

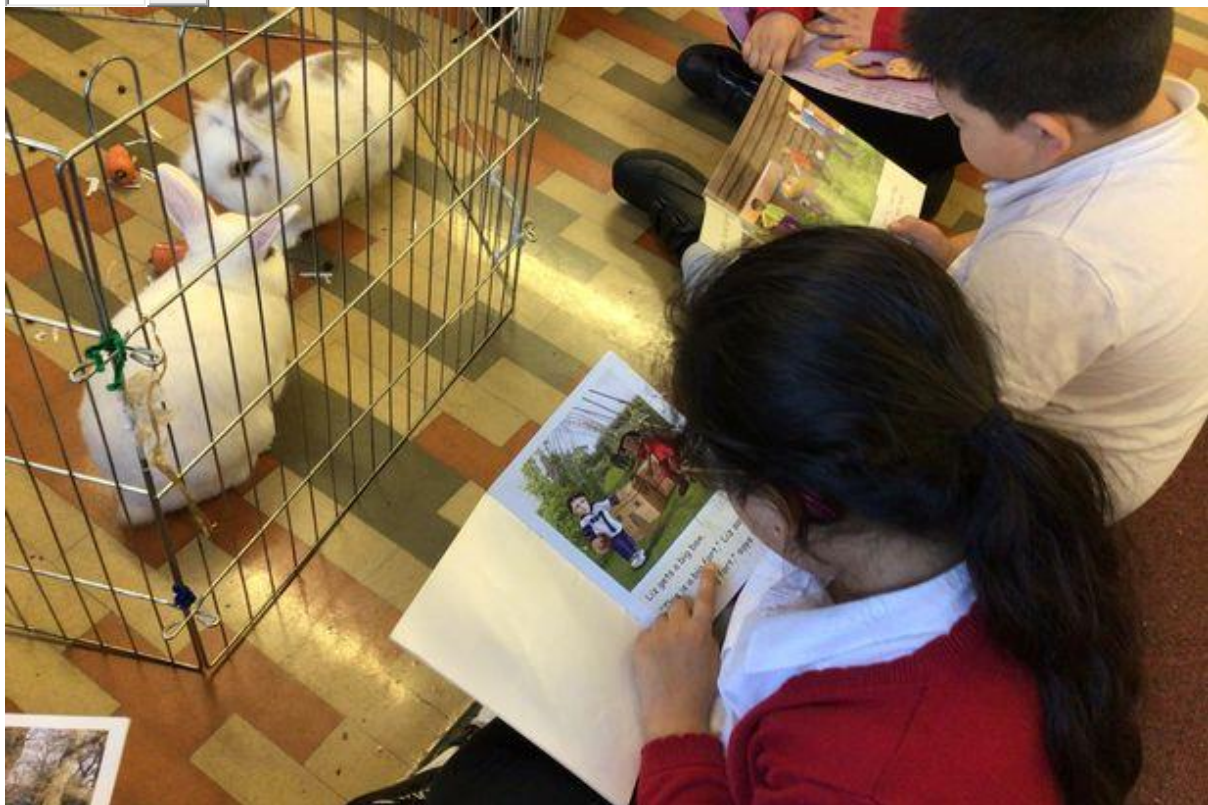
Adorable way Derby teachers help get kids reading leads to 'good' Ofsted rating

'Reading is at the heart of school life' at Pear Tree Infant School

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Reading rabbits Rosie and Rodrigo listen to stories with the children (Image: Pear Tree Infant School)

Pupils at a Derby infant school "are immersed in a world of books" from the moment they start their education and to help them with their reading some of the youngest children are accompanied by the school's reading rabbits - Rosie and Rodrigo.

Inspectors from Ofsted were impressed by the attention given to reading at **Pear Tree Infant School**, as well as other subjects on the "ambitious" curriculum and rated the school as "good" overall.

The **Ofsted** inspectors visited the Pear Tree Street school at the end of November last year for two days and they decided that "staff inspire pupils to have high aspirations for their futures". Pupils told the inspection team, "I feel happy when I come here - we have a lot of fun" and "I like to be at school because I can make new friends and learn new things".

The newly-published report notes that "pupils cannot wait to visit the reading den" where the rabbits are, and which is fitted out like a forest woodland, and they told the inspectors: "It is a relaxing indoor forest where we can go to read." The inspectors decided that "reading is at the heart of school life" and pupils also like to collect books through a reading scheme.

Each term children receive a reading reward card, and if they read at home and bring their book back to exchange on a Friday they receive a stamp on their card. Once they have received 12 stamps they are given a token and are able to choose a book from the school's booking vending machine.

The report continues: "Pupils get on well with each other. They are polite and respectful. Pupils behave well. Pupils know that bullying is not tolerated and one of them said: "The grown-ups at Pear Tree Infant School make sure everyone feels happy, comfortable and safe." Pupils also enjoy maths, according to the report.

In order to improve further, the 270-pupil school, which is aimed at pupils aged five to seven, needs to make sure that the rate of absence is not too high and reduce absenteeism. Leaders also need to ensure that curriculum plans are being implemented in every subject.

Headteacher Bindy Suddhi joined the school in 2017 and is said to have worked tirelessly since then to improve standards and to ensure that the children aim high. Mrs Suddhi said: "The staff and children at the school are hardworking and resilient. Since 2017 the school has undergone many changes. Aiming high and embedding ambitious aspirations for the future of every child is of paramount importance to me. It is heart-warming to know that the children have a voice and feel safe and happy.

"Learning and enjoying learning is at the heart of our philosophy. We take great pride in promoting our uniqueness which includes the acceptance of diversity. As our children have rightly said 'it does not matter what people look like or where they're from, just treat them kindly'. I am proud and honoured to work with such remarkable children, staff, and wider school community."

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