Almost two in five schools participated in five or more programmes, demonstrating sustained engagement with the wider school improvement offer.

Only 10 Schools Did Not Engage

Just 10 schools did not access the offer during 2025–26. All are part of Multi-Academy Trusts and are therefore likely to access professional development through internal trust provision.

Average of 4 Programmes per School

Participating schools engaged with an average of four programmes across the year, reflecting ongoing commitment to professional learning and improvement.

883 Delegate Attendances

Approximately 883 delegate attendances were recorded across the year. Delegates may be counted more than once where they attended multiple programmes.

24 Professional Development Sessions Delivered

A diverse programme of 24 individual sessions was delivered, covering curriculum, leadership, safeguarding and school improvement priorities.

Consistently High-Quality Provision

Delegates anonymously evaluated each session, resulting in an average satisfaction rating of 4.66 out of 5, demonstrating consistently high levels of quality and relevance.

School-Led, System-Wide Impact

The scale of participation, depth of engagement and consistently positive feedback demonstrate the Alliance's continuing contribution to workforce development, collaboration and school improvement across Barnsley.

TOGETHER, BARNSLEY SCHOOLS BECOME PART OF SOMETHING MORE.

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PROGRAMME DATA

HEADS DRB BRIEFINGS

PROGRAMME DATA

Programme Description:

These termly briefings are provided by DRB Schools and Academies Services Limited to ensure headteachers are fully updated with the latest information from the Department for Education, the ESFA, Ofqual and Ofsted. Delegates hear the latest advice on Assessment, Government issues, Funding, Leadership, Early Years, Teaching, Pupils' personal development and Inspection updates.

Designed and facilitated by: DRB Schools and Academies Services Limited

Attendance, evaluation and participants learning:

Session	Number of participants	Number of schools	Overall programme rating /5
1	24	23	5
2	26	22	5
3	21	19	4.88

Comments Include:

"So useful once again and thanks to the Alliance Board for providing this"

"As ever, absolutely great."

"Brilliant as usual"

"I have a whole list of things to take away."

"Once again it is so useful and reassurance alongside daily role - thank you "

"Another brilliant and informative session. Thank you so much". "

"Please continue to deliver these sessions they are so valuable, engaging and more importantly support my wellbeing as important information is shared and saves me so much time - thank you "

ENABLING GREATER DEPTH IN WRITING THROUGH EFFECTIVE PLANNING

PROGRAMME DATA

Programme Description:

Following the evaluation of the moderation cycle, Barnsley Schools' Alliance delivered a series of professional development sessions for Upper Key Stage 2 teachers. The programme supported participants to plan writing opportunities that enabled pupils to demonstrate the 'pupil can' statements for greater depth within the Teacher Assessment Framework by the end of Year 6.

Throughout the programme, teachers worked collaboratively to plan units of work based on a shared text and reflected on the implementation of those plans with colleagues from other schools. Participants shared pupils' work, discussed effective practice and developed their confidence in articulating how evidence met the standards outlined in the Teacher Assessment Framework. As a result, the programme strengthened teachers' knowledge of assessment requirements and increased confidence in preparation for internal and external moderation activities.

Designed and facilitated by: Georgina Fletcher and Hannah Baker

Attendance, evaluation and participants learning:

Six sessions engaged up to 51 delegates from 44 schools. Ratings ranged from 4.73 to 4.81/5 (where recorded).

Session	Number of delegates	Number of schools	Overall programme rating /5
1	48	34	4.78
2	46*	34*	4.73
3	42	33	4.81
4	51	44	4.73
5	49	36	4.7
6	25	21	4.9

Comments Include:

"One of the most engaging, useful training sessions that I have attended - thoroughly enjoyed it!"

"Loved the enthusiasm of the day. It got everyone excited and feeling inspired! Thank you."

"Fantastic session. Hannah and Georgina are very knowledgable and gave plenty of time to think and do and the time to plan really helped to give more dedicated time to getting the writing right."

ENABLING GREATER DEPTH IN WRITING THROUGH EFFECTIVE PLANNING

PROGRAMME DATA

Comments continued:

"Another great session. So informative and useful. It is great to have real examples and tasks which we can implement in class."

