

# Sodexo Stop Hunger Foundation Supporting Chapter One children in Manchester



## LILY, YEAR 1

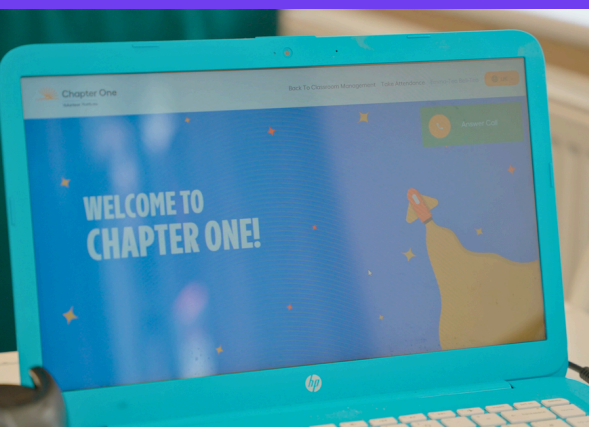
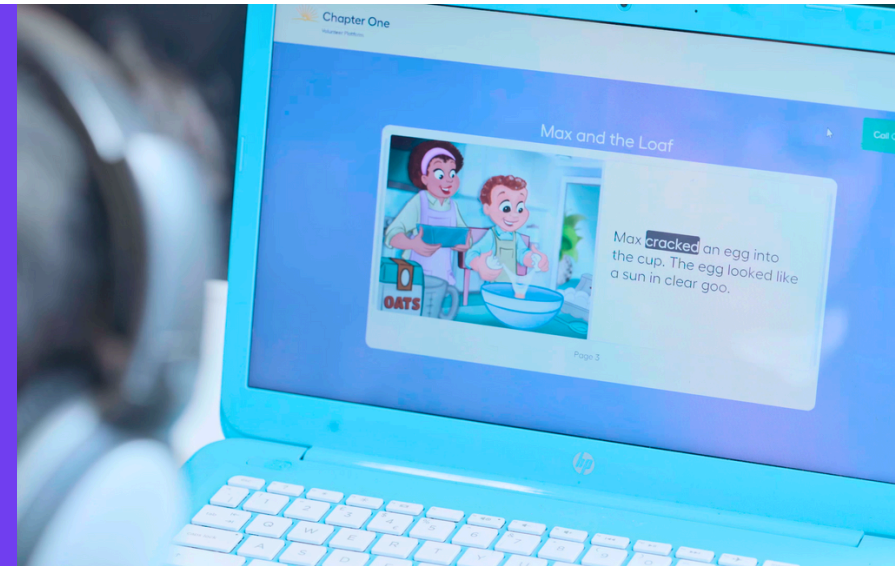
Winter and Spring terms 2023-24



### Child and school background

Lily\* attends Year 1 in a school in Manchester. In this school, 37.9% of pupils are in receipt of Pupil Premium funding and 87.9% of pupils have English as an additional language. As part of their Pupil Premium Strategy for 2023–24, this school highlights their key challenges for pupils facing disadvantage. Too many children enter the Early Years Foundation Stage with lower-than-average language abilities, and the school also has a high proportion of pupils who are new arrivals to the UK.

Lily's teacher, Ms Smith\*, put Lily forward for Chapter One due to a hearing impairment, speech difficulties, and low reading confidence. Lily is paired with Danni Fitton, an online reading volunteer from Sodexo. Lily began reading with Danni in early November 2023.



When Chapter One interviewed her teacher and Sodexo volunteer, Lily had been reading online for 30 minutes a week with her volunteer reader for the first two terms of the school year.

*\*Lily and Ms Smith are not their real names.*

**AT CHAPTER ONE, WE TRANSFORM  
CHILDREN'S FUTURES WITH  
1:1 READING SUPPORT AT THE TIME  
THEY NEED IT THE MOST.**

## LILY'S EXPERIENCE WITH CHAPTER ONE

According to her teacher, Ms Smith, at the start of Year 1, Lily was in the lowest reading group, was unfamiliar with many sounds, struggled to decode and did not have much knowledge of 'sight' words like 'the'. She was not reading at the expected level for her age. However, since taking part in Chapter One, both teacher and volunteer noted a variety of **improved reading skills** in Lily.

Now, according to Ms Smith, Lily is reading confidently at the expected level, her fluency has improved and her sight word recognition has also improved. Her reading comprehension is better, as well as her questioning of texts. This progress has also impacted on improvements in her writing.

