



When will my child move to the next colour band?

For a child to be an effective reader, they need not only to read the words on the page but also to understand what they have read. The teachers will carefully monitor your child's reading and move them to the next colour band when they are ready. Thank you for reading with your child at home. It is such an essential part of their development as a reader and you play a crucial role in nurturing their love of reading.



Book Banding Parents' Guide



In Hyndland Primary, we have moved to a system of Book Banded guided reading books to support our young people learning to be effective readers. This guide provides a brief outline of the approach, as well as hints and tips for how you can support your child at home.

What is Book Banding?

The Book Band system helps schools to carefully grade their books by difficulty level. It helps effectively compare books across different reading schemes. So you can choose titles from a range of reading schemes at the same level. The scope of the colour bands (to the right) range from reading age of 4.5 years (PINK) -12 years (BLACK).

Why Book Band?

When a child is learning to read, it is important that they are exposed to a variety of texts, formats, genres and vocabulary. Teachers have found that children exposed to only one reading scheme can struggle when they are asked to read something different. Book banding is designed to help schools grade children's reading books across different schemes. So children have access to the variety of texts they need, whilst still being supported at the correct reading level.



How are the books leveled?

All publishers grade *their* scheme to *their* specifications but the Book Band system is far broader in its leveling. It is **based on careful research** into the kind of words used in each book, the length of the sentences, punctuation, story structure style or non-fiction format and text size. It also supports a progression of reading strategies.

What can I expect?

It may be, because of the broader nature of Book Band leveling, there are books from **different stages of the same reading scheme in one colour band**. It also means there may be lower stages which are harder texts, so **it may appear as if your child has a book from a lower level**. As long as the book is in your child's book band colour, the level is right for them. Eventually, the books will all have coloured stickers on them, but for now the teacher will be able to provide you with this information.

<p>Turquoise</p> <p>Turquoise level books include an increasing range of adjectives and more descriptive verbs to replace 'said'. There is an increased proportion of space allocated to print rather than pictures.</p> <p>Turquoise level books include words chosen for appropriateness and impact rather than decodability, with more extended descriptions. Paragraphs begin to develop and more unusual and challenging vocabulary is included.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Extract meaning from the text while reading with less dependence on illustration. Approach different genres with increasing flexibility. Use punctuation and text layout to read with a greater range of expression. Sustain reading through longer sentence structures and paragraphs. Tackle a higher ratio of more complex words. 	<p>Your child is now beginning to read with more independence and their books are getting longer. You can help them by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encouraging them to read some pages silently, inside their heads. Listening to some pages read aloud, encouraging the use of expression and paying attention to punctuation marks. Talking about how events in the book relate to each other and helping your child to understand how the story builds up in a longer book. Asking them to tell you about interesting things they found out and showing you where the information is in the book.
<p>Purple</p> <p>Purple level books include an increased proportion of longer sentences, with a more challenging vocabulary. Some Purple books have short chapters to challenge and encourage reading stamina.</p> <p>Purple level books include longer and more complex sentences with the inclusion of complex (i.e. 'when') and simple (i.e. 'and') connectives. Story features such as plot, character and setting are developed in more detail, and the text in the non-fiction books is presented in a variety of ways.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Look through a variety of texts with growing independence to predict content, layout and story development. Read silently or quietly at a more rapid pace, taking note of punctuation and using it to keep track of longer sentences. Adapt to fiction, non-fiction or poetic language with growing flexibility. Take more conscious account of literacy effects used by writers. 	<p>Your child is now beginning to read with more independence and their books are getting longer. You can help them by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encouraging them to read some pages silently, inside their heads. Listening to some pages read aloud, encouraging the use of expression and paying attention to punctuation marks. Talking about how events in the book relate to each other and helping your child to understand how the story builds up in a longer book. Asking them to tell you about interesting things they found out and showing you where the information is in the book.
<p>Gold</p> <p>Gold level books include more sophisticated and challenging vocabulary, including word play and the introduction of figurative language. Some Gold books have longer chapters for more sustained reading.</p> <p>Children reading at this level are confident independent readers who can tackle increasingly complex language, story structures and text layout. However, Bug Club books have been carefully levelled to ensure success, even at this level, and include motivating texts with just the right level of challenge to encourage children to maintain their progress.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Look through a variety of texts with growing independence to predict content, layout and story development. Read silently or quietly at a more rapid pace, taking note of punctuation and using it to keep track of longer sentences. Solve most unfamiliar words on the run. Adapt to fiction, non-fiction or poetic language with growing flexibility. Take more conscious account of literacy effects used by writers. 	<p>Your child is now reading longer books with fewer illustrations, so they continue to need your help to ensure they are getting the full meaning and enjoyment from the text. They may prefer to read one chapter or section at a time, rather than reading the whole book in one session. You can support them by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Asking them to read some pages of the book aloud to you so that you can enjoy hearing them reading with expression and pace. Asking them to find parts of the text which describe a character or place and talking about the words used in the description. Asking for regular updates as to what is happening in the book, so that you know how the different chapters or sections link. Talking about how much they enjoy a book, or a type of book. Encourage them to look for more books of the type they enjoy.

