

Service definition: Reading Cloud

Service description

Reading Cloud is a web-based, fully responsive solution to effectively manage school library operations. Core functionalities enable users to create, catalogue and circulate multi-format library assets. An intuitive user interface assists students to browse, select and borrow books. These functions are also available alongside administrative controls and reporting within a separate management user interface. Age and subject appropriate reading recommendations, book reservations, alerts and restrictions, loan rules and the borrowing activity and history of students are standard features.

Third party integrations include access to enriched book descriptions and meta data to aid searches and recommendations; access to and management of eBooks; and automated update of student data from the school MIS.

We are currently investing in powerful new features, updated user interfaces and deeper integration with other products in the ParentPay portfolio to bring our connected library vision to life – a flexible reading enablement platform that seamlessly links school, pupil and home with a shared goal of improving literacy. Speak to our Sales Team to find out more.

Onboarding support

Reading Cloud provides structured onboarding through a comprehensive library of training videos and documentation accessible 24/7/365. Each customer can be supported by a dedicated Product Specialist who delivers basic training and orientation sessions tailored to library staff needs. Product Specialists guide customers through initial setup, ensure the site is fully operational, and verify that staff are confident using core platform features. This combination of self-service resources and personalised support ensures smooth implementation and rapid time-to-value.

Offboarding support

Schools wishing to end their Reading Cloud contract should email notice of contract termination to info@Reading-Cloud.com at least 90 days prior to the contract renewal date. Our support team will then guide the school through the close down process.

Service constraints

Reading Cloud comes with standard integrations for the upload of student data; book meta data and ebook management.

Customisation

Reading Cloud is highly configurable to meet the specific needs of individual schools and educational institutions. System Administrators have comprehensive access to configure the platform across multiple dimensions. Schools can customise user account management and role-based access controls to align with their organisational structure, defining permissions for librarians, teachers, support staff, parent volunteers, and pupils. The management interface can be formatted and branded to reflect school identity and preferences. Circulation rules can be tailored to individual school policies, including loan periods, reservation limits, fine structures, and age-appropriate borrowing restrictions. Schools can organise their library collections using custom classification systems and create curriculum-linked reading lists aligned with their educational priorities. The interface presentation can be adjusted to suit different user groups, with simplified versions for younger pupils featuring minimal text and engaging graphics, while older students and staff access more comprehensive functionality. Reading Cloud integrates with approved school Management Information Systems (MIS) and identity providers, allowing schools to configure data synchronisation and single sign-on authentication according to their existing infrastructure. Schools can also configure notification preferences, reading recommendations algorithms, and reporting parameters to match their operational requirements and strategic reading engagement objectives.

Service availability

Service availability target is 99.5% for all applications and services. Service availability is provided as per service levels defined in the Customer Service Agreement. This is 24/7/365, with documented maintenance windows agreed with the customer. These maintenance windows take place outside of normal school hours.

System availability is monitored and reported on a monthly basis and can be reported to the customer as required.

Support

Reading Cloud provides comprehensive omnichannel support through multiple channels designed to meet diverse user needs. Our 24/7/365 AI-powered chatbot delivers immediate assistance for common queries, seamlessly handing over to human support colleagues during operational hours when needed. Users can access our extensive knowledge base featuring help articles, FAQs, technical documentation, and a comprehensive catalogue of online training videos available on demand.

For queries requiring human assistance, support requests can be submitted via email, telephone, and online portal forms. Operational support hours are available Monday to Friday, 08:30 to 16:30 (UK time), excluding bank holidays. Email and online portal

submissions are accepted 24/7/365, with responses provided during operational hours according to priority level.

Our priority-based response system ensures timely resolution aligned with issue severity. Most telephone and chat enquiries are resolved during initial contact, with our SLA compliance target set at 92%.

