

## Top tips for Schoolreaders Partner Schools

Now we are back to school for another year, thank you for renewing your school's commitment to spreading the joy of reading. We have spoken to some of our volunteer readers and teachers at our partner schools, they have come up with a few top tips from their experience to help you ensure a seamless and rewarding transition into the classroom for both volunteers and teachers alike. We hope you really enjoy having reading volunteers in your school and being part of Schoolreaders.

1. **Warm Welcome and Orientation:** Provide your volunteers with a thorough induction. Familiarise them with the school layout, introduce them to staff members, and designate a point of contact for any inquiries. Ensure they are aware of any staff changes or contact information updates throughout the year.
2. **Child-specific Guidance:** Supply your volunteers with a list of children they will be reading with each week, along with any necessary information to support children with specific needs.
3. **Collection Process Clarification:** Clarify the process for volunteers to collect children for their reading sessions. Some may feel hesitant to interrupt a lesson, so make sure they know the protocol. You can also ask them to get their current child to collect the next one.
4. **Communication is Key:** Keep your volunteers informed about any changes to the school schedule, such as off-timetable days, inset days, or school holidays when their assistance may not be required. Many volunteers are eager to support on school trips and be an integral part of the school community.
5. **Feedback Expectations:** Set clear expectations regarding feedback. Define what information needs to be recorded after each reading session and how this will be documented. Volunteers appreciate knowing they are supporting the children effectively and cherish updates on the children's progress.
6. **Address Protocol:** Let volunteers know how children should address them in your school. Whether it's Mrs., Mr., or Miss, most volunteers will adapt to your school's norms.
7. **Understanding Reading Sessions:** Explain what a typical reading session in your school entails, particularly concerning the age of the child involved. Volunteers generally spend 10 to 15 minutes with each child.
8. **Literacy Integration:** Invite volunteers to observe a literacy lesson in your school. Provide them with an overview of the school's phonics scheme to enhance their effectiveness during sessions.
9. **Personal Contributions:** Some volunteers like to bring books and souvenirs from their travels that tie into the books the children are reading. Share your school's policy on these items with your volunteers.

10. **Inclusivity Matters:** Foster a sense of inclusion by offering opportunities and guidance for volunteers to access hot drinks or the staffroom during their time in school.
11. **Appreciation Matters:** Show your gratitude to Schoolreaders volunteers. Consider an end-of-term thank-you card from the children or an invitation to the school's Christmas performance. These gestures mean a great deal to our dedicated reading volunteers.
12. **Continuous Planning:** At the end of each term and academic year, engage in open communication with your volunteers. Invite them to return and collaborate on scheduling that works for both your school and them.