Bookmark Reading: Review of programmes

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This review explores what effective one-to-one support for children's reading looks like and to what extent Bookmark's programmes align with this evidence. By focusing on basic aspects of programme design as well as specific considerations for supporting children online, this review highlights that overall, Bookmark's programmes can be considered well designed and evidence based. Recommendations are made for future development of the programme, in particular the new online version.

1. Introduction

Bookmark Reading Charity (Bookmark) supports children's reading in primary schools by offering a fun and engaging six-week programme involving two 30-minute face-to-face sessions each week with a child who needs extra support with their reading. Delivered by trained volunteers, the programme offers support for children in Years 1 to 3 who are at risk of not meeting the expected standard for reading, and it also helps them to develop a love of reading.

Bookmark's programmes are evidence based and aim to impact children's reading attainment, enjoyment, and confidence in a positive, safe and meaningful way. The programmes can be delivered either face to face or online. Both programmes use the same principles of support and both offer a variety of resources to support the sessions.

In late 2020, Bookmark commissioned the National Literacy Trust to help them review their face-to-face and online reading programmes, assessing programme design, structure, resources, technology and training against the evidence base around effective literacy interventions for the first years of primary school. This report details the key findings of this review. It will first discuss considerations for supporting children's reading one to one, particularly focusing on primary-school-aged children, and how Bookmark's programmes align with existing evidence. The first part of the review focuses on both face-to-face and online support. The second part of the review presents specific evidence on one-to-one support online and considerations for effective digital support.

The end of each section will assign Bookmark's programmes green, yellow or red colours depending on their alignment with the existing evidence. Green indicates a good alignment, yellow means room for development, and red denotes a considerable gap in evidence and the programmes. Overall, this report shows that Bookmark's programmes align well with existing evidence and can be considered well designed. The key recommendations can be found at the end of the report. Other considerations for future development are also provided as potential additions to the programme.

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3. Executive summary

In late 2020, Bookmark commissioned the National Literacy Trust to help them review their face-to-face and online reading programmes, assessing programme design, structure, resources, technology and training against the evidence base around effective literacy interventions for the first years of primary school. This report details the key findings of this review. Bookmark's programmes were assigned green, yellow or red colours depending on their alignment with the existing evidence around each specific element. Green indicates good alignment, yellow means room for development, and red denotes a considerable gap in evidence and the programmes.

Overall, this report shows that Bookmark's programmes align well with existing evidence and can be considered well designed. The key findings from this review indicate that:

1. Volunteers can have a positive effect on a variety of reading outcomes for children, if volunteers are well trained and provided resources to support children's reading.
   - Bookmark's programmes fit well within the evidence base. The use of volunteers to support children is justified based on evidence, and volunteers are provided training and resources.
   - Alignment with the evidence base: **Green**

2. Sessions supporting children's reading one to one should be short and regular, highly structured and explicitly linked to normal lessons.
   - Bookmark's programmes are well aligned with existing evidence. Both face-to-face and online programmes provide 30-minute sessions twice a week for six weeks, and sessions are clearly structured with three parts. The face-to-face sessions also utilise the children's classroom book to create a connection to the regular classroom work. While the online support does not make a specific link to the book the pupils read in the classroom, this is not considered to have a negative impact on the programme overall.
   - Alignment with the evidence base: **Green**

3. Programme resources used to support children should be good quality and engaging. Book choice is a particularly important consideration for supporting reading for pleasure.
   - Bookmark's programmes align well with the evidence. Both face-to-face and online programmes offer varied and engaging content, including literacy games and activities and a range of books. During reading sessions, children are encouraged to choose what they want to read. In addition, Bookmark's resources are designed to be as diverse and representative as possible.
   - A future development could consider the inclusion of a wider range of reading materials in sessions to increase engagement. This is particularly important for the online programme, which offers a more limited choice. Bookmark has already added

a magazine that can be distributed to children in their communities, adding a useful extra resource to engage children who take part as well as their classmates.
- Alignment with the evidence base: **Green**

4. One of the key considerations for the basic design of support is which children are chosen to take part. Overall, it can be concluded that good practice for subgroups of pupils is generally good practice for all pupils. However, some specific strategies should be in place to support those with English as an additional language and boys.
- Bookmark's programme can be considered fitting well within the evidence base as one-to-one support can benefit all pupils equally. The programme relies on teachers choosing which pupils take part, which inevitably results in varied groups of children taking part across the schools. However, specific resources and strategies (such as audio) to support groups of pupils such as those with English as an additional language and boys could be considered to make the programme more effective for those pupils.
- Alignment with the evidence base: **Yellow**

The review also considered elements that are particularly relevant for supporting children's reading online. It shows that:

1. Supporting children's reading digitally can be effective, particularly if the volunteers are well trained.
- Bookmark's digital offer appears to align well with recent and relevant evidence of the positive impact of volunteer-led one-to-one online reading tutoring programmes on children's literacy outcomes. Bookmark's volunteers are also trained to use the interactive platform for the online sessions, providing them with experience of it and ensuring effective online support.
- Alignment with the evidence base: **Green**

2. There are various benefits of supporting pupils digitally. One practical benefit of providing one-to-one support digitally rather than face to face is that there is no need for volunteers to travel, indicating that they may be drawn from a wider pool than might be possible for in-person support, and that the potential for reaching a higher number of children with volunteers from more diverse backgrounds may be increased. Another potential benefit of online support is the appeal of the digital format for less-keen readers or those short on confidence, who may benefit from the format.
- Evidence indicating the benefits of opportunities to read on screen for less-engaged readers suggests that Bookmark's online offer fits well with the existing evidence base, and may be particularly valuable for children who are less keen or lack confidence when using print books.
- Alignment with the evidence base: **Green**

3. Research has indicated that children may learn more effectively from screens of all types if there are elements of joint media engagement (such as social or co-use with others and high interactional quality like dialogic reading), and social contingency (i.e. content familiar or relevant to the child's experience).

- Bookmark's digital programme fits well with the existing evidence base with inclusion of the joint media engagement between volunteer and child, the high interactional quality supported by volunteers trained in supporting dialogic reading practices, and opportunities for socially contingent content offered by audio or video interactions in real time. In addition, the short, focused and regular nature of the programme aligns with expert guidance on effective remote teaching.
- Alignment with the evidence base: **Green**

4. Some of the considerations when using technology to support children's reading are:
- Key considerations for platform functionality which are:
  - intuitive navigation
  - ability to conduct short, regular, engaging sessions
  - opportunities for joint media engagement that is social or co-use with others or high interactional quality
  - allowing high interactional quality through real-time audio and video
  - minimal features on screen alongside text
  - allow adjustment for text font and size, and background colour
  - ability to record
- Access to a wider variety of materials is therefore a key functionality of the platform used to support children's reading.
- Lack of hardware, software and Wi-Fi are barriers for many schools, and this might prevent them from taking part in the programmes.
- Bookmark's current online support platform provides most of the key considerations for basic functionality. However, the platform currently allows only a predetermined set of reading to be used in sessions. Therefore, Bookmark's online programme can be considered well placed within the evidence base with scope for improvement.
- Alignment with the evidence base: **Yellow**

Key recommendations based on the review:
- Resources and strategies to support specific groups of pupils
  - While one-to-one support can be equally beneficial for all pupils requiring reading support, specific resources and strategies as part of the programme would help ensure its effectiveness for specific groups of pupils.
- Improved access to materials, particularly for online support
  - While the current platform consists of a range of professionally developed texts, increasing the range and variety of titles to represent the interests of children more broadly in the relevant age groups should be a priority.

- Improved communication with teachers regarding the content of the platform
  - In making teachers aware of the texts available to pupils and of the content of the sessions, Bookmark can help teachers ensure that the content of the platform is embedded in the wider culture of the school and maximise the reading-for-pleasure benefits it provides. This also ensures greater linkage between the programme and classroom activity.
- Support for schools struggling with technology
  - It may be worth considering providing devices for pupils to use for the duration of the intervention in schools that would otherwise struggle to access devices. This would allow children to take part in Bookmark's online tutoring sessions.
- Further development of the online platform
  - It is important to ensure that any platform allows the basic functionalities highlighted in this review. Moreover, future development could utilise Kolb's Triple E Framework[1] for what works and doesn't work when it comes to technology in learning, as well as taking advantage of the affordances of technology to engage (in learning goals), enhance (of learning goals) and extend learning.

Other considerations for the future include:
- Use of teaching assistants
  - While the programme's identity is based on the use of volunteers to support children's reading, teaching assistants are a readily available resource in many schools so potential future development could explore how teaching assistants could be trained to provide reading support with Bookmark's model.
- Regular evaluation of the programme
  - Regular evaluation, conducted internally or externally, is needed to prove the effectiveness and explore the benefits on children's reading of this particular model.
- Engaging and supporting children online: enhanced information for volunteers
  - It may be worth including brief information about research on joint media engagement, interactional quality and social contingency to inform and encourage volunteers in their roles supporting children's learning online.

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[1] Triple E Framework. (n.d.). *Triple E Framework*. Retrieved 11 March 2021, https://www.tripleeframework.com

4. Supporting children's reading one to one in primary school

A fundamental and defining aspect of Bookmark's programmes is one-to-one support, so the first part of this review will consider evidence on effective support for children's reading one to one rather than in a group setting. In fact, evidence has also specifically identified one-to-one support as effective, delivering on average five additional months' progress[2]. This type of tutoring seems to be impactful for younger pupils[3]. However, there are multiple considerations in what makes good one-to-one support. Therefore, this section will discuss elements that are crucial when considering individualised support for reading.