"Another brilliant session from both Hannah and Georgina. Another great writing stimulus that I can't wait to take back to class. The impact it huge on the Y5 cohort and has developed not only their skill set but also their passion for writing. They love having chance to explore deeper and I think it's underpinned what hasn't worked for the writing process at High View. Now starting to look at what can be used in previous year groups to support a proper chance to explore. Thank you."

"Thoroughly enjoyed the day again. The morning session provided ideas that I know I can implement into my next piece of narrative writing to bring out the most of all of my writers. The afternoon session, gave us the opportunity to plan as well as providing some pieces as an example of what a GDS writer looks like at Y6. Thank you!"

"Thank you for the fantastic sessions - a very useful course to have attended. Appreciated the opportunity to network with others outside of my trust too."

"Lovely way to complete a fantastic programme which has been hugely beneficial."

Please see Appendix 1 for a more detailed Impact Report.

READING: LANGUAGE COMPREHENSION FROM EYFS TO YEAR 6

PROGRAMME DATA

Programme Description:

Following the local authority's audit of reading comprehension, Barnsley Schools' Alliance delivered a series of professional development sessions for English leaders and headteachers to support the development of in-school reading provision and staff training.

The programme deepened participants' understanding of reading comprehension and its links to writing, oracy and assessment. Delivered across six sessions throughout the academic year, the programme combined professional learning with opportunities for planning, implementation and reflection. Each session focused on one of three key pillars of reading comprehension – context, syntax and structure – enabling leaders to strengthen curriculum design, classroom practice and whole-school approaches to reading.

Designed and facilitated by: Leah Charlesworth, Rachel Maul, Lucy Tucker, Louise Wilkie, Natalie Hall & Ross Gardener.

Attendance, evaluation and participants learning:

Session	Number of delegates	Number of schools	Overall programme rating /5
1	76	50	4.7
2	70	46	4.84
3	74	50	4.84
4	60	43	4.55
5	55	38	4.64
6	50	34	4.76

Comments Include:

"Great day. Loved the strategies for teaching vocabulary in the class and ideas for resources."

"The training was brilliant, staff were encouraging, they were able to answer questions, provide examples and were able to discuss things with us."

"Brilliant day, our next Inset day is planned for us!"

READING: LANGUAGE COMPREHENSION FROM EYFS TO YEAR 6

PROGRAMME DATA

Comments continued:

"Excellent course followed the oracy training perfectly"

"Thank you- so much content in terms of curriculum planning and delivery, really linking the other training together."

"Excellent delivery and engaging session. Real purpose and use to apply in school"

"The facilitators were great. They imparted their information, knowledge and experience in a clear way making the best use of the time we had"

"Well delivered. Clear and concise. Good balance of input and opportunity to reflect and share ideas "

"A really interesting and helpful course. Thank you so much."

Please see Appendix 2 for a more detailed Impact Report.

SAFEGUARDING ESSENTIALS 2025: KCIE, WTSC & CPOMS IN ACTION

PROGRAMME DATA

Programme Description:

A full-day safeguarding update for Headteachers, senior leaders and Designated Safeguarding Leads (DSLs) to strengthen safeguarding practice and ensure schools remained up to date with statutory requirements.

During the morning session, participants explored the latest updates to Keeping Children Safe in Education and Working Together to Safeguard Children, considering the implications for schools and reflecting on how these changes could be embedded within their own settings. Case studies, professional discussion and practical reflection supported leaders to review and strengthen safeguarding practice.

The afternoon session focused on maximising the use of CPOMS. Participants developed their understanding of key platform features and explored ways to improve recording, reporting and safeguarding workflows. The session also introduced additional tools and strategies to support a more efficient and effective approach to safeguarding management. By the end of the programme, school leaders reported increased confidence in their safeguarding knowledge, statutory responsibilities and use of CPOMS to support robust safeguarding systems within their schools.

Designed and facilitated by: Nigel Leeder, Director, Leeder Safeguarding Training & Consultancy, Hilary Gornall, Manager of Customer Success, CPOMS & Adele Selwood, Customer Success Associate, CPOM

Attendance, evaluation and participants learning:

Session	Number of delegates	Number of schools	Overall programme rating /5
1	27	21	4.33

Comments Include:

"The updates from Nigel were very helpful and I'm really grateful that we have access to the slides."