You're never too old, too wacky,
too wild, to pick up a book and
read to a child.
-Dr. Seuss

	Description of the band	Skills your child will learn	How to support your child
<p>Light Blue</p>	<p>Blue level books have a slightly increased number of words and some variation in sentence beginnings. They may use ellipses and other punctuation. The story lines are more complex, including more than one event, and the stories are less dependent on picture cues.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Moving through text attending to meaning, print and sentence flexibly Self correct more rapidly on the run Re-read to enhance phrasing and clarify precise meaning Solve new words using print information along with attention to meaning Use analogy with known vocabulary to solve new words Manage a greater variety of text genre Discuss content of the text in a manner indicating precise understanding. 	<p>Your child is now developing into a more confident reader. Encourage them to select from books at the library or bookshop as well as those from school. As they read, you can help by encouraging them to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sound out quickly – and silently – inside their heads, if they need to sound out words Look at the punctuation marks. You may want to model how to read a page of writing, paying attention to punctuation, such as full-stops and question marks. Tell you about what the characters in the story are doing and why they are acting in that way. Show you how they can find particular things that interest them in non-fiction books.
<p>Green</p>	<p>The number of words increases slightly in Green level books. Stories have a wider variety of characters and events which develop over a number of pages. Sentences may include lists of things or actions, and adverbs are used frequently to begin sentences. The books begin to use capital letters to support reading with expression.</p> <p>The growing complexity in the story lines is reinforced through the development of inference and prediction using visual literacy. All of the books introduce new sets of characters which are revisited throughout the level.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Read fluently with attention to punctuation Solve new words using print detail while attending to meaning and syntax Manage effectively a growing variety of texts Discuss and interpret character and plot more fully 	<p>Your child is now developing into a more confident reader. Encourage them to select from books at the library or bookshop as well as those from school. As they read, you can help by encouraging them to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sound out quickly – and silently – inside their heads, if they need to sound out words Look at the punctuation marks. You may want to model how to read a page of writing, paying attention to punctuation, such as full-stops and question marks. Tell you about what the characters in the story are doing and why they are acting in that way. Show you how they can find particular things that interest them in non-fiction books.
<p>Orange</p>	<p>At Orange level, the page count increases pages to challenge and encourage reading stamina. There is an increased use of dialogue to encourage reading with expression.</p> <p>Orange Level books introduce some complex sentences (use of 'if', 'so' and 'because') and include italics to show emphasis. Slightly more literary language is used. Children are increasingly encouraged to infer meaning from the text in order to gain full enjoyment from the story.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Get started without relying on instructions. Read longer phrases and more complex sentences. Attend to a range of punctuation. Cross-check information from meaning, syntax and print on the run. Search for and use familiar syllables within words to read longer words. Infer meaning from text. 	<p>Your child is now beginning to read with more independence. They should be feeling more confident and will rarely need to sound out words. You can help them by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Listening to them when they read aloud. If they make mistakes, but they keep the sense of the text, don't interrupt. You can revisit that page at the end of the session to check certain words. Reminding them of useful strategies if they can't read a word, for example: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Sounding the word out silently, under their breath 2 Dividing a longer word into syllables, or looking at the word without an -ing or an -ed ending Don't allow them to worry about a word. Tell them what it says and revisit the word once you have completed the book. Encouraging some use of expression, especially for character-speech in fiction books. You may wish to model reading some pages aloud for your child to copy. Talking about how characters are feeling.