It is important to note that evidence from all kinds of reading support was considered as part of this review. However, schemes supporting children requiring interventions with a very specific aspect of reading, such as phonics, were not considered comparable with Bookmark's programmes. While these interventions inevitably help children catch up with specific skills, what works for these sessions is likely to be different than those interventions that are aiming to support reading more widely. Therefore, this review provides considerations for specific aspects of reading only where relevant. For a good comprehensive evidence review of schemes supporting specific reading subskills, see Brooks (2016)[4].

4.1 Trained adults supporting children's reading

One-to-one reading support can be provided by teachers, teaching assistants and volunteers. While an experienced and trained teacher provides perhaps the most effective literacy support for children, teaching assistants and volunteers can have a valuable, cost-effective impact[5]. Indeed, some research has shown that for particular groups of pupils, such as those who receive free school meals, using support staff can be particularly effective[6].

The Education Endowment Foundation (EEF)'s guidance for using teaching assistants[7] shows that tasking teaching assistants with specific activities such as delivering interventions instead of just supporting the teacher can be a more valuable and effective use of their time. Indeed, numerous successful one-to-one reading interventions use trained teaching assistants to support reading. For example, Catch Up Literacy was found to have an impact on pupils' self-

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[2] Education Endowment Foundation. (2018). *One to one tuition.* Retrieved 11 March 2021, https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/pdf/generate/?u=https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/pdf/toolkit/?id=135&t=Teaching%20and%20Learning%20Toolkit&e=135&s=

[3] Education Endowment Foundation. (2020). *Improving literacy in Key Stage 1: Guidance report.* Retrieved 11 March 2021, https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/public/files/Publications/Literacy/Literacy_KS1_Guidance_Report_2020.pdf

[4] Brooks, G. (2016). *What works for children and young people with literacy difficulties?* Retrieved 11 March 2021, https://thatreadingthing.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/What-Works-5th-edition-Rev-Oct-2016.pdf

[5] See e.g., Education Endowment Foundation. (2018). *One to one tuition.* Retrieved 11 March 2021, https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/pdf/generate/?u=https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/pdf/toolkit/?id=135&t=Teaching%20and%20Learning%20Toolkit&e=135&s=; Education Endowment Foundation. (2020). *Improving literacy in Key Stage 1: Guidance report.* Retrieved 11 March 2020, https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/public/files/Publications/Literacy/Literacy_KS1_Guidance_Report_2020.pdf

[6] Nicoletti, C., & Raben, B. (2014). *Spending it wisely: How can schools use their resources to help poorer pupils?* Retrieved 11 March 2021, https://www.iser.essex.ac.uk/research/publications/522830

[7] Education Endowment Foundation. (2018). *Making best use of teaching assistants.* Retrieved 11 March 2021, https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/tools/guidance-reports/making-best-use-of-teaching-assistants/

assessed ability in reading among other things[8], while pupils taking part in Switch-on Reading made around three months' additional progress in reading outcomes[9].

While there is some evidence that teaching assistants might produce better outcomes than volunteers[10], engaging volunteers and tutors from outside the school to support children's reading within the school setting can have a profound impact on literacy outcomes. For example, one meta-analysis[11] of a range of volunteer-led reading interventions in the US found that students who worked with volunteers were likely to score higher in assessments of oral fluency, writing, and letter and words recognition than their peers who did not work with volunteers. The next section will detail some of the programmes utilising volunteers to support children's reading in the UK.

4.1.1 Examples of successful use of volunteers on reading outcomes

The impact of volunteers on children's reading is evident across reading outcomes, including skills, attitudes and confidence. For example, Coram Beanstalk's programme, Reading 321, which supports children's reading at Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 with volunteers, found in its evaluation that 47% of participating pupils caught up to their age-appropriate reading level over the course of the programme[12]. The evaluation also found that the majority of schools involved said that volunteers helped increase children's self-esteem and built a positive attitude towards books and reading[13]. While a randomised control trial (RCT) that assessed the effectiveness of Coram Beanstalk's reading intervention for children aged 3-5, Story Starters, did not show significant skills-based outcomes, most settings and volunteers perceived the programme to have had impact on children's vocabulary, print motivation, active engagement, print awareness, narrative skills, conversation and confidence[14].

School Readers, who recruit volunteers to listen to children read in primary schools, have also been found to support reading outcomes for children successfully. Their latest impact report[15] showed that schools noticed improvements not only in children's reading enjoyment, fluency, self-esteem and confidence as a result of reading with their volunteer but also in terms of their reading skill. Similarly, evaluation findings from Better Reading Support Partners, who have supported 3,000 children in 300 schools through volunteers and teaching assistants,

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[8] Rutt, S. (2015). *Catch Up Literacy*. Retrieved 11 March 2021, https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/public/files/Projects/Evaluation_Reports/EEF_Project_Report_CatchUpLiteracy.pdf
[9] Education Endowment Foundation. (2020). *Switch-on Reading*. Retrieved 11 March 2021, https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/pdf/generate/?u=https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/pdf/project/?id=198&t=EEF%20Projects&e=198&s=
[10] Education Endowment Foundation. (2018). *Making best use of teaching assistants*. Retrieved 11 March 2021, https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/tools/guidance-reports/making-best-use-of-teaching-assistants/
[11] Ritter, G., Denny, G., Albin, G., Barnett, J., & Blankenship, V. (2006). The effectiveness of volunteer tutoring programs: A systematic review. *Campbell Systematic Reviews, 2*(1), 1-63. https://doi.org/10.4073/csr.2006.7
[12] Coram Beanstalk. (n.d.). *Reading 321: Impact Report 2018/19*. Retrieved 11 March 2021, https://www.beanstalkcharity.org.uk/Handlers/Download.ashx?IDMF=800743b0-ec69-4aa8-b64d-e9cee4dd889f
[13] Ibid
[14] Coram Beanstalk. (n.d.). *2017-2019 Impact and evaluation report.* Retrieved 11 March 2021, https://www.beanstalkcharity.org.uk/Handlers/Download.ashx?IDMF=05679033-45a5-4c7b-9270-f0ef9e7bc53b
[15] School Readers. (2021). *Impact report 2020*. Retrieved 11 March 2021, https://www.schoolreaders.org/impact-report-2020

suggest that children have made four times the expected progress in their reading, and 99% of them showed more interest and confidence in reading after being supported by the reading partner[16]. Children's Literacy Charity, who provide phonics-based one-to-one literacy support by using expert tutors and volunteers, also found that for every one month a child spends in the programme, they make 4.5 months' progress in their reading and comprehension skills[17].

In addition to specific reading outcomes, interventions that use volunteers from settings outside the school provide pupils with opportunities to interact with a range of adults from a variety of backgrounds. For example, a 2003 evaluation of Business in the Community's Time to Read intervention[18], which recruits volunteers from the business world to spend an hour each week working one to one with children in Key Stage 2, found that the project 'made a considerable impact on the participating children who have identified with positive role models in the business world and as a result have developed stronger interpersonal skills with adults. Indeed, the role of the volunteer as a role model is also reflected in volunteering schemes focusing on specific demographic characteristics to provide role models for children, such as using male volunteers as role models[19].

While not an exhaustive list of all possible volunteer-led schemes supporting children's reading, this evidence indicates that overall volunteers can have a positive effect on a variety of reading outcomes for children. However, what makes volunteers successful in supporting children clearly depends on their own skills. We will now discuss training the volunteers and providing resources for them, an aspect that has been identified as crucial in effective one-to-one support.

4.1.2 The importance of training and resources

Both teaching assistants and volunteers from outside the school have been found to be beneficial in supporting children's reading, as long as there is a structure in place and the volunteers are provided with training[20]. For literacy interventions in KS1 in general, the latest guidance by EEF suggests extensive training lasting between three and five hours.

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[16] Edge Hill University. (2021). *Better Reading Support Partners*. Retrieved 11 March 2021, https://everychildcounts.edgehill.ac.uk/better-reading-support-partners/

[17] The Children's Literacy Charity. (n.d.). *Impact report 2018/2019*. Retrieved 11 March 2021, https://thechildrensliteracycharity.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/CLC-Impact-Report-18-19-web-1.pdf

[18] Arlow, M. (2009). *Time to Read – A ten year review*. Retrieved 11 March 2021, https://www.educationandemployers.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/06/time-to-read-bitc1.pdf

[19] Volunteering Matters. (2017, February 13). *How can male volunteers positively influence vulnerable young people in Scotland?* Retrieved 11 March 2021, https://volunteeringmatters.org.uk/can-male-volunteers-positively-influence-vulnerable-young-people-scotland/

[20] Education Endowment Foundation. (2018). *Making best use of teaching assistants*. Retrieved 11 March 2021, https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/tools/guidance-reports/making-best-use-of-teaching-assistants/; Education Endowment Foundation. (2018). *One to one tuition.* Retrieved 11 March 2021, https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/pdf/generate/?u=https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/pdf/toolkit/?id=135&t=Teaching%20and%20Learning%20Toolkit&e=135&s=

The National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO) suggests that it is good volunteer management to ensure volunteers have the skills they need to fulfil their roles[21] and that training must be relevant and appropriate to the role the volunteer is doing[22]. Some scholars[23] suggest that without at least some training most programmes using volunteers do not work. A framework[24] for best practice in one-to-one support for young people in education[25] suggests key considerations for available training. They suggest training and development should be goal-focused, clear in expectations, focused on the personal development of supporters, accommodating of personal motivations to become a supporter, knowledge-building on topics such as the practicalities, safeguarding and programme content, as well as skill-developing and aligned in its pedagogy using principles of adult learning.