Both teacher and volunteer described Lily's **improved confidence and self-belief**. According to her volunteer Danni, at the start of the year, Lily lacked confidence and was 'fearful', 'nervous' and 'afraid of making mistakes'. Now, Lily's volunteer says that Lily has developed more general confidence around reading. Lily's teacher noted that her increased confidence was not just restricted to reading:

**“ I THINK SHE ... HAS THAT SELF-CONFIDENCE... SHE'S WAY MORE CONFIDENT TO JOIN IN, AND IF WE'RE DOING ACTIVITIES IN CLASS ... SHE'S BEGINNING TO TAKE THE LEAD IN THOSE, SHE WASN'T BEFORE... YOU CAN SEE IT ACROSS HER LEARNING, NOT JUST IN HER READING. ”**

- Ms Smith, Lily's teacher

Lily clearly **enjoys Chapter One reading sessions!** Lily's teacher commented that she very much looks forward to reading with her volunteer: *"I think it is just such a special time where she can have that one-to-one with somebody."*

Danni commented that Lily enjoys the variation of activities and the structure of Chapter One reading sessions. They usually start with flashcards, and move on to reading stories, and Lily is always very excited to play a game at the end of the session.

As Lily now enjoys Chapter One reading sessions, this has led to **increased enjoyment of reading in general**. Danni commented that Lily is much more engaged with reading than she used to be. Lily's teacher told us: *"She really enjoys reading now as well, which she definitely didn't at the beginning of the year, she found it hard."*

Lily now shows a **more positive attitude to reading** and **increased motivation**. Ms Smith said: *"At the beginning of the year if you asked her to come and read with you, she would be quite reluctant to do that, whereas now you ask her, she's like yes, I'll come, straight away, skips over, and so it's just like a real visible change in her."*

Lily's teacher went on to say that, before, Lily would have given up if she came to a tricky word, *"whereas now she's got those skills to decode, knowledge of words to be able to kind of get there and she won't give up on it either"*.

Her volunteer Danni commented: *"She's now much more open and engaged and willing to be challenged"*. According to Danni, Lily has responded very well to progressing up the reading levels – tackling more challenging texts. She now even enjoys the challenge of reading at higher levels!

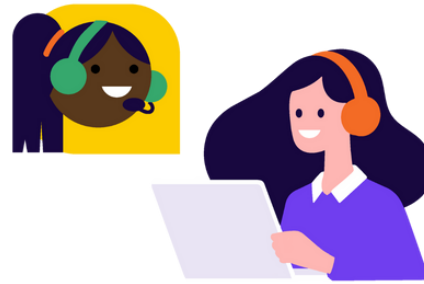


Lily's teacher believes that one of the key benefits of Chapter One for Lily is that she enjoys having someone to talk to – that **one-to-one attention** that Chapter One provides.

**“ I DO THINK IT IS JUST BECAUSE SHE REALLY ENJOYS HAVING THAT TIME SOCIALLY TO **CONNECT WITH SOMEONE.**”**

- Ms Smith, Lily's teacher

Such one-to-one interactions have likely resulted in **improved communication skills** for Lily. According to Danni, at the start of the programme, Lily was nervous about having conversations with her and did not engage when she asked questions. Now *“she'll openly have those [everyday] conversations with me, which is a huge change.”*



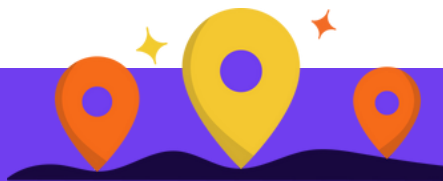
Notably, Lily also reads with a Chapter One volunteer at home, and Lily now enjoys telling Danni about what she had read with the home volunteer. In addition, she now also offers unprompted observations about - and reactions to - the stories they read together. Lily's teacher, Ms Smith, has also seen improvements in her communication skills: *“Her interactions with her peers and with adults have improved a lot, her vocabulary has improved.”*

**MORE THAN A QUARTER OF PUPILS IN MANCHESTER LEAVE PRIMARY SCHOOL UNABLE TO READ WELL**

**44.7%**

of children in Manchester are living in poverty

## Literacy and poverty rates in Manchester



Across the UK, 29% of children are living in poverty; in the North West this rises to 34.3% and in Manchester, to 44.7%. Analysis by the National Literacy Trust and Experian in 2017 found that almost half of the wards in Manchester fall in the top 10% of areas for literacy need in the whole country and more than a quarter of pupils in Manchester leave primary school unable to read well. In 2018, 28% of students in Manchester did not reach the expected standard in reading when they left primary school.