

Monteagle School - The Final Results

The big news is that every child at Monteagle Primary can now read simple sentences well enough to score a reading age. At the start of the school year in September 2006 more than a quarter of the pupils – 29% could not read well enough to score a reading age.

At the start of the school year 55% of the children were reading at a level more than a year behind that expected for their age. Ten months later and that has dropped to 28%.

The number of children seriously behind with their reading has more than halved from 230 children to 111 and they are catching up fast.

Children who are reading properly – close to their expected level or better has gone from 25% to 49%

In September 2006, the reading age of every child at Monteagle Primary from age 6 to age 11 (Years 2–6) age was measured using the Suffolk Reading Scale.

For the Year 1 children (age 5-6) and those older children who were known to have particular reading difficulties, Reading Now was used.

The lowest reading age for the Suffolk Reading Scale is age 6 and for Reading Now it is age 5. These tests were repeated at the beginning of July for all children who had spent at least 2 terms at the school.

Suffolk Reading Scale and Reading Now are both published by nfer Nelson.

Reading age Test Results in September by year group

YEAR Group	Number of children tested	13 or more months behind	No reading age on test i.e. non-readers	5 to 12 months behind correct level	No more than 4 months behind
Year 1	79	60	60	13	6
Year 2	63	28	28	14	21
Year 3	70	39	22	13	18
Year 4	61	28	9	13	20
Year 5	78	38	1	16	24
Year 6	70	37	1	16	17
TOTAL	421	230	121	85	106
percent	100%	55%	29%	20%	25%

Reading age Test Results in July by year group

YEAR Group	Number of children tested	13 or more months behind	No reading age on test i.e. non-readers	5 to 12 months behind correct level	No more than 4 months behind*
Year 1	62	11	0	19	32
Year 2	69	15	0	14	40
Year 3	65	22	0	15	28
Year 4	59	13	0	10	36
Year 5	73	30	0	11	32
Year 6	63	20	0	18	25
TOTAL	391	111	0	87	193
percent	100%	28%	0	22%	49%

Year 1

Children in Year 1 are at least 5 years old – they had their 6th birthday between the beginning of September 2006 and the end of August 2007. This year group started the school year with very poor reading skills – 76% were unable to score a reading age on the test designed for children of this age - Reading Now - which means that they were reading at lower than the level expected of a child aged exactly 5 years.

There were 48 children who had started the year as non-readers who were still at the school in July. All of them scored a reading age in July. Twenty two of them had caught up with their expected level or were reading at a higher level. For example, one girl failed to score a reading age in September and also did not score a spelling age. English is not her first language but her vocabulary is at the level expected of a child of her age. By July she scored a reading age of 7 years and 3 months - which is 15 months ahead of her actual age - and she was spelling at the level expected of a child of age 7 years and 5 months.

A boy whose only language is English went from being a non-reader to having a reading age of 5 years and 2 months which is 11 months behind his actual age. It doesn't sound like much progress but this boy started the year with a very poor vocabulary, poorer than a three year old, so he has been learning to speak his language at the same time as he is learning to read it.

This entire year group has now grasped the basics of reading.

Reception

Children in Reception have just started school and turn 5 during the course of the school year. Many children start at Monteagle Primary with very poor vocabularies and this year 48% of the reception children do not speak English as their first language – many of these children knew very little English at the start of the year. The reading tests we used are not designed for children this young but we tested the 18 children in the top reading group using Reading Now in July. All but one child scored a reading age. Seven of these 5 year olds scored reading ages of more than age 6 years.

Years 5 & 6

There were some dramatic improvements in the reading of these 9-11 year olds. For example, one girl who was 9 years and 1 month in September scored a reading age of 7 years and 1 month. In July she scored a reading age of 10 years and 2 months. That's an increase of 37 months in 10 months. But for most of these older children it's very difficult to catch up with their correct reading age. The test is not only a test of decoding ability but also of comprehension and many of these older non-readers have very poor vocabularies. For most children reading is the fuel that feeds the growth in their vocabulary and these children have had years of being unable to read whilst their reading peer's vocabulary has grown.

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