A closer look at some of the successful volunteer-led programmes discussed above also shows that they all provide comprehensive training for the volunteers, potentially contributing to their success. For example, Coram Beanstalk's primary-age intervention, Reading 321, provides their reading-helper volunteers with a day's training at the start of the programme[26]. Their reading intervention for children aged 3-5, Story Starters, trains volunteers using evidence from The ESRC International Centre for Language and Communicative Development (LuCiD)[27]. Better Reading Support Partners also provide the adult supporting children with two days of training, covering topics including delivering the sessions, selecting suitable texts, understanding the reading process and talking to children about their reading[28].

In line with training, many of the programmes that successfully support children's reading one to one provide volunteers with resources to supplement training. For example, some interventions, such as Better Reading Support Partners[29] and Time to Read, provide volunteers with a handbook to guide them through the intervention[30]. Likewise, the Coram Beanstalk volunteer training provides trainees with a series of reference materials that they can use to review the content delivered at the training[31]. Indeed, as discussed above, the framework for best practice in one-to-one support for young people in education also

[21] NCVO. (2019, January 24). *Effective volunteer training.* Retrieved 11 March 2021, https://knowhow.ncvo.org.uk/your-team/volunteers/training/effective-volunteer-training

[22] NCVO. (2019, January 24). *How much training to give volunteers?* Retrieved 11 March 2021, https://knowhow.ncvo.org.uk/your-team/volunteers/training/howmuch

[23] Grossman, J. B., & Furano, K. (1999). Making the most of volunteers. *Law and Contemporary Problems, 62*(4), 199-218.

[24] Taylor, P., Quinian, O., Maskrey, S., Mangan, L., Surowiec, C., & Batka, M. (n.d.). *One-to-one support: A collaborative quality framework*. Retrieved 11 March 2021, https://brightside.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/One-To-One-Support-A-Collaborative-Quality-Framework.pdf

[25] Please note that as this framework relates to supporting young people, it is used in this review as supporting evidence and not as a key source for identifying what best practice looks like

[26] Coram Beanstalk. (n.d.). *Reading 321: Impact Report 2018/19*. Retrieved 11 March 2021, https://www.beanstalkcharity.org.uk/Handlers/Download.ashx?IDMF=800743b0-ec69-4aa8-b64d-e9cee4dd889f

[27] Coram Beanstalk. (n.d.). *Story Starters: 2017-2019 Impact and Evaluation Report*. Retrieved 11 March 2021, https://www.beanstalkcharity.org.uk/Handlers/Download.ashx?IDMF=05679033-45a5-4c7b-9270-f0ef9e7bc53b

[28] Edge Hill University. (2017). *Better Reading Support Partners.* Retrieved 11 March 2021, https://everychildcounts.edgehill.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/BRSP-flyer-2017.pdf

[29] Ibid.

[30] Arlow, M. (2009). *Time to Read – A ten year review*. Retrieved 11 March 2021, https://www.educationandemployers.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/06/time-to-read-bitc1.pdf

[31] Coram Beanstalk. (n.d.). *Reading Helper Training (Years 1 to 4)*, Retrieved 17 February 2021, https://www.beanstalkcharity.org.uk/parent-reading-helper-training

highlights the importance of supporters knowing where to go for additional resources and support as part of good-quality training[32].

4.1.3 How well does Bookmark's programme fit within the evidence?
It can be concluded that Bookmark's programmes fit well within the evidence base. The use of volunteers to support children is justified based on evidence, and volunteers are provided with training and resources. The core training covers a wide range of topics, including overview of the goals, programme and impact, safeguarding, behaviour management, building rapport with the child, how to run the sessions, finding books based on a child's interests, explaining comprehension and phonics, and supporting reading through stories. The online training also covers how to use the interactive platform for the online sessions. Volunteers will be able to revisit any section of the training at any time, and they are encouraged to do so, providing a useful resource for them while volunteering. The volunteers are also offered supplementary training resources via the Bookmark Library. Thus, volunteers can be expected to be well placed to support children's reading and achieving positive outcomes.

Bookmark's overall alignment within the evidence base:

X		

4.2 Programme design: regular, short and structured sessions with links to regular classroom work
According to EEF[33], one-to-one support achieves optimum impact when it is provided in regular short sessions (30 minutes three to five times a week) over a set time period (six to 12 weeks). Indeed, previous evidence on volunteer-led tutoring programmes found that those with regular sessions showed higher levels of effectiveness across all disciplines[34]. The framework for best practice in one-to-one support for young people similarly suggests that good-quality support uses regular and consistent contact between the young person and the supporter[35].

Evidence from existing interventions suggest that while the length of the programmes varies, many provide shorter sessions multiple times a week. For example, Better Reading Support

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[32] Taylor, P., Quinian, O., Maskrey, S., Mangan, L., Surowiec, C., & Batka, M. (n.d.). *One-to-one support: A collaborative quality framework*. Retrieved 11 March 2021, https://brightside.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/One-To-One-Support-A-Collaborative-Quality-Framework.pdf

[33] Education Endowment Foundation. (2018). *One to one tuition.* Retrieved 11 March 2021, https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/pdf/generate/?u=https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/pdf/toolkit/?id=135&t=Teaching%20and%20Learning%20Toolkit&e=135&s=

[34] Ritter, G., Denny, G., Albin, G., Barnett, J., & Blankenship, V. (2006). The effectiveness of volunteer tutoring programs: A systematic review. *Campbell Systematic Reviews, 2*(1), 1-63. https://doi.org/10.4073/csr.2006.7

[35] Taylor, P., Quinian, O., Maskrey, S., Mangan, L., Surowiec, C., & Batka, M. (n.d.). *One-to-one support: A collaborative quality framework*. Retrieved 11 March 2021, https://brightside.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/06/One-To-One-Support-A-Collaborative-Quality-Framework.pdf

Partners[36] provides support in 15-minute sessions three times a week for 10 weeks, and Coram Beanstalk's Reading 321[37] provides support in 30-minute sessions twice a week for at least three terms. Regular short sessions also appear as a common format for other types of reading interventions, such as those supporting older learners (e.g. TextNow[38], which provides a 20-minute reading session each weekday for 10 weeks) and those delivered by teachers and teaching assistants (for a full list, see Brooks, 2016[39]).

In addition to regular short sessions, it is critical that those sessions are highly structured. In fact, the EEF also suggests that highly structured tutoring programmes, including having trained tutors, focusing on specific skills and systematically timetabled sessions, provide the best effects on outcomes[40]. This also applies for support delivered by teaching assistants[41]. Similarly, a 2006 meta-analysis[42] found that highly structured interventions have a significantly greater effect on global reading outcomes than those with less structure.

Well-structured sessions also relate to the session format itself, such as each session having a clear purpose and structure. Better Reading Support Partners[43] offers an excellent example of a structured session format and its importance. Their session works in three parts: reading familiar text to provide confidence and motivation for the pupil; reading a recently introduced text, allowing the adult to observe pupils' reading behaviours and strategies; and reading a new text, providing new challenges and promoting practice for the pupil. This exemplifies how a structured session gives a clear focus to various aspects of reading and can balance confidence building with the appropriate level of challenge. For decades, various reading interventions have identified structured elements like re-reading familiar text, writing, and guided reading of new material as effective[44].

Finally, evidence provided by the EEF suggests that literacy support for KS1 pupils should be additional to and explicitly linked to normal lessons, and it should also make connections between the extra support and classroom teaching[45]. Similarly, their guidance for one-to-one

[36] Edge Hill University. (2021). *Better Reading Support Partners*. Retrieved 11 March 2021, https://everychildcounts.edgehill.ac.uk/better-reading-support-partners/
[37] Coram Beanstalk. (n.d.). *Reading 321: Impact Report 2018/19*. Retrieved 11 March 2021, https://www.beanstalkcharity.org.uk/Handlers/Download.ashx?IDMF=800743b0-ec69-4aa8-b64d-e9cee4dd889f
[38] Education Endowment Foundation. (2019). *TextNow Transition.* Retrieved 11 March 2021, https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/pdf/generate/?u=https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/pdf/project/?id=218&t=EEF%20Projects&e=218&s=
[39] Brooks, G. (2016). *What works for children and young people with literacy difficulties?* Retrieved 11 March 2021, https://thatreadingthing.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/What-Works-5th-edition-Rev-Oct-2016.pdf
[40] Education Endowment Foundation. (n.d.). *Small Group Tuition*. Retrieved 17 February 2021, https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/evidence-summaries/teaching-learning-toolkit/small-group-tuition/ .
[41] Education Endowment Foundation. (2015). *Catch Up Literacy: Evaluation report and executive summary.* Retrieved 11 March, https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/projects-and-evaluation/projects/catch-up-literacy/
[42] Ritter, G., Denny, G., Albin, G., Barnett, J., & Blankenship, V. (2006). The effectiveness of volunteer tutoring programs: A systematic review. *Campbell Systematic Reviews, 2*(1), 1-63. https://doi.org/10.4073/csr.2006.7
[43] Edge Hill University. (n.d.). *Extract from the BRSP:* Handbook. Retrieved 11 March 2021, https://everychildcounts.edgehill.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/Extract-from-the-BRSP-Handbook.pdf
[44] Invernizzi, M., Rosemary, C., Juel, C., & Richards, H. C. (1997). At-risk readers and community volunteers: A 3-year perspective. *Scientific Studies of Reading, 1*(3), 277–300. https://doi.org/10.1207/s1532799xssr0103_6
[45] Education Endowment Foundation. (2020). *Improving Literacy in Key Stage 1*. Retrieved 11 March 2021, https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/public/files/Publications/Literacy/Literacy_KS1_Guidance_Report_2020.pdf

support suggests that it can have a positive impact when explicitly linked to normal teaching[46].