	Description of the band	Skills your child will learn	How to support your child
White	<p>In White level books there is a more sophisticated use of narrative voice. Clauses in longer sentences are separated by commas to encourage developing intonation. Some books have longer chapters for more sustained reading.</p> <p>The stories included at White level encourage children to empathise with the characters and consider why they behave as they do, and how they change during the course of the story. The non-fiction books are divided into sections that require more sustained reading and there is increased challenge in the layout of the information.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read silently most of the time. • Sustain interest in longer text, returning to it easily after break. • Use text more fully as a reference and as a model. • Search for and find information in texts. • Notice the spelling of unfamiliar words and relate to known words. • Show increased awareness of vocabulary and precise meaning. • Express reasoned opinions about what is read. • Offer and discuss interpretations of text. 	<p>Your child is now reading longer books with fewer illustrations, so they continue to need your help to ensure they are getting the full meaning and enjoyment from the text. They may prefer to read one chapter or section at a time, rather than reading the whole book in one session. You can support them by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Asking them to read some pages of the book aloud to you so that you can enjoy hearing them reading with expression and pace. • Asking them to find parts of the text which describe a character or place and talking about the words used in the description. • Asking for regular updates as to what is happening in the book, so that you know how the different chapters or sections link. • Talking about how much they enjoy a book, or a type of book. Encourage them to look for more books of the type they enjoy.
Lime	<p>Lime level books include a widening range of writing styles and an increased variation in sentence structure, including -ing clauses and longer sentences with more than two clauses</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognise text type and predict layout and general content. • Take notes and devise ways to remember meaning and spelling of words. • Rerun to make different interpretations of dialogue, more complex sentences, unfamiliar language etc. • Investigate and identify the styles and voice of a range of different text types including plays, poetry, narrative, procedural and explanatory texts. • Talk about how the writer made those parts so enjoyable. • Talking about how characters develop or how they react to different people, places or events. • Reading the book yourself so that you can talk together about the smaller details of the book. 	<p>Although your child is now taking off as a reader, it is still important that you read with them and talk to them about their reading. This reassures them that their reading is still important to you, as well as giving you an opportunity to share an enjoyment of books. You can still help them by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Asking them to read aloud some parts of the text which they particularly enjoy. This may include action or description. • Talk about how the writer made those parts so enjoyable. • Talking about how characters develop or how they react to different people, places or events. • Reading the book yourself so that you can talk together about the smaller details of the book.
Brown	<p>At this level, they should be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> interpret more sophisticated word-play and puns distinguish the narrator's voice in a fiction story from the characters' voices through figurative, idiomatic and literary language understand a story that is told through dialogue and action to 'show' instead of 'tell' the plot 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interpret more sophisticated word-play and puns. • Distinguish the narrator's voice in a fiction story from the characters' voices through figurative, idiomatic and literary language. • Understand a story that is told through dialogue and action to. • 'Show' instead of 'tell' the plot 	<p>You can help your child by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continuing to make a time available for regular quiet reading sessions, and reading your book while your child reads. • Establishing an expectation of a conversation at the end of each reading session: can they tell you what's happening in their book?
Grey	<p>At this level your child may well not want to read aloud to you any more because they probably enjoy silent reading more. This is fine as long as your child continues to read actively and not just pass their eyes over the words.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explain a character's motivations. • Discuss the points of view of the character and the narrator. • Better understand a range of narration styles 	<p>You can help your child by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask questions which make your child go back to the book to find answers. Support your child as they develop skills in skimming and scanning to find the information to answer your question. • Continuing to read aloud to your child at bedtime. This shows them the importance you place on reading as well as developing their language, vocabulary and love of story.
Navy	<p>At this level your child will be able to gather information from more than one place in the text and use inference based on what is shown rather than being told. This allows for greater complexity in building character and setting.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To locate and use information from more than one place in a text. • To use inference to explain what is being shown rather than told. • To understand character and setting. 	<p>The books at this level are written in a much more subtle way than in previous levels which means that it is important that the reader is fully engaged with the process of reading and alert to the language and vocabulary the writer is using. This level is more advanced than many books that are sold to adults but these stories are not intended to be just 'leisure reads'. Although your child should enjoy them, the books need the reader to be fully alert and willing to learn.</p> <p>You can help them by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continuing to make a time available for regular quiet reading sessions, and reading your book while your child reads. • Suggest that your child invites friends who are also reading the book to a 'Book Group'. If you skim-read the book first – or ask your child's teacher – you can prepare some questions for the book group to discuss.
Black	<p>At this level your child will be able to understand that books are written in a much more subtle way. This means that it is important that the reader is fully engaged with the process of reading and alert to the language and vocabulary the writer is using. These stories are not designed to be just 'leisure' reads.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognise how layers of meaning allow for build up of humour or tension • Are able to discuss how the author has achieved the effects. • Can synthesise information from different places in a text. 	<p>At this level you can help your child by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Before a reading session, ask your child to find and note down some particular information. It could relate to the plot or it could be something like: a really good descriptive passage; three words which are adventurous; two words you want to use in your next piece of writing; an example of something typical a character does or says; how one character's reaction to another shows their relationship. • There are lots of questions you can ask which don't mean you have to know the book yourself, but just serve to alert your child to its possibilities.