Target response timetable:

Priority	Definition	Target First Response	Target Resolution
P1 – Critical	Complete system outage, data loss, or security breach affecting multiple schools with no workaround available.	30 minutes	2 hours
P2 – High	Major functionality failure affecting core library operations with limited or complex workaround.	1 hour	4 hours
P3 – Medium	Moderate impact on library operations with stable workaround available or affecting single school.	2 hours	1 business day
P4 – Low	Minor issues, feature requests, training questions, or non-urgent administrative matters.	4 hours	3 business days

After sales support

All users will have access to our online knowledge base. This includes technical details of our systems, FAQs, details of version updates and a portal to submit and manage ticket requests

Technical requirements

Reading Cloud operates as a cloud-hosted, web-based service requiring no mandatory local installations or proprietary devices. Users require a modern, standards-compliant web browser supporting HTML5, JavaScript, and secure TLS encryption, including current versions of Google Chrome, Microsoft Edge, Mozilla Firefox, and Safari. A reliable internet connection with sufficient bandwidth for cloud-based access is essential for optimal performance. The platform is compatible with current operating systems including Windows, macOS, iPadOS, and ChromeOS, accessible through standard web browsers on any device. A minimum screen resolution of 1280×800 pixels is recommended for optimal use of the management interface. USB barcode scanners must comply with standard HID (Human Interface Device) specifications for seamless integration with circulation workflows. Cookies and local storage must be enabled for secure session management and optimal user experience. Network firewalls must permit outbound HTTPS traffic to Reading Cloud endpoints. Up-to-date anti-virus software is recommended on school-managed devices for security best practice. Access to an approved identity provider for single sign-on authentication is required for secure user access. CSV file support is available for manual data imports where MIS integration is unavailable. A dedicated Reading Cloud mobile application is available for download on the Play Store (Android), Apple App Store (iOS), and Kindle App Store, providing mobile access to library features. The system is fully responsive across all devices, maintaining consistent navigation and functionality whether accessed through desktop browsers, tablets, or mobile devices.

ParentPay Group IT operations

- ParentPay Group operations and infrastructure is fully resilient and prepared to handle a comprehensive set of serious failures. These are exercised regularly through various mechanisms
- All critical systems are replicated between data centres and backups are encrypted and replicated to cloud storage in our UK Data Centres
- Our RTO for all unscheduled service outages is 4 hours and RPO is near real-time
- Office locations have redundant internet connectivity to ensure continued service for telephony and SaaS systems used for the delivery of the service
- Telephony and Support systems are cloud based and are resilient to failure, with Disaster Recovery capability
- ParentPay Group operates a secondary datacentre for use in a disaster scenario
- All staff throughout ParentPay Group are able to work from any location, with all systems enabled for remote access. This ensures that all functions of the company can operate without the risk of a physical location being lost.

Maintenance management

ParentPay Group communicates any downtime due to planned system maintenance with all users, well in advance of the maintenance window. These are scheduled to take place late at night, to avoid disruption to users. Any software releases are performed outside of school opening hours.

System monitoring

Reading Cloud systems are monitored 24/7/365 using Azure Monitor, Azure Alerting, and Azure Log Analytics to identify and resolve issues proactively. Our change management process ensures all affected parties receive advance notification of planned maintenance or service disruptions, with detailed scheduling to minimize impact on educational activities.

For unplanned incidents, customers are informed based on severity and impact. Major incidents affecting multiple schools receive immediate notification via email and Support portal status updates, with regular progress communications until resolution. Medium and low-priority incidents are communicated through Support portal notifications. All notifications include incident details, expected resolution timeframes, and workaround guidance where available.

Hosting locations

Our platforms are hosted solely within the UK. A number of sub-processors process data from within the EEA. All such transfers are fully safeguarded as required by the EU GDPR and UK Data Protection Law.

All data centre locations are managed by dedicated specialist third party data centre operators. All data centre locations are certified by specialist third parties, independent to the datacentre provider. All locations are subject to PCI-DSS and ISO 27001 Standards.

Access to data (upon exit)

Our Support team will advise schools on how and when to access and download relevant data, as part of the closedown process. Data can be exported in Excel or .csv format.

Security

- ParentPay Group has a dedicated team of qualified security experts
- ParentPay Group is fully ISO27001 Certified
- ParentPay Group is also Cyber Essentials Plus certified, at time of writing, we are one of just a few (if not the only) CE+ certified supplier across UK EdTech
- ParentPay Group undertakes a comprehensive suite of penetration tests (approx. 80 tests per year); each product is tested at least once per year