4.2.1 How well does Bookmark's programme fit within the evidence?

Bookmark's programmes are well aligned with existing evidence. Both face-to-face and online programmes provide 30-minute sessions twice a week for six weeks, and sessions are clearly structured with three parts. The face-to-face sessions also utilise the children's classroom book to create a connection to their regular classroom work. While the online support does not make a specific link to the book the pupils read in the classroom, this is not considered to have a negative impact on the programme overall.

Bookmark Reading's overall alignment within the evidence base:

X		

4.3 Session content and resources: Engaging and relevant

In addition to well-trained volunteers and short, frequent, structured sessions, it is clearly important to consider the content of the sessions and resources provided for children. Addressing children who are falling behind in their reading, Brooks (2016)[47] suggests materials for support need to be carefully structured and include rich, exciting texts. EEF similarly suggests that KS1 literacy support needs to utilise structured resources and/or lesson plans with clear objectives[48].

Good-quality and engaging resources can also be considered a vital element of the support provided because the best volunteers and/or any number of sessions clearly won't support children if they do not actively engage in the reading activities provided. In fact, various educational psychologists suggest that engagement is necessary for learning[49], and engagement links motivation and achievement[50], suggesting that even if the child is initially motivated to attend the reading session, they will need to participate actively to get the benefit.

Engaging materials and resources also support pupils' willingness to read, which some researchers consider a critical part of high-quality education[51]. Being willing and eager to read

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[46] Education Endowment Foundation. (2018). *One to one tuition.* Retrieved 11 March 2021, https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/pdf/generate/?u=https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/pdf/toolkit/?id=135&t=Teaching%20and%20Learning%20Toolkit&e=135&s=

[47] Brooks, G. (2016). *What works for children and young people with literacy difficulties?* Retrieved 11 March 2021, https://thatreadingthing.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/What-Works-5th-edition-Rev-Oct-2016.pdf

[48] Education Endowment Foundation. (2020). *Improving Literacy in Key Stage 1.* Retrieved 11 March 2021, https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/public/files/Publications/Literacy/Literacy_KS1_Guidance_Report_2020.pdf

[49] e.g., Finn, J. D., & Zimmer, K. S. (2012). Student engagement: What is it? Why does it matter? In S.L. Christenson, A. L. Reschly & C. Wylie (Eds.), *Handbook of Research on Student Engagement.* Boston, MA: Springer. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-4614-2018-7

[50] e.g., Eccles, J., & Wang, M. T. (2012). Part I commentary: So what is student engagement anyway? In S.L. Christenson, A. L. Reschly & C. Wylie (Eds.), *Handbook of Research on Student Engagement.* Boston, MA: Springer. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-4614-2018-7

[51] De Naeghel, J., Van Keera, H., & Vanderlinde, R. (2014). Strategies for promoting autonomous reading motivation: A multiple case study research in primary education. *Frontline Learning Research, 3,* 83-101. https://doi.org/10.14786/flr.v2i1.84

also ensures increased practice in reading and can therefore be linked to reading attainment[52]. It may also be linked to increased confidence to engage with a wider range of reading genres, which in turn provides greater opportunities to develop deeper understanding of texts[53]. From a general teaching point of view, it is important to give pupils age-appropriate choices, connect with their interests, offer rationales and take the students' perspective, and provide students with opportunities to take the initiative during learning activities. These activities support their autonomous motivation, that is, engagement in activity linked to pleasure, value, interests and importance [54].

4.3.1 Importance of book choice

Book choice is an important consideration, particularly when reading for pleasure is a key outcome of an intervention. Previous evidence suggests that having a choice of books, and personal interest in the topic of a book, are important factors in increasing reading motivation and attainment[55]. Previous research on book ownership[56] has also highlighted that choice empowers learners and creates personal responsibility to complete an activity. This reflects considerations from self-determination theory, which suggests that perceived autonomy is a necessary condition for intrinsic motivation[57], that is, one needs to feel in control to be truly interested in the activity. In fact, some researchers[58] also suggest that choice can be an important factor in reading engagement and can function as a motivational strategy.

However, it is also important to acknowledge that choice needs to be structured to some extent[59] so as not to detract from other key outcomes. It has also been highlighted that as choice involves making a judgement, if one does not have enough information to make the judgement, a range of options can cause pupils to disengage and rush through the task[60]. This suggests that providing choice from a limited pool of options, as well as teaching children how to make informed book choices, may be beneficial. In fact, an efficacy trial of Accelerated Reader[61] found that having a wide variety of books in the AR library was a key component of

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[52] Education Endowment Foundation. 2020. *Improving Literacy in Key Stage 1*. https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/public/files/Publications/Literacy/Literacy_KS1_Guidance_Report_2020.pdf

[53] Ibid

[54] De Naeghel, J., Van Keera, H., & Vanderlinde, R. (2014). Strategies for promoting autonomous reading motivation: A multiple case study research in primary education. *Frontline Learning Research, 3,* 83-101. https://doi.org/10.14786/flr.v2i1.84

[55] Steinkuehler, C. (2011). *The mismeasure of boys: Reading and online videogames* (WCER Working Paper No. 2011-3). Retrieved 11 March, 2021, http://www.wcer.wisc.edu/publications/workingPapers/papers.php

[56] Clark, C., & Phythian-Sence, C. (2008). *Interesting choice: The (relative) importance of choice and interest in reader engagement.* Retrieved 11 March 2021, https://cdn.literacytrust.org.uk/media/documents/2008_07_20_free_research_-_interesting_choice_review_2008_FfPOxNX.pdf

[57] Ryan, R., & Deci, E. (2006). Self-regulation and the problem of human autonomy: Does psychology need choice, self-determination, and will. *Journal of Personality*, *74:*6, 1557-1586. Retrieved 11 March, 2021, https://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download?doi=10.1.1.398.3178&rep=rep1&type=pdf

[58] Clark, C., & Phythian-Sence, C. (2008). *Interesting choice: The (relative) importance of choice and interest in reader engagement.* Retrieved 11 March 2021, https://cdn.literacytrust.org.uk/media/documents/2008_07_20_free_research_-_interesting_choice_review_2008_FfPOxNX.pdf

[59] see e.g., Renck Jalongo, M. (2007). Beyond benchmarks and scores: Reasserting the role of motivation and interest in children's academic achievement. *Childhood Education: International Focus Issue, 83*, 395-407.

[60] Ibid

[61] Gorard, S., Siddiqui, N., & See, B. H. (2015). Accelerated Reader: Evaluation report and executive summary. Retrieved 11 March 2021, https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/public/files/Projects/Evaluation_Reports/EEF_Project_Report_AcceleratedReader_1.pdf

the programme because it was linked to an increased positive impact on weaker readers. This suggests that choice from a wide but predetermined set of books was beneficial for children.

4.3.2 How well does Bookmark's programme fit within the evidence?

Bookmark's programmes align well with the evidence. Both face-to-face and online programmes offer varied and engaging content, including literacy games and activities and a range of books. During reading sessions, children are encouraged to choose what they want to read. In addition, Bookmark's resources are designed to be as diverse and representative as possible. This is crucial as recent research highlights that 32.7% of children do not see themselves represented in what they read but 39.8% would like more books with characters who are similar to them[62].

A future development could consider including a wider range of reading materials in sessions to increase engagement. This is particularly important for the online programme, which offers a more limited choice (discussed further in section 5.4.2). Bookmark has already added a magazine that can be distributed to children in their communities. This magazine consists of three stories across three different reading levels and, having been adapted from those used in the online reading programme, is suitable for readers aged 5-8. In addition, it contains games and activities connected to each story that are designed to build children's comprehension skills.

The magazine adds another format for children to read and may tap into interests of many children who are not drawn to the traditional book format. It increases their engagement in reading and could even be considered part of the sessions. The magazine also provides children with reading material to have at home, increasing access particularly for those from disadvantaged backgrounds. As the magazine is offered to all children, including those who do not take part in the programme, it can be used by teachers in classrooms to engage pupils in reading as well as building important links between the classroom and extra reading support for those who do take part.

Bookmark's overall alignment within the evidence base:

X		

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[62] Best, E., Clark, C., & Picton, I. (2020). *Seeing yourself in what you read: Diversity and children and young people's reading in 2020.* Retrieved 24 March 2021, https://cdn.literacytrust.org.uk/media/documents/Diversity_and_children_and_young_peoples_reading_in_2020.pdf

4.4 Selection of children who take part

Finally, one of the key considerations for the basic design of support is which children are chosen to take part. Indeed, EEF guidance for supporting literacy in KS1[63] suggests that effective interventions ensure the right support is provided to the right child. Evidently, this is also a practical use of often-limited resources. Assessment can be one of the ways to ensure the right children are selected to take part. Assessment also ensures that children receive the best possible support, such as by choosing a programme targeting specific areas of reading where the child may struggle or providing more overarching support for reading skills alongside practice and support for the enjoyment of reading. Assessment and identification are often done by teachers, and various tools for assessment also exist. However, some scholars have suggested that many of the current reading measures are static and new ones for identifying children at risk of falling behind must be developed[64].

4.4.1 Supporting disadvantaged pupils in particular

It is also important to consider various subgroups of pupils, as outcomes of interventions can vary depending on demographic. For example, we know that there is a persistent 'attainment gap' between pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds and their more affluent peers, which is likely to increase as the country recovers from school closures following the COVID-19 pandemic. Some evidence suggests that targeted support either one to one or in small groups can have the highest effect in closing the attainment gap[65]. Some literacy initiatives delivered on a one-to-one basis such as Tutor Trust[66], which targeted schools with high proportions of pupils eligible for free school meals (FSM is used as a proxy to indicate disadvantage), found that FSM pupils who received tutoring made three months' additional progress compared with FSM pupils in control groups.