Book Band Guide

– skills progression & tips

Description of bands and how to help your child's reading

	Description of the band	Skills your child will learn	How to support your child
Lilac	<p>Lilac level books are wordless books that tell a story through pictures alone. They help children to develop speaking and listening skills through creating and telling stories</p>	<p>Can sustain attention for a period of time</p>	<p>Your child is just beginning to discover the excitement of books. Although these books have no words, they are an important introduction to reading. Please encourage your child to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Look at the pages in order, and talk about what is happening on the left hand page before the right hand page. • Talk about what is happening on each page rather than just talking about what they see in each picture. • Tell you who or what the book is about.
Pink	<p>Pink level is the very first level of reading books which has words. The number of words increases slightly as your child progresses through the reading level. If your child has read the Bug Club Lilac books, he or she will be delighted to find that Pink level books follow many of the same characters. This means that children are motivated to read the book because they are already familiar with the characters and interested in their adventures.</p>	<p>Locate title, Open front cover, Turn pages appropriately</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand that left page comes before right • Understand that we read print from left to right • Match spoken word to printed word • Locate familiar word and use to check own reading • Use the meaning of the text. • Use language patterns (print syntax) • Predict the story line and some vocabulary 	<p>Your child is beginning to learn to read. As they read, please help them to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read the words carefully. Ask your child to sound out and blend only the words they can't read yet, not every word. Eventually almost all words will become part of your child's 'sight memory', and they won't have to sound out at all. • On second and third readings of the book, encourage them to read with more pace and with less focus on sounding out the letters in each word. • Make a story out of a whole book, rather than focusing just on what is happening on each page. • Tell you about something that happened in the book, or about something they found out in the book.
Red	<p>Red level books have a slightly increased number of words, an increase from eight to twelve pages and slightly more complex story lines.</p> <p>The growing complexity in the story lines is reinforced through the development of inference and prediction using visual literacy. All of the books introduce new sets of characters which are revisited throughout the level.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Locate and recall title • Have secure control of one-to-one matching • Use known words to check and confirm reading • Start to read more rhythmically or use phrasing • Repeat words, phrases or sentences to check, confirm or modify own reading • Predict from meaning, syntax and print to solve new words 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read the words carefully. Most of the words can be recognised or sounded out. Ask your child to sound out and blend only the words they can't read yet, not every word. Eventually almost all words will become part of your child's 'sight memory', and they won't have to sound out at all. • On second and third readings of the book, encourage them to read with more pace and with less focus on sounding out the letters in each word. • Make a story out of a whole book, rather than focusing just on what is happening on each page. • Tell you about something that happened in the book, or about something they found out in the book.
Yellow	<p>New learning in Yellow level books includes a slightly increased number of words and a move away from familiar experiences.</p> <p>Yellow books require some inferencing skills from the reader, e.g. for humour, and have more variation in sentence structure, including sentences with more than one clause.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Follow print with eyes only, finger pointing only at points of difficulty • Take more note of punctuation to support the use of grammar and oral language rhyme • Cross check all sources of information more quickly while reading • Note familiar words and letter clusters and use these to get unknown words e.g. Look-too • Search for information in print to predict, confirm or attempt new words while reading • Notice relationships between one text and another • Predict in more detail 	<p>Your child is now beginning to read with more confidence. As they read aloud, you can help them by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Giving them time to sound out words they don't know. If they still struggle, encourage them to try sounding out the whole word first, rather than guessing from the pictures or from the first letter. • Giving them time to recognise and correct their own mistakes. • Asking them to talk about what's happening in the book, encouraging them to make links to events on previous pages.