

# Sodexo Stop Hunger Foundation Supporting Chapter One children in London



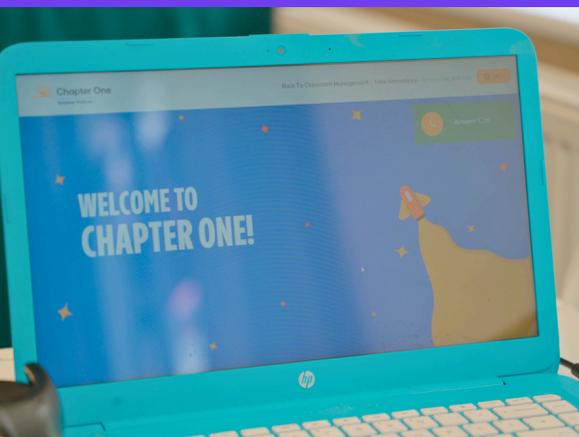
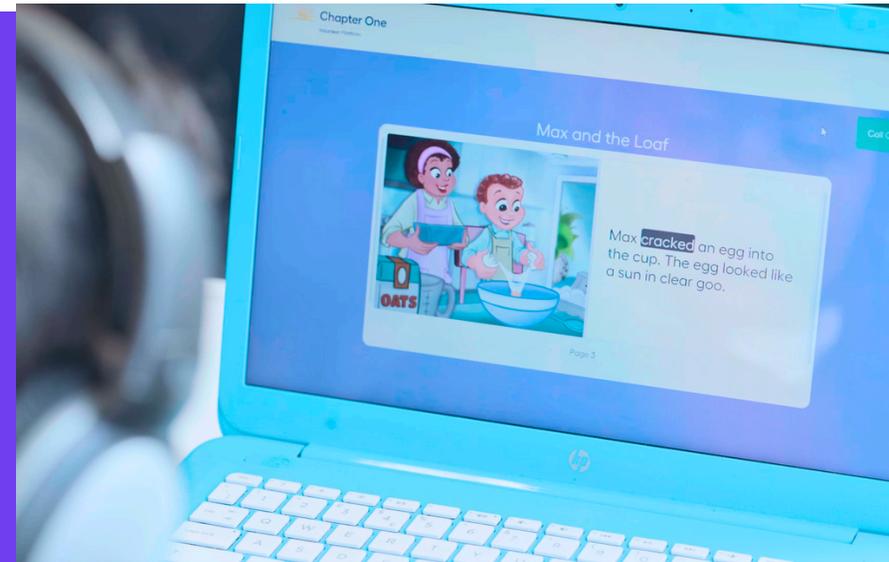
## JUAN, YEAR 1 2023-24 school year



### Child and school background

Juan\* attends Year 1 in **Earlsmead Primary School** in South Tottenham in the London Borough of Haringey. In this school, a significant number of pupils face disadvantage, and 26% of pupils are eligible for Pupil Premium funding. The school has identified key challenges to achievement amongst these pupils, such as low attainment, slow progress, gaps in knowledge and limited cultural or extra curricular experiences outside of school.

Juan's family is keen to support him in reading but as English is not their native language, they can only offer limited support. Juan's teacher - **Vanessa Robson** - put Juan forward for Chapter One reading sessions because, although she noted his potential, she was concerned that he would not reach the expected standard in reading by the end of the school year. Juan was matched with Sodexo volunteer reader **Martin Reeve** and the pair enjoyed reading sessions from October 2023 to June 2024.



We spoke to both Ms Robson and Martin Reeve at the end of the school year. We were also able to speak directly with Juan to hear how he felt about his reading after eight months of additional support from Martin.

\*Juan is not his real name.

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

## JUAN'S READING JOURNEY

According to Ms Robson, at the start of the school year, Juan was not interested in reading. Reading was simply not on his agenda - he just wanted to have fun! Ms Robson described his reading as 'choppy'. Juan wanted help with every word, he'd get stuck on a lot of words, he knew only a few tricky words and he didn't understand what he read. Juan was not on track to meet the expected reading standard by the end of the school year.

However, Juan had positive experiences on the Chapter One Online Reading Volunteers Programme. He told us that he particularly enjoyed the games and activities on the platform, such as 'Three-in-a-Row' - and he really enjoyed winning!

Ms Robson could also see that Juan enjoyed Chapter One reading sessions. She felt that he enjoyed the reading programme because it offered him some special attention, praise and the feeling that he was doing well. Ms Robson also said that his participation in Chapter One sessions brought additional positive benefits to school life:

*"When he comes back into the classroom after Chapter One sessions, this increased motivation is translated to his classroom activities".*

Juan's enjoyment of the programme contributed to a variety of improvements, such as improvements in functional reading skills. According to both Ms Robson and his Sodexo volunteer reader Martin, by the end of the school year Juan had mastered certain sounds and his ability to sound out words had improved, as had his word recognition. Ms Robson said that Juan had reached the expected reading standard at the end of the year.

In addition to improvements in functional reading skills, Juan's confidence and independence in relation to reading had improved. Ms Robson noted: *"He's become more independent and he's more confident to just get on and use the words and the phonics he knows from reading and phonics lessons to get a sentence out..."*

Martin said: *"The most noticeable change in his reading was his confidence in himself to...have a go".*

Martin said Juan was particularly motivated by moving up the levels of the stories, being able to challenge himself with more difficult texts. This resonated with Juan's comments, as the very first thing that he mentioned to us was that he was very proud of moving from the blue to the purple book band, and that he liked to read because it *"made his mum proud"*.

Another important change in Juan's reading behaviours was his increased ability to communicate and discuss what he had read, making links to his own experiences. For example, Martin recalled that they read a story about electric cars together, and this prompted Juan to communicate his own knowledge about the topic: *"[He] took great pleasure in telling me almost everything that he knew about electric cars, you know, which just added more fun to the story."*



## Literacy and poverty rates in Haringey

Haringey is ranked as the fourth most deprived borough in London as measured by the Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) score 2019 (where 1 = most deprived). Haringey is one of the more deprived authorities in the country, ranking 49 out of 317 local authorities. According to the Trust for London, 35% of children in Haringey live in poverty (after housing costs). There are a range of different indicators related to child poverty and Haringey is below average for London in 10 of 18 of these across London. The indicators cover a range of themes, including work, living standards, housing and shared opportunity. There is a particularly low level of social mobility in Haringey, with the borough being in the bottom quartile for London.