Beyond the use of targeted and focused sessions to impact on deprivation-related attainment gaps directly, there is little evidence to suggest that specific methods or approaches are particularly effective for disadvantaged groups. Rather, the schools that are most successful in closing the disadvantage gap use a mixture of whole-school approaches that demonstrate commitment and more targeted interventions for individuals: disadvantage in itself does not dictate learning practices[67]. A report for Department for Education analysing successful schools remarks that 'interviewees in more successful schools saw pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds as individuals, each with their own set of challenges, talents and interests[68]. It

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[63] Education Endowment Foundation. (2020). *Improving Literacy in Key Stage 1*. Retrieved 11 March 2021, https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/public/files/Publications/Literacy/Literacy_KS1_Guidance_Report_2020.pdf

[64] Nuffield Foundation. (n.d.). *Identifying children at risk of reading disorder*. Retrieved 11 March 2021, https://www.nuffieldfoundation.org/project/identifying-children-at-risk-of-reading-disorder

[65] Education Endowment Foundation. (2017). *The Attainment Gap*. Retrieved 11 March 2021, https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/public/files/Annual_Reports/EEF_Attainment_Gap_Report_2018.pdf

[66] Education Endowment Foundation. (2018). *Tutor Trust: Affordable Primary Tuition.* Retrieved 11 March 2021, https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/public/files/Projects/Evaluation_Reports/Tutor_Trust.pdf

[67] MacLeod, S., Sharp, C., Bernardinelli, D., Skipp, A., & Higgins, S. (2015*). Supporting the attainment of disadvantaged pupils: articulating success and good practice*. Report for Department for Education. Retrieved 11 March 2021, https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/473974/DFE-RR411_Supporting_the_attainment_of_disadvantaged_pupils.pdf

[68] Ibid

was believed that all pupils have the capacity to succeed and that the school's role was to ensure success for everyone[69]. Indeed, a report for Centre for Excellence and Outcomes in Children and Young People's Services found that whole-class approaches are the best way of targeting gaps in early reading, which can then be followed up with targeted tuition[70]. Therefore, one-to-one support may benefit disadvantaged pupils' reading if they need practice to improve their skill or lack motivation but should not be a factor in itself when choosing pupils who require one-to-one reading support.

Notwithstanding the above, there are broader benefits beyond direct reading outcomes that some interventions can have for disadvantaged pupils. As mentioned earlier, a key outcome of Business in the Community's Time to Read[71] intervention is the positive role modelling that comes from the choice of volunteers, which drew a range of volunteers from businesses. National Literacy Trust research from 2009 shows that children and young people from all socioeconomic backgrounds find motivation in a range of role models. However, those who receive free school meals are more likely than their peers to indicate sportspeople as their role models. In contrast, they are less likely than their peers to find reading inspiration in their dad[72]. It may be possible that exposure to volunteers as role models can have a positive effect on those pupils less likely to have 'direct' access to adults with whom they can speak and build a relationship, suggesting that one-to-one support with volunteers can be particularly beneficial for pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds.

4.4.2 Supporting pupils with English as an additional language

Pupils for whom English is an additional language (EAL pupils) make up around 20% of primary-school pupils[73]. While some of these pupils may have good literacy skills in their own language but lack proficiency in English, some will struggle with literacy itself: in some cultures, reading is seen as a specialised skill and not something that is applicable to all[74]. However, many others have excellent literacy skills and proficiency in English. In this section EAL refers to those new to English.

It has been suggested that good practice for pupils with English as an additional language is largely good practice for all pupils[75]. However, some may benefit from specialised support.

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[69] Ibid

[70] Sharples, J. Slavin, R., Chambers, B., & Sharp, C. (2010). *Effective classroom strategies for closing the gap in educational achievement for children and young people living in poverty, including white working-class boys.* Report for Centre for Excellence and Outcomes in Children and Young People's Services. Retrieved 11 March 2021, https://www.york.ac.uk/media/iee/documents/Closing%20the%20Gap.pdf

[71] Arlow, M. (2009). *Time to Read – A ten year review.* Retrieved 11 March 2021, https://www.educationandemployers.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/06/time-to-read-bitc1.pdf

[72] Clark, C., Osborne, S., & Dugdale, G. (2009). *Reaching Out with Role Models: Role models and young people's reading.* Retrieved 11 March 2021, https://cdn.literacytrust.org.uk/media/documents/2009_01_04_free_research_-_reading_and_role_models_survey_2009_kOxO0Dt.pdf

[73] Crolla, C., & Treffers-Daller, J. (2017). *A Guide to supporting EAL Learners.* Retrieved 11 March 2021, https://cdn.oxfordowl.co.uk/2017/08/10/09/32/48/468/bp_eal_guide.pdf

[74] The Bell Foundation. (2021). *Great idea: Reading for meaning.* Retrieved 11 March 2021, https://www.bell-foundation.org.uk/eal-programme/guidance/effective-teaching-of-eal-learners/great-ideas/reading-for-meaning/

[75] Crolla, C., & Treffers-Daller, J. (2017). *A Guide to supporting EAL Learners.* Retrieved 11 March 2021, https://cdn.oxfordowl.co.uk/2017/08/10/09/32/48/468/bp_eal_guide.pdf

Some of the successful ways to support EAL pupils include scaffolding listening, allowing plenty of listening time, audio resources and, where possible, parental engagement in home-learning tasks[76]. As well as listening, reading for meaning is a key part of literacy that can be challenging for EAL learners who tend to do well with phonological awareness but perform less well with comprehension[77]. Therefore, collaborative activities such as paired reading and reading to the learner can be highly beneficial to EAL learners[78]. In addition, while the evidence base in UK-based interventions is sparse, there is some indication that interventions focused on vocabulary have showed promising effects for EAL pupils[79].

In sum, it can be concluded that the key considerations for a reading programme that supports EAL are opportunities for listening, differentiation of comprehension questions for EAL learners, and a focus on vocabulary building as an outcome.

4.4.3 Supporting pupils based on gender

It is well established that fewer boys than girls say that they enjoy reading or read in their free time. This has been exacerbated by lockdown, with the gap in reading enjoyment widening from 2.3 percentage points at the beginning of 2020 to 11.5 percentage points during lockdown[80]. The gender gap in daily reading also widened during lockdown, increasing from a 4.3-percentage-point difference at the beginning of 2020 to a 7.4-percentage-point difference during lockdown[81]. However, there are a variety of factors contributing to this and, as such, a range of approaches that reading programmes can take to help close the gap.

Online support can be particularly effective for boys, who might be less easily distracted by screen-based reading and associate a 'cool factor' with technology-based reading (addressed more closely in considerations regarding one-to-one support online). In addition, audio can be used as a tool to support boys in particular. For example, the National Literacy Trust's report on reading during lockdown found that audiobooks might be a way to re-engage boys with stories. It showed that this is the only format where more boys than girls said that they enjoy them and engage with them more often[82].

[76] Ibid

[77] Murphy, V., & Franco, D. (2016). Phonics instruction and children with English as an Additional Language. *EAL Journal*, 1, 38-42. Retrieved 11 March 2021, https://naldic.org.uk/publications/eal-journal/issue-1/

[78] The Bell Foundation. (2021). *Great idea: Reading for meaning.* Retrieved 11 March 2021, https://www.bell-foundation.org.uk/eal-programme/guidance/effective-teaching-of-eal-learners/great-ideas/reading-for-meaning/

[79] Murphy, V. A., & Unthiah, A., (2015). A systematic review of intervention research examining English language and literacy development in children with English as an Additional Language (EAL). Retrieved 11 March 2021, https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/public/files/Presentations/Publications/EAL_Systematic_review.pdf

[80] Clark, C., & Picton, I. (2020). *Children and young people's reading in 2020 before and during lockdown.* Retrieved 11 March 2021https://literacytrust.org.uk/research-services/research-reports/children-and-young-peoples-reading-in-2020-before-and-during-the-covid-19-lockdown/

[81] Ibid

[82] Clark, C., & Picton, I. (2020). *Children and young people's reading in 2020 before and during lockdown.* Retrieved 11 March 2021https://literacytrust.org.uk/research-services/research-reports/children-and-young-peoples-reading-in-2020-before-and-during-the-covid-19-lockdown/

As with pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds, the benefit of one-to-one reading support may lie in the opportunity to provide role models. For example, as girls have been found to be twice as likely to see their gender as a barrier to achieving their aspirations as boys (12.4% vs 6.4%)[83], female volunteers providing reading support can also demonstrate the potential of women to succeed in the workplace, so helping girls and young women to see past these barriers could be beneficial. However, it has to be acknowledged that studies exploring the impact of teachers' gender found that pupils are much more attuned to the engagement and level of care that the teacher exhibits rather than their gender[84]. In a similar vein, while volunteers have the potential to act as important role models for pupils, their engagement may be more important than their own gender.

4.4.4 How well does Bookmark's programme fit within the evidence?

Bookmark's programme can be considered to fit well within the evidence base as one-to-one support can equally benefit all pupils. The programme relies on teachers to choose which pupils take part, which inevitably results in varied groups of children taking part across the schools. However, specific resources and strategies, such as using audio, supporting groups of pupils like those with English as an additional language and boys, could make the programme more effective for those pupils.