"Really enjoyed the day, very well delivered. Thank you."

"Will share with staff in school."

EFFECTIVE PUPIL PREMIUM CONFERENCE

PROGRAMME DATA

Programme Description:

This professional development session was designed to support school leaders in strengthening their approach to improving outcomes for disadvantaged pupils. Grounded in current research, policy and local priorities, the session explored the factors that contribute to successful Pupil Premium implementation and the importance of creating a strong culture and ethos that underpins achievement for all.

Participants examined the key features of an effective, evidence-informed Pupil Premium strategy, considering how schools can use resources, tools and available evidence to identify priorities and maximise impact. The session also explored the role of robust monitoring and evaluation in assessing effectiveness, with a particular focus on accountability and the contribution of governors in providing challenge and oversight.

A key element of the programme was the opportunity for leaders to collaborate in shaping a review and peer-review process that could support schools in evaluating the impact of their work with disadvantaged pupils. Through professional discussion and shared reflection, participants contributed to the development of a collaborative approach to school improvement focused on reducing disadvantage-related gaps and improving outcomes.

Designed and facilitated by: Exchange Research School – Helen Bellinger and Sally Adams, with Susie Arnold and Alistair Budd.

Attendance, evaluation and participants learning:

Session	Number of delegates	Number of schools	Overall programme rating /5
1	43	33	4.69

Comments Include:

"I would recommend anything that Helen leads on as she is always very good at delivery and very informative."

"Conducting a rigorous review of current approaches to supporting disadvantaged pupils."

"Supported reflection about current strategy and ways to evaluate and strengthen this."

"Conducting a rigorous review of current approaches to supporting disadvantaged pupils."

PEER COLLABORATION FACILITATION

PROGRAMME DATA

Programme Description:

This training programme was designed to prepare headteachers to facilitate SEND Peer Collaboration activities within their triads. Led by Rob Carpenter, the session

focused on the principles and practices of effective peer collaboration, enabling leaders to create professional dialogue that is supportive, challenging and focused on improvement.

Participants explored the role of the facilitator in guiding collaborative review processes, fostering trust between schools and ensuring that discussions remained evidence-informed and impactful. Drawing on Barnsley's well-established Peer Collaboration model, the training provided practical strategies for leading productive school-to-school evaluation activities and supporting SENCOs throughout the process.

By equipping headteachers with the knowledge, skills and confidence to facilitate SEND collaboration days, the programme strengthened leadership capacity across the system and helped ensure a consistent, high-quality approach to peer review.

Ultimately, the training supported schools to work collectively to improve SEND provision and outcomes for children.

Designed and facilitated by: Rob Carpenter

Attendance, evaluation and participants learning:

Session	Number of delegates	Number of schools	Overall programme rating /5
1	19	18	4

Comments Include:

"The use of the slides and info shared today will help significantly with the planning of the sessions (and the taking part in them)."

"It's been really useful. I am looking forward to the first facilitator day."

"Knowing what to ask / how to probe and enquire if a school doesn't have a clear plan - the training will help with this. "

LIVED EXPERIENCE OF OFSTED UNDER THE REVISED FRAMEWORK

PROGRAMME DATA

Programme Description:

This session provided school leaders with the opportunity to hear first-hand accounts from colleagues who had recently experienced two Ofsted inspections under the revised framework. Rather than focusing on published guidance or framework content, the session centred on the practical realities of the inspection process and the lessons learned through direct experience.

Through honest reflections and professional discussion, participants gained valuable insight into the inspection journey, from the initial notification and conversations with

inspectors through to final feedback and post-inspection reflection. The session enabled leaders to explore what the process felt like in practice, identify effective approaches to preparation and engagement, and consider implications for their own school contexts.

Designed and facilitated by: Tom Banham and Steven Honeyman

Attendance, evaluation and participants learning:

Session	Number of delegates	Number of schools
1	36	36

Comments Include:

"Extremely beneficial listening to the feedback from a lived experience."

"It was really interesting to listen to the "lived experience" of two inspections. After all reading, social media "noise" and various press releases it was good to get a realistic voice to support understanding of so much information."

"Informative and reassuring. Helpful to gain more of an understanding of the new framework from recently inspected schools."

"Thank you for sharing your experiences - really supportive in understanding a new framework and how to drive focused aspects of school improvement."

OFSTED INSPECTION TOOLKIT

PROGRAMME DATA

Programme Description:

These collaborative professional learning sessions were designed to support primary leaders in deepening their understanding and application of the Ofsted Inspection Toolkit. Building on the initial briefing delivered during the autumn term, the sessions provided structured opportunities for leaders to work together in exploring the toolkit in greater depth.

Rather than delivering further training or formal presentations, the sessions focused on professional dialogue, collective sense-making and peer-to-peer learning. Participants examined the standards within the toolkit, discussed their interpretation in different school contexts and considered the evidence required to make robust and accurate self-evaluation judgements.

Through collaborative discussion, leaders explored how monitoring and evaluation activities could be planned strategically to gather meaningful evidence and strengthen school improvement processes. The sessions also enabled participants to share approaches, challenge assumptions and develop greater confidence in using the toolkit as part of their ongoing quality assurance work.

Designed and facilitated by: Joanne Bentley and Steven Honeyman

Attendance, evaluation and participants learning:

Session	Number of delegates	Number of schools
1	21	16

STRONG FOUNDATIONS CASE STUDY

PROGRAMME DATA

Programme Description:

This one-hour online briefing provided primary school leaders with an opportunity to explore how one school had approached the development of its Strong Foundations Strategy. Using a case study model, leaders from Lacewood Primary shared their thinking, documentation and processes, offering a practical example of how they had translated expectations into a school-specific approach.

The session created a valuable opportunity for professional dialogue and peer learning, enabling participants to consider the similarities and differences between their own context and that of another school. By examining a real-world example, leaders were able to reflect on their own strategic development work, explore potential approaches to documenting pedagogical expectations and engage critically with emerging practice.

Designed and facilitated by: Lacewood Primary School

Attendance, evaluation and participants learning:

Session	Number of delegates	Number of schools
1	17	20

IMPROVING MTC SCORE CASE STUDY

PROGRAMME DATA

Programme Description:

This open house event showcased Joseph Locke Primary School's successful approach to raising attainment in the Year 4 Multiplication Tables Check. Attendees explored practical strategies and routines that support pupil fluency and achievement, with opportunities to reflect on how these approaches could be implemented within their own schools.

Designed and facilitated by: Lacewood Primary School

Attendance, evaluation and participants learning:

Session	Number of delegates	Number of schools
1	21	16

MATHS OPEN HOUSE

PROGRAMME DATA

Programme Description:

This open classroom showcase provided school leaders and practitioners with the opportunity to explore how oracy can be used to strengthen mathematical understanding and improve pupils' confidence in using precise mathematical language. Hosted by Gawber Primary School, the session offered a practical insight into an oracy-based mathematics curriculum and its implementation across different phases of the school.

Participants observed teaching and learning in both Foundation Stage 2 and Year 4 classrooms, seeing first-hand how structured talk strategies were used to develop reasoning, deepen conceptual understanding and support mathematical communication. The session also included opportunities for professional discussion with a South Yorkshire Maths Hub Lead Teacher, focusing on curriculum design, classroom practice and approaches to embedding oracy within mathematics.

Designed and facilitated by: Gawber Primary School

Attendance, evaluation and participants learning:

Session	Number of delegates	Number of schools
1	21	16

APPENDIX 1

APPENDIX 1

ENABLING GREATER DEPTH IN WRITING THROUGH EFFECTIVE PLANNING

EFFECTIVE SUMMARY

Programme Description:

During the 2025–2026 academic year, Barnsley Local Authority delivered the Enabling Greater Depth in Writing Through Effective Planning professional development programme to primary schools across the borough.

The programme was developed in response to a recognised need to strengthen teachers' understanding of how greater depth in writing can be planned for, taught and assessed effectively. Whilst many schools secure expected standards in writing, enabling children to write with independence, sophistication and authorial control remains one of the greatest challenges within the primary curriculum.

Over six professional development sessions, teachers explored evidence-informed approaches drawn from:

- The DfE Writing Framework
- Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) recommendations
- STA Teacher Assessment Framework
- High-quality children's literature
- Explicit teacher modelling
- Evidence-informed curriculum planning

The programme culminated in a borough-wide celebration event where schools showcased examples of pupils' writing, reflected on professional learning and shared next steps for continued improvement.

Evaluation evidence demonstrates exceptionally positive engagement throughout the programme, with participants reporting increased confidence, significant changes to classroom practice and improved understanding of how greater depth writing develops.

Programme Overview:

The programme was designed to move beyond assessment and focus on the pedagogy of writing. Teachers explored how carefully sequenced planning, high-quality literature and explicit teacher modelling enable pupils to become increasingly independent writers.

Across six sessions participants investigated:

- identifying potential greater depth writers
- planning writing sequences from high-quality texts
- developing vocabulary and language
- explicit teaching of composition
- purposeful grammar instruction
- creating effective WAGOLs (What A Good One Looks Like)
- genre-specific progression
- moderation against the Teacher Assessment Framework

Rather than providing isolated resources, the programme encouraged teachers to trial strategies within their own classrooms, reflect on impact and refine practice over time.

APPENDIX 1

ENABLING GREATER DEPTH IN WRITING THROUGH EFFECTIVE PLANNING

EFFECTIVE SUMMARY

Participation

The programme attracted strong engagement from schools across the borough.

Over the six sessions:

- 169 evaluation responses were received.
- Teachers represented a wide range of primary schools.
- Professional dialogue developed across schools, creating opportunities for collaboration beyond individual settings.
- The programme concluded with a celebration event attended by teachers, senior leaders and representatives from Children's Services.

Evaluation Summary

Participant evaluations remained consistently positive throughout the programme.

Around 80 participants attended the sessions.

Across all six sessions:

- 76% of responses rated the sessions 5 out of 5
- 23% rated sessions 4 out of 5
- Less than 2% of responses awarded 3 out of 5
- No responses rated sessions below 3.
- Whilst these figures demonstrate high participant satisfaction, the qualitative feedback provides stronger evidence of professional impact.

Teachers consistently described changes to planning, classroom practice and professional confidence rather than simply enjoyment of the sessions.

Key Themes Emerging from Evaluation

1. Increased Professional Confidence

One of the strongest themes was teachers' increased confidence in identifying and teaching greater depth writers.

Participants frequently referred to having a clearer understanding of:

- what greater depth looks like
- how writing develops over time
- how to plan for greater depth from the beginning of a unit
- how to assess writing against the Teacher Assessment Framework.

Rather than viewing greater depth as something achieved only at the end of Year 6, teachers increasingly recognised that greater depth is developed through consistent curriculum design and carefully sequenced teaching.

APPENDIX 1

ENABLING GREATER DEPTH IN WRITING THROUGH EFFECTIVE PLANNING

EFFECTIVE SUMMARY

2. Changes to Classroom Practice

Feedback demonstrated that professional learning had translated directly into classroom practice. Teachers described making changes including:

- spending longer immersing pupils in high-quality literature
- placing greater emphasis on vocabulary development
- modelling writing more explicitly
- improving planning sequences
- using richer writing stimuli
- increasing opportunities for oral rehearsal
- creating more authentic writing purposes and audiences.

Several participants commented that they had already adapted existing units as a result of the programme.

3. Improved Understanding of Writing Pedagogy

Participants valued the programme's focus on how children become successful writers rather than simply what they should produce.

Teachers reported greater understanding of:

- the importance of mentor texts
- reading as the foundation for writing
- explicit modelling of authorial choices
- building independence through carefully scaffolded teaching
- planning for composition rather than isolated objectives.

This reflects the programme's intention to develop sustainable pedagogical expertise rather than resource dependency.

4. Impact Beyond Greater Depth

A particularly significant finding was that teachers viewed the approaches as beneficial for all pupils.

Many participants commented that:

- strategies introduced during the programme could be adapted across the attainment range
- improvements in planning had strengthened writing provision generally
- explicit teaching approaches supported pupils working towards expected standard as well as those capable of greater depth.

This reinforces the principle that high-quality teaching benefits every learner.

APPENDIX 1

ENABLING GREATER DEPTH IN WRITING THROUGH EFFECTIVE PLANNING

EFFECTIVE SUMMARY

Future Professional Development

Evaluation responses highlighted strong enthusiasm for continuing the programme. Teachers requested further professional learning focusing on:

- additional writing genres
- further greater depth exemplification
- further opportunities to moderate writing collaboratively
- further sharing of examples of pupil work
- continued borough-wide professional networks.

This suggests schools value sustained professional development rather than one-off training events.

Celebration Event

The programme concluded with a celebration event bringing together teachers, senior leaders and representatives from Children's Services. The event showcased pupils' writing from participating schools and celebrated the professional commitment shown by staff throughout the programme. Schools reflected on the impact of their learning, shared examples of classroom practice and considered next steps for embedding improvements. The event reinforced the collaborative culture developed across the programme and celebrated the achievements of both teachers and pupils.

Overall Impact

The Enabling Greater Depth in Writing Through Effective Planning programme has successfully established a shared understanding of effective writing pedagogy across participating schools. Evidence indicates improvements in teacher confidence, curriculum planning and classroom practice. Importantly, participants consistently reported that the approaches introduced have strengthened writing provision for all pupils, rather than solely those working towards greater depth. The programme has also strengthened professional collaboration between schools, creating a common language around evidence-informed writing instruction rooted in national guidance.

Recommendations

1. Continue to develop borough-wide writing networks to sustain professional dialogue.
2. Extend the programme to include further genres and opportunities for collaborative moderation.
3. Continue collecting examples of high-quality pupil writing to develop a borough exemplification library.
4. Evaluate longer-term pupil outcomes to measure the sustained impact of changes to classroom practice.

Conclusion

The success of this programme demonstrates the value of sustained, collaborative professional development. By investing in teachers' pedagogical knowledge and creating opportunities for schools to learn together, Barnsley Local Authority has strengthened capacity across the borough to improve writing outcomes for children. The programme has established a strong foundation on which future writing development can continue to build.

APPENDIX 2

APPENDIX 2

READING: LANGUAGE COMPREHENSION FROM EYFS TO YEAR 6

EFFECTIVE SUMMARY

Programme Content:

This six-session research-informed programme supported schools to develop a structured approach to curriculum design, teaching routines, assessment and reading culture. It was aligned with local research and national guidance including the DfE Reading Framework, Writing Framework and Ofsted English Review.

The programme supported schools to build a progressive reading curriculum from Year 2 to Year 6, using carefully selected texts to develop knowledge, vocabulary, fluency, comprehension and a love of reading. Central to the programme are the three pillars of reading — context, syntax and structure — which provide a shared language and practical framework for improving pupils' access to increasingly complex texts. Through video exemplification, live teaching and practical school-based tasks, delegates explored consistent lesson structures for fluency and comprehension, explicit vocabulary and syntax teaching, text annotation, diagnostic assessment and approaches to supporting pupils who find reading difficult. The programme also emphasised daily story time, reading for pleasure and the development of pupils' reading identities.

By the end of the series, participating schools were expected to have reviewed current practice, strengthened assessment and teaching routines, and developed three-year improvement plans focused on reading structure, comprehension, context, syntax, sequencing and target setting. The programme was designed to support sustainable improvement in reading outcomes by giving schools a clear, evidence-informed model for high-quality reading provision.

Objectives

- Strengthen schools' understanding of what effective reading provision looks like across Key Stage 2.

Met to a strong extent: schools reported clearer and more consistent approaches to teaching reading, stronger progression across KS2 and increased confidence in applying research-informed strategies.

- Support leaders and teachers to design a progressive, text-rich reading curriculum that builds knowledge, vocabulary, fluency and comprehension over time. **Met to a strong extent:** schools reviewed reading spines, refreshed text choices and strengthened links across the curriculum, supporting a more progressive and text-rich reading offer.

- Develop consistent teaching routines for reading, including explicit attention to context, syntax, structure and vocabulary. **Met well:** schools increased their focus on fluency, vocabulary, syntax, prosody, active reading and structured talk, indicating stronger and more consistent teaching routines.

- Improve the use of assessment to identify gaps, diagnose barriers and plan targeted support for pupils who find reading difficult. **Met well:** schools made greater use of fluency assessments, diagnostic approaches and targeted interventions to identify gaps earlier and respond more effectively to pupils' needs.

- Promote a strong reading culture through daily story time, reading for pleasure and opportunities for pupils to develop positive reading identities. **Met to a strong extent:** schools reported improved pupil engagement, confidence and enjoyment of reading, alongside stronger daily read-alouds, discussion and reading-for-pleasure opportunities.

- Enable schools to translate learning from the programme into clear, evidence-informed improvement plans and measurable next steps.

Partly evidenced: schools are using the programme to shape priorities, but further follow-up is needed to ensure improvement plans are clear, measurable and sustained.

APPENDIX 2

READING: LANGUAGE COMPREHENSION FROM EYFS TO YEAR 6

EFFECTIVE SUMMARY

IMPACT EVALUATION (participant feedback)

- **Reading structure, consistency and progression:** Schools reported clearer, more structured and consistent approaches to teaching reading, including refined teaching sequences, five-day cycles, active reading approaches and clearer progression across year groups. Responses highlighted greater rigour in how reading is planned, taught and assessed, particularly across KS2.
- **Fluency, vocabulary and assessment:** A significant impact has been the increased focus on reading fluency, explicit vocabulary teaching and more precise assessment. Schools described the use of fluency assessments, diagnostic approaches and targeted interventions to identify gaps earlier and respond more effectively to pupils' needs.
- **Syntax, prosody and comprehension:** Schools reported stronger attention to syntax, prosody and deeper understanding of texts. Pupils are developing stronger vocabulary knowledge and are beginning to apply this more confidently in both reading and writing.
- **Oracy, active reading and pupil engagement:** Active reading, partner talk and oracy strategies have increased pupil engagement and confidence while reducing over-reliance on written responses. Pupils are reportedly enjoying reading sessions more and are better able to discuss texts, characters, events and ideas.
- **Text choice, reading spines and curriculum links:** Many schools have reviewed or refreshed text choices, reading spines, daily read-alouds and reading lists, with investment in high-quality, age-appropriate texts. Stronger links are being made between reading and writing, alongside wider opportunities for reading across the curriculum.
- **Pupil confidence and love of reading:** Schools reported improved pupil confidence, enjoyment and engagement in reading. Children are increasingly able to articulate their love of reading, remember key vocabulary and see themselves as readers from an earlier stage.
- **Staff confidence, engagement and leadership:** Staff confidence and ownership have improved, with teachers more able to talk about pupils' reading progress and plan vocabulary, fluency and text-based work more effectively. Leadership discussion, staff engagement and the application of CPD learning were identified as key outcomes in strengthening provision and consistency across school.

APPENDIX 3

APPENDIX 3

HERTS FOR LEARNING READING COMPREHENSION REPORT

EFFECTIVE SUMMARY

The KS2 Reading Fluency Project was launched in Spring 2026 following a successful pilot at Laithes Primary School in 2025. Fourteen Barnsley schools participated, with costs match-funded through the Tykes Teaching Alliance. The project aimed to improve reading fluency, comprehension and accuracy for identified pupils through an evidence-informed intervention programme supported by high-quality professional development and coaching.

The project demonstrated a significant positive impact. Across participating schools, pupils achieved:

- Average comprehension progress of 2 years
- Average reading accuracy progress of 1 year and 1 month
- Improvements achieved over an 8-week intervention period

Outcomes indicate that targeted fluency interventions, combined with sustained professional development and implementation support, can accelerate reading progress for pupils working below age-related expectations.

Project Overview

The project was designed and delivered by Herts for Learning (HfL) and was underpinned by evidence-informed approaches to reading fluency and effective professional development.

Participating schools were required to engage in a structured programme consisting of:

- An initial leadership briefing and launch event at Laithes Primary School.
- Three live professional development webinars attended by reading leaders and intervention staff.
- Bespoke two-hour remote consultancy support.
- Access to online learning modules.
- Ongoing data analysis support.
- Opportunities to observe the intervention in practice at Laithes Primary School.
- Optional in-school implementation support.

Leadership engagement was prioritised from the outset, ensuring schools understood both the rationale behind the programme and the implementation expectations.

Implementation and Engagement

The project benefited from a strong implementation model. Schools were provided with multiple opportunities to engage with programme delivery and to learn directly from successful practice. Support activities included:

Activity	Participation
Launch Briefing	All participating schools invited
School visits to Laithes	4 schools
Bespoke school support visit	1 school
Online webinars	All schools
Remote implementation support	All schools

APPENDIX 3

HERTS FOR LEARNING READING COMPREHENSION REPORT

EFFECTIVE SUMMARY

Schools that engaged most actively with the support offer generally achieved stronger outcomes. HfL identified engagement with school visits and professional learning opportunities as a key factor in successful implementation and pupil progress.

The project also demonstrated the importance of implementation fidelity. While most schools engaged proactively throughout the programme, one school's outcomes were identified as anomalous due to lower engagement with support opportunities and difficulties submitting data.

Pupil Outcomes

Overall Impact

Across the cohort:

- 63 pupils contributed to comprehension data.
- 54 pupils contributed to accuracy data.
- Average comprehension gains equated to 2 years' progress.
- Average accuracy gains equated to 1 year and 1 month's progress.

Considering the intervention lasted only eight weeks, these outcomes represent substantial accelerated progress for participating pupils.

School-Level Outcomes

Several schools achieved particularly notable gains.

Highest Comprehension Gains

Activity	Average Comprehension Progress
Birkwood Primary School	3 years 8 months
Athersley South Primary School	3 years 5 months
Lacewood Primary School	3 years 4 months
Ladywood Primary School	2 years 9 months
Athersley North Primary School	2 years 6 months
Jump Primary School	2 years 6 months

APPENDIX 3

HERTS FOR LEARNING READING COMPREHENSION REPORT

EFFECTIVE SUMMARY

School Average Accuracy Progress

School	Average Accuracy Progress
Lacewood Primary School	2 years 4 months
Athersley South Primary School	2 years 0 months
Jump Primary School	1 year 11 months
Ladywood Primary School	1 year 5 months
Athersley North Primary School	1 year 4 months

These results suggest that when implemented effectively, the reading fluency approach can have a transformational impact on both reading comprehension and accuracy.

Equity and Inclusion

The programme demonstrated positive outcomes across different pupil groups. Data indicates that pupils eligible for Pupil Premium also benefitted from the intervention and made substantial gains in reading outcomes. This suggests that the project has the potential to contribute to narrowing attainment gaps by accelerating progress for disadvantaged learners.

The structured, repeated reading and oral fluency approaches used within the programme appear particularly effective for pupils requiring targeted reading support.

Factors Contributing to Success

Analysis of implementation suggests several key success factors:

- **Strong Leadership Commitment:** Early engagement with school leaders ensured that implementation barriers could be addressed and resources allocated effectively.
- **High-Quality Professional Development:** Staff participated in multiple training opportunities and ongoing coaching, supporting consistency and confidence in delivery.
- **Practical Modelling:** Visits to Laithes Primary School allowed staff to see the intervention in action and understand how strategies can be embedded into wider classroom practice.
- **Ongoing Support and Accountability:** Regular contact, bespoke consultancy and implementation support helped schools maintain momentum throughout the intervention period.
- **Evidence-Informed Design:** The programme aligns with Education Endowment Foundation principles for effective professional development, combining training, implementation support, feedback and practice opportunities.

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EFFECTIVE SUMMARY

Challenges Identified

Although outcomes were highly positive, several challenges emerged:

- Variability in school engagement levels.
- Delays in post-intervention data submission from some schools.
- Reduced impact where implementation support opportunities were not fully utilised.
- Continued need for implementation monitoring and follow-up.

These findings reinforce the importance of sustained engagement throughout improvement programmes.

Conclusion

The KS2 Reading Fluency Project has delivered a highly successful first cohort across Barnsley schools. Achieving average gains of two years in reading comprehension and one year and one month in reading accuracy within just eight weeks represents a significant return on investment for participating schools.

The combination of evidence-informed intervention, expert professional development, implementation support and opportunities to observe effective practice has resulted in measurable improvements in pupil outcomes. The success of this programme provides a strong rationale for continuing and expanding reading fluency work across the local authority and supports future engagement with the HfL Year 1, Year 2/3 and KS2 fluency programmes.

Key Impact Statement

The Barnsley KS2 Reading Fluency Project demonstrates that, when supported by high-quality professional development and strong implementation, targeted fluency interventions can deliver accelerated reading progress equivalent to over two years in comprehension and more than one year in reading accuracy within a single half-term intervention period.

TOGETHER, BARNSELEY SCHOOLS BECOME PART OF SOMETHING MORE.