Bookmark's overall alignment within the evidence base:

	X		

5. Considerations relating specifically to online support

While the previous section has considered Bookmark's programmes overall, due to the similarity in the key elements between the face-to-face and online offers, it is also critical to consider elements that are particularly relevant for supporting children's reading online, which is the focus of this section. It presents evidence and expert analysis on whether online support is effective, what the benefits are and how to engage children online. It also examines the technology used, including basic considerations for platform functionality, to support Bookmark in developing their digital offer.

5.1 Does supporting children one to one online work?

Integration of digital technology in classroom-based interventions is becoming a key component of many initiatives because most children have been working remotely via computers or other devices as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Even before the pandemic,

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[83] Teravainen-Goff, A., Hackett, S., & Clark, C. (2020). "Isn't an aspiration like a personal journey, in which you challenge yourself?": Aspirations, literacy and gender: Insight from young people and adults. Retrieved 11 March 2021, https://cdn.literacytrust.org.uk/media/documents/National_Literacy_Trust_-_Aspirations_literacy_and_gender_-_FINAL.pdf

[84] Carrington, B., Francis, B., Hutchings, M., Skelton, C., Read, B., & Hall, I. (2007). Does the gender of the teacher really matter? Seven- to eight-year-olds' accounts of their interactions with their teachers. *Educational Studies, 33*(4), 397-413. https://doi.org/10.1080/03055690701423580

however, there was evidence that a digital component to an intervention could provide effective support for pupils' literacy. A Cambridge evaluation of primary intervention, ReadingWise, for example, found that pupils were able to self-lead with computer-based aspects of the programme, freeing up teacher capacity[85]. Evidence that computer-based interventions can help build reading skills[86] was developed further by a 2016 evaluation of Lexia, a computer-based literacy programme to boost phonological skills of 4- to 6-year-olds with low or below average phonological skills[87]. This evaluation found that such programmes could indeed boost phonological skills[88]. There is also evidence that children's comfort around, and engagement with, digital technology can have a positive impact on reluctant readers and that use of digital platforms can help remove barriers to learning, such as poor writing ability or low reading confidence and motivation[89]. Teachers surveyed in 2018 reported that digital tools could engage and enable pupils, citing examples of platforms, programmes and apps that encourage weaker readers, support children with dyslexia or ASD, and facilitate personalised and collaborative learning[90].

While digital technology can be used effectively in the classroom, it is also important to consider how these approaches might intersect with the use of volunteers. The remote literacy tutoring programme, TutorMate, is a relevant example of this involving volunteers delivering reading support sessions from their place of work to Year 1 pupils identified by their teachers as likely to benefit from extra support with their reading. A 2019 evaluation of the platform[91] showed that participating pupils' reading levels increased over the course of the intervention by an average of 3.2 reading levels (from 2.8 to 6.0), while phonics scores increased by an average of 9.3 points (from 27.4 to 36.7). Notably, pupils starting with the lowest reading ability showed the most significant improvements, and the programme also had a positive impact on children's reading attitudes and enjoyment[92].

5.1.1 Increased importance of the trained adult in online support

As highlighted earlier, one-to-one literacy support can be effective if the volunteer supporting the child is well trained. Indeed, this also applies to online support. However, the need for training of the volunteer might be amplified when it comes to supporting children digitally.

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[85] MacBeath, J., & Alexandrou, A. (2015). *Reading More Wisely: An Evaluation*. Retrieved 11 March 2021, https://readingwise.com/research/reading-more-wisely
[86] McMurray, S. (2013). An evaluation of the use of Lexia Reading software with children in Year 3, Northern Ireland (6- to 7-year olds). *Journal of Research in Special Educational Needs, 13*, 15-25; Brooks, G. (2016). *What works for children and young people with literacy difficulties?* Retrieved 11 March 2021, https://thatreadingthing.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/What-Works-5th-edition-Rev-Oct-2016.pdf
[87] O'Callaghan, P., McIvor, A., McVeigh, C., & Rushe, T. (2016). A randomized controlled trial of an early intervention, computer-based literacy program to boost phonological skills in 4- to 6-year-old children. *British Journal of Educational Psychology*, 86(4), 546. https://doi.org/10.1111/bjep.12122
[88] Ibid
[89] Picton, I. (2019). *Teachers' use of technology to support literacy in 2018.* Retrieved 11 March 2021, https://cdn.literacytrust.org.uk/media/documents/Teachers_Use_of_Technology_report.pdf
[90] Ibid
[91] Picton, I., Clark, C., & Teravainen-Goff, A. (2019). TutorMate: The outcomes of an online reading mentoring intervention on children's reading skills, enjoyment, behaviours and attitudes. Retrieved 11 March 2021, https://cdn.literacytrust.org.uk/media/documents/Tutormate_pilot_evaluation_report.pdf
[92] Ibid

As Brooks (2016)[93] suggests, it is essential to ensure that technologically driven schemes are mediated by a skilled adult to meet children's needs. In addition to training around the session content and how to support children, volunteers should be provided with training on using technology itself. In fact, a report by online-learning platform Bramble suggests that the strongest predictor of the effectiveness of online tuition is the adult's previous experience of delivering online sessions[94]. Effective training for the volunteer can support volunteers to gain this experience. Finally, training should cover safeguarding issues specific to digital environment. For more information on safeguarding for tutors, see NSPCC (2021[95]).

5.1.2 How well does Bookmark's programme fit within the evidence?

Bookmark's digital offer appears to align well with recent and relevant evidence of the positive impact of volunteer-led one-to-one online-reading tutoring programmes on children's literacy outcomes. Bookmark's volunteers are also trained to use the interactive platform for the online sessions, providing them experience of it and ensuring effective online support.

Bookmark's overall alignment within the evidence base:

X		

5.2 Benefits of online support

One practical benefit of providing one-to-one support digitally rather than face to face is that there is no need for volunteers to travel. Indeed, 3 in 5 (59%) volunteers in the TutorMate programme said they valued the flexibility of being able to volunteer from their desk[96]. While this does not necessarily have an impact on children's literacy outcomes, it does suggest that volunteers may be drawn from a wider pool than might be possible for in-person support, and that the potential for reaching a higher number of children with volunteers from more diverse backgrounds may be increased. This, in turn, provides children a wider variety of role models.

Another potential benefit of online support is the appeal of the digital format for less-keen readers or those who lack confidence. International studies have noted that many less-engaged readers are familiar with and comfortable around screens, and that this may hold some benefits when it comes to reading in this format. Indeed, one study found that the gap between girls' and boys' reading attainment narrowed from 38 points (equivalent to a year's

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[93] Brooks, G. (2016). *What works for children and young people with literacy difficulties?* Retrieved 11 March 2021, https://thatreadingthing.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/What-Works-5th-edition-Rev-Oct-2016.pdf

[94] Bramble Technologies. (2020). *Getting the most out of live online tutoring: Insights from half a million hours.* Retrieved 11 March 2021, https://about.bramble.io/downloads/Getting-the-most-out-of-live-online-tutoring-Bramble.pdf

[95] NSPCC. (2021, January 14). *Safeguarding and child protection for tutors.* Retrieved 11 March 2021, https://learning.nspcc.org.uk/safeguarding-child-protection/tutors

[96] Picton, I., Clark, C., & Teravainen-Goff, A. (2019). TutorMate: The outcomes of an online reading mentoring intervention on children's reading skills, enjoyment, behaviours and attitudes. Retrieved 11 March 2021, https://cdn.literacytrust.org.uk/media/documents/Tutormate_pilot_evaluation_report.pdf

schooling) to 26 when reading assessments took place on a screen[97]. Furthermore, an evaluation assessing the impact of an ebook platform on 800 UK 8- to 16-year-olds found that participating boys who were the least-engaged readers initially not only enjoyed reading more on screen when given the opportunity to read ebooks but they were four times more likely to say they enjoyed reading in print after taking part in the trial[98]. Related research indicates that half (50%) of boys who do not enjoy reading agree with the statement: "Reading on screen is cooler than reading a book"[99]. It is perhaps also worth noting that a study of 565 five-year-olds found that children who carried a specific allele (a variant form of a gene) that made them particularly 'distractible' (susceptible to environmental influences) were "more able to focus, learn and even outperform their peers" when exposed to particular types of multimodal ebook formats[100].

At the same time, other studies have found reading comprehension in particular maybe inferior on screen than in print for some groups of readers. A recent meta-analysis[101] found that reading a story on paper outperforms reading digitally when the paper and digital versions are practically the same and only differ in some digital features such as voiceover or highlighted print. However, the analysis also noted that often conversations during digital book reading are about the device or the child's behaviour and not the story itself. In addition, the authors suggest that the design of the digital books and/or the adults' mediation can moderate or overcome the 'screen inferiority' effects. For example, if the digital enhancements target the story content, such as prompting children's background knowledge, the digital books outweigh the potential negative effects of the digital device on story comprehension and may even outperform print books.

Similarly, an earlier meta-analysis[102] concluded that the current picture is of "screen inferiority, with lower reading comprehension outcomes for digital texts compared with printed texts". However, a number of moderating factors affected these findings, including the type of device (more studies related to fixed screens, such as desktop computers, rather than portable devices such as laptops or tablets) and the age of study participants (data related predominantly to older age groups). A recent Norwegian study, on the other hand, found that the best-performing girl readers could be disadvantaged by reading tests on

[97] OECD. (2015). Tackling underperformance among boys. *In The ABC of Gender Equality in Education: Aptitude, Behaviour, Confidence.* Paris: OECD Publishing. Retrieved 11 March 2021, https://doi.org/10.1787/9789264229945-5-en

[98] Picton, I., & Clark, C. (2015). The Impact of ebooks on the reading motivation and reading skills of children and young people: A study of schools using RM Books. Retrieved 11 March 2021, https://cdn.literacytrust.org.uk/media/documents/2015_12_09_free_research_-_impact_of_ebooks_2015_8uTEZVb.pdf

[99] Picton, I., Clark, C., O'Keefe, S., Choli, M., & Gliksten, H. (2019). *Improving the literacy skills of disadvantaged teenage boys through the use of technology* Retrieved 11 March 2021, https://cdn.literacytrust.org.uk/media/documents/Research_report_-_Improving_boys_literacy_using_technology.pdf

[100] Plak, R. D., Merkelbach, I., Kegel, C. A. T., van IJzendoorn, M. H., & Bus, A. G. (2016). Brief computer interventions enhance emergent academic skills in susceptible children: A gene-by-environment experiment. *Learning and Instruction, 45*, 1–8. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.learninstruc.2016.06.002

[101] Furenes, M. I., Kucirkova, N., & Bus, A. G. (2021). A comparison of children's reading on paper versus screen: A meta-analysis. *Review of Educational Research*, 1–35. https://doi.org/10.3102/0034654321998074

[102] Delgado, P., Vargas, C., Ackerman, R., & Salmerón, L. (2018). Don't throw away your printed books: A meta-analysis on the effects of reading media on reading comprehension. *Educational Research Review 25*, 23–38. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.edurev.2018.09.003

desktop computers compared with paper[103]. Some commentators argue that it is therefore essential to teach children and young people both technology-based and 'deep' reading techniques, with developmental psychologist and cognitive scientist Maryanne Wolf describing these skills in terms of 'biliteracy'[104].

5.2.1 How well does Bookmark's programme fit within the evidence?

Evidence indicating the benefits of opportunities to read on screen for less-engaged readers suggests that Bookmark's online offer fits well with the existing evidence base, and it may be particularly valuable for children who are less keen or confident using print books. As it is unlikely that higher-performing readers will be involved in the programme, they are not likely to be disadvantaged by the screen format.

Bookmark's overall alignment within the evidence base:

X		

5.3 Engaging children online

Research has indicated that children may learn more effectively from screens of all types if there are elements of joint media engagement (such as social or co-use with others and high interactional quality such as dialogic reading), and social contingency (i.e. content familiar or relevant to the child's experience).

Joint media engagement describes an important way that children deepen their learning by connecting with others through media or while using media. It offers "an environment that can help [children] learn through the Vygotskian notion of scaffolding, or extending children's learning beyond what they would learn left on their own"[105]. One US study found that interactional quality played an important role in making touchscreen devices effective teaching tools for young children[106].

Other research has shown that socially contingent content can support learning[107], and that there is evidence that video-calling features that allow face-to-face (albeit virtually) reactions

[103] Støle, H., Mangen, A., & Schwippert, K. (2020). Assessing children's reading comprehension on paper and screen: A mode-effect study. *Computers & Education, 151*. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.compedu.2020.103861

[104] Richardson, J. (2014). Maryanne Wolf: Balance technology and deep reading to create biliterate children. *Phi Delta Kappan, 96*(3), 14–19. https://doi.org/10.1177/0031721714557447

[105] Wartella, E., Rideout, V., Lauricella, A. R., & Connell, S. (2013). *Parenting in the age of digital technology*. Report for the Center on Media and Human Development, School of Communication. Retrieved 11 March 2021, https://cmhd.northwestern.edu/wp-content/uploads/2015/06/ParentingAgeDigitalTechnology.REVISED.FINAL_.2014.pdf; see also Takeuchi, L., & Stevens, R. (2011). *The New Coviewing: Designing for learning through joint media engagement*. Retrieved 11 March 2021, https://www.joanganzcooneycenter.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/12/jgc_coviewing_desktop.pdf

[106] Zack, E. and Barr, R. (2016). The role of interactional quality in learning from touch screens during infancy: Context matters. *Frontiers in Psychology, 7.* https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2016.01264

[107] see e.g., Lauricella, A., Pempek, T., Barr, R., & Calvert, S. (2010). Contingent computer interactions for young children's object retrieval success. *Journal of Applied Developmental Psychology, 31*(5), 362-369.

in real time can help develop this[108]. At the same time, while audio features clearly play an essential role in online reading-support sessions, allowing tutors to interact verbally with children and hear their reading, it is more difficult to find evidence suggesting that video features are essential for learning. The UK Safer Internet Centre (UKSIC)'s POSH helpline (Professional's Online Safety Helpline) notes that having cameras on can have positive benefits for interaction, engagement and wellbeing, both for the learner and the educator[109]. However, they note that camera use is "ultimately… a decision that needs to be made as a school" and the need to respect personal feelings around comfort and safety. Similarly, while recording lessons may "ensure a level of safety", it also requires consideration of GDPR and parental consent"[110].

Aligning with evidence on effective support discussed in the previous section, a rapid review of the evidence on remote teaching in 2020 concluded that online sessions should be "short, focused and regular", stating that "although it is hard to draw conclusions on the exact intensity, it seems that short and sustained sessions are more effective"[111]. This indicates that online support should indeed follow the same pattern as the face-to-face support of regular short sessions.

5.3.1 How well does Bookmark's programme fit within the evidence?

Bookmark's digital programme fits well with the existing evidence base with inclusion of the joint media engagement between volunteer and child, the high interactional quality supported by volunteers trained in supporting dialogic reading practices, and opportunities for socially contingent content offered by audio or video interactions in real time. In addition, the short, focused and regular nature of the programme aligns with expert guidance on effective remote teaching.

Bookmark's overall alignment within the evidence base:

X		

5.4 Considerations of technology used

5.4.1 Basic platform functionality

The platform used to deliver sessions should primarily be intuitive to navigate for both the volunteer and the child to ensure the limited time available for sessions can be spent productively on reading. Functionality should support the aspects highlighted previously, such as short, regular, engaging sessions that offer opportunities for joint media engagement and

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[108] Roseberry, S., Hirsh-Pasek, K., & Golinkoff, R. (2013). Skype Me! Socially Contingent Interactions Help Toddlers Learn Language. *Child Development, 85*(3), pp.956-970.

[109] UK Safer Internet Centre. (2021, March 2). *Cameras On or Off? - Important Questions Answered by the POSH helpline*. Retrieved 11 March 2021, https://www.saferinternet.org.uk/blog/cameras-or-important-questions-answered-posh-helpline

[110] Ibid

[111] Education Endowment Foundation. (2020). *Remote Learning, Rapid Evidence Assessment.* Retrieved 11 March 2021, https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/public/files/Remote_Learning_Rapid_Evidence_Assessment.pdf

high interactional quality through real-time audio and video input between volunteer and child.

The main screen should offer minimal features alongside the text to encourage focus[112], and should allow readers to adjust the text font and size to suit their personal preference (including dyslexia-friendly font options), and the background colour for comfort. Additional customisation features, such as highlighting sentences or words, may provide useful support for some children such as those with developmental dyslexia[113]. Inclusion should be foregrounded in the choice of platform, which should include supporting features to scaffold reading for all children, including those with additional needs.

The ability to listen to a text being read aloud while reading at the same time, or the technique known as Reading While Listening (RWL), may be a useful consideration for functionality. RWL has been characterised as a model that 'allows children to shift their attention from the laborious effort of reading individual words to the far more interesting job of understanding the narrative'[114]. Studies conducted with foreign or second-language learners have found that RWL can increase levels of engagement than when people are just reading[115]. One study with language learners suggests that RWL can support learners with word identification, develop letter-sound correspondences, and contribute to vocabulary development[116]. These findings indicate potential for RWL to be used in reading support. If screen or audio recording is available, this may support children in listening back to their practice, which can be helpful for reviewing mistakes and noting progress over several sessions. However, safeguarding considerations would need to be taken into account, and parental consent given.

To summarise, the key considerations for platform functionality are:
- intuitive navigation
- ability to conduct short, regular, engaging sessions
- opportunities for joint media engagement (social or co-use with others or high interactional quality)
- allowing high interactional quality through real-time audio and video
- minimal features on the screen alongside the text
- allow adjustment for text font and size, as well as background colour
- ability to record

[112] Bus, A. G., Takacs, Z. K., & Kegel, C. A. T. (2015). Affordances and limitations of electronic storybooks for young children's emergent literacy. *Developmental Review, 35*, 79–97. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.dr.2014.12.004

[113] Stein, J. (2014). Dyslexia: the role of vision and visual attention. *Current Development Disorder Reports, 1*(4), 267-280. https://doi.org/10.1007/s40474-014-0030-6; Ikeshita, H., Yamaguchi, S., Morioka, T., & Yamazoe, T. (2018). Effects of Highlighting Text on the Reading Ability of Children with Developmental Dyslexia: A Pilot Study. *International Journal of Emerging Technologies in Learning (IJET), 13*(09), 239–251. https://doi.org/10.3991/ijet.v13i09.8736

[114] Bergman, O. (1999). *Wait for Me! Reader Control of Narration Rate in Talking Books*. Retrieved 11 March 2021, https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED443099.pdf

[115] Tragant, E., & Vallbona, A. (2018). Reading while listening to learn: young EFL learners' perceptions, *ELT Journal*, 72(4), 395–404. https://doi.org/10.1093/elt/ccy009

[116] Conklin K., Alotaibi S., Pellicer-Sánchez A., & Vilkaitė-Lozdienė, L. (2020). What eye-tracking tells us about reading-only and reading-while-listening in a first and second language. *Second Language Research, 36*(3), 257-276. https://doi.org/10.1177/0267658320921496

5.4.2 Access to material

As highlighted earlier, the choice of books is important to support reading motivation and attainment. Offering readers a good variety of high-quality texts reflecting children's interests is therefore a crucial consideration of support online. In addition, high-interest titles may also be of particular importance for children more comfortable and familiar with the print-reading format because they will be more likely to persist in reading something of personal interest on a screen rather than something with less personally interesting content. Access to a wider variety of materials is therefore a key functionality of the platform used to support children's reading.

5.4.3 Hardware

Online reading-support programmes depend on the availability of desktop computers, laptops or tablets for children to use with their tutor, and the space for sessions to take place in a suitable environment in the school setting. A survey that explored teachers' use of technology to support literacy in the classroom found that just 2 in 5 (39.3%) teachers said that their pupils had access to desktop computers, and under half (48.4%) could access laptops or tablets[117]. Indeed, many teachers cited a lack of hardware, software and Wi-Fi (58.4%), finances (51.6%) and outdated or insufficient hardware (45.2%) as the top three barriers to using technology to support literacy in the classroom[118].

Schools facing more challenges may also be more likely to have poor access to learning devices for pupils. A 2020 survey of 5,000 teachers conducted by Teacher Tapp noted that 72% of students in schools rated inadequate by Ofsted did not have access to individual devices in their classrooms, compared with 59% in outstanding schools[119]. Ofcom data[120] also indicates that rural and less-affluent communities are less likely to have internet access.

5.4.5 How well does Bookmark's programme fit within the evidence?

Bookmark's current online-support platform provides most of the key considerations for basic functionality, such as being reasonably intuitive, supporting effective learning with real-time video and audio, having minimal features on screen, and the ability to record sessions. However, the platform currently allows only a predetermined set of reading materials to be used in sessions. The current offer consists of a small range of good-quality titles written by experts. While this may be mitigated slightly by a wide variety of topics, types of materials

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[117] Picton, I. (2019). *Teachers' use of technology to support literacy in 2018.* Retrieved 11 March 2021, https://cdn.literacytrust.org.uk/media/documents/Teachers_Use_of_Technology_report.pdf

[118] Ibid

[119] Teacher Tapp. (2020). Closing the achievement gap in the connected classroom: How the UK's educators are using technology to bridge the digital learning divide. Report for Microsoft Surface. Retrieved 11 March, 2020, https://query.prod.cms.rt.microsoft.com/cms/api/am/binary/RE4J8dm
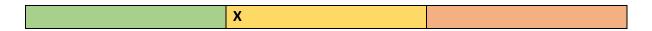
[120] Ofcom. (2020, October 8). *Technology Tracker*. Retrieved 11 March 2021, https://data.gov.uk/dataset/eb673e35-1a59-47d3-b5f1-914a67d85baf/technology-tracker

and interests, the content and range of titles currently available may not support all children's personal interests.

In addition, research indicates that many schools have poor access to hardware and Wi-Fi, and that the schools that might benefit most from the additional support of an online reading-tutoring platform may be less likely to have access to the devices needed to facilitate such an intervention.

Therefore, Bookmark's online programme can be considered well placed within the evidence base with scope for improvement.

Bookmark's overall alignment within the evidence base:

	X	

6. Recommendations and considerations for the future

This review has shown that, overall, Bookmark's face-to-face and online programmes align with the available evidence on best practice for supporting children's reading one to one. Below is a list of recommendations for future development and consideration.

6.1 Key recommendations

6.1.1 Resources and strategies to support specific groups of pupils

While one-to-one support can be equally beneficial for all pupils requiring reading support, specific resources and strategies as part of the programme would help to ensure its effectiveness for specific groups of pupils. For example, resources providing opportunities for listening, differentiation of comprehension questions, and focus on vocabulary may benefit EAL pupils specifically. Audio resources and inclusion of digital elements within the face-to-face resources, on the other hand, may provide enhanced engagement for boys. In addition to the resources, volunteers may benefit from specific tips and guidance on supporting various groups of pupils, so integration of this into the volunteer training offer should be considered.

6.1.2 Improved access to materials, particularly for online support

Choice of reading materials is crucial in engaging pupils because a wide range of books facilitate and encourage book choice and are able to appeal to pupils with a range of backgrounds and interests. While the current platform consists of a range of professionally developed texts, increasing the range and variety of titles to represent the interests of children in the relevant age groups more broadly should be a priority. In addition, an increased variety of formats for face-to-face support may be beneficial. Bookmark has already developed a magazine that could be rolled out in all sessions. A wide variety of materials,

genres and interests also reflects regular classroom practice, so aiming to mirror this in the programmes provides a link between the classroom and the extra support. Indeed, materials tapping into children's interests and engaging them in reading can be considered more important than accessing classroom-banded books in the sessions.

6.1.3 Improved communication with teachers regarding the content of the platform

Developing a whole-school culture of reading, where teachers model themselves as readers and reading is made explicit in every aspect of school life, is crucial in building pupils' positive attitudes to reading and in demonstrating the universality of reading as an activity that extends beyond the classroom. In making teachers aware of the texts available to pupils and of the content of the sessions, Bookmark can help teachers ensure that the content of the platform is embedded in the wider culture of the school and maximise the reading-for-pleasure benefits it provides. This also ensures greater linkage between the programme and classroom activity.

6.1.4 Support for schools struggling with technology

In addition, many schools have poor access to hardware and Wi-Fi. Therefore, schools that might benefit most from the additional support of an online reading-tutoring platform may be less likely to have access to the devices needed to facilitate such an intervention. Some online reading-tutoring platforms provide devices for pupils to use for the duration of the intervention[121]. This may be worth considering for schools that would otherwise struggle to access devices to allow children to take part in Bookmark's online tutoring sessions.

6.1.5 Further development of the online platform

In addition to ensuring a range of available materials through the online platform, it is important to ensure that any platform allows the basic functionalities highlighted in this review, including foregrounding inclusion. These key considerations are:

- intuitive navigation
- ability to conduct short, regular, engaging sessions
- opportunities for joint media engagement (social or co-use with others or high interactional quality)
- allowing high interactional quality through real-time audio and video
- minimal features on the screen alongside text
- allow adjustment for text font and size, background colour, and the ability to record

Moreover, future development could utilise Kolb's Triple E Framework[122] for what works and does not work when it comes to technology in learning, and take advantage of the affordances

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[121] Innovations for Learning. (n.d.). *Support for schools.* Retrieved 11 March 2021, https://www.innovationsforlearning.org/uk/support-for-schools

[122] Triple E Framework. (n.d.). *Triple E Framework*. Retrieved 11 March 2021, https://www.tripleeframework.com

of technology to engage (in learning goals), enhance (of learning goals) and extend learning. This means development of the platform could consider questions such as:

- "Does the technology allow students to focus on the assignment or activity with less distraction?"[123] (Engagement)
- "Does the technology tool aid students in developing or demonstrating a more sophisticated understanding of the content?"[124] (Enhancement)
- "Does the technology allow students to build skills that they can use in their everyday lives?"[125]

6.2 Other considerations

In addition to the key recommendations, there are other potential considerations for future development of the programme:

6.2.1 Use of teaching assistants

While the programme's identity is based on the use of volunteers to support children's reading, teaching assistants are a readily available resource in many schools, so potential future development could explore how teaching assistants could be trained to provide reading support with Bookmark's model. As the evidence base also suggests support delivered by teaching assistants is successful[126], inclusion of teaching assistants might provide an opportunity to increase face-to-face support, particularly for schools in areas where recruiting volunteers from the community has been less successful.

6.2.2 Regular evaluation of the programme

This review suggests that Bookmark's programmes are well designed based on available evidence. However, a regular evaluation – conducted internally or externally – is needed to prove the effectiveness and explore the benefits on children's reading of this particular model. Evaluation of the programmes could also compare the effectiveness of the face-to-face and online support to determine how resources are best allocated in the future.

6.2.3 Engaging and supporting children online: enhanced information for volunteers

It may be worth including brief information about research on joint media engagement, interactional quality and social contingency to inform and encourage volunteers in their roles supporting children's learning online. Advice and guidance on aspects of interactional quality (such as dialogic reading) and using relevant opportunities for socially contingent content (such as relating what is in the text to the child's own experience) could be shared to respond to the existing evidence base.

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[123] Triple E Framework. (n.d.). *Engage*. Retrieved 24 March 2021, https://www.tripleeframework.com/engagement.html

[124] Triple E Framework. (n.d.). *Enhance*. Retrieved 24 March 2021, https://www.tripleeframework.com/enhancement.html

[125] Triple E Framework. (n.d.). *Extend*. Retrieved 24 March 2021, https://www.tripleeframework.com/extension.html

[126] see e.g., Education Endowment Foundation. (2018). One to one tuition. Retrieved 11 March 2021, https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/pdf/generate/?u=https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/pdf/toolkit/?id=135&t=Teaching%20and%20Learning%20Toolkit&e=135&s=; Education Endowment Foundation. (2018). Making best use of teaching assistants. Retrieved 11 March 2021, https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/tools/guidance-reports/making-best-use-of-teaching-assistants/

As all children are individuals, some will prefer to experience reading in print to reading on a screen and they may need more support to understand what they are reading on the screen. Much of the academic advice to date relates to older children (reading from the internet) rather than younger children reading fewer words from a book-like image on a screen. However, it may be helpful to consider whether training could include guidance on specific techniques known to support effective reading comprehension generally, with an acknowledgement that this may be more difficult on screen for some children.

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Coram Beanstalk. (n.d.). *Story Starters: 2017-2019 Impact and evaluation report.* Retrieved 11 March 2021, https://www.beanstalkcharity.org.uk/Handlers/Download.ashx?IDMF=05679033-45a5-4c7b-9270-f0ef9e7bc53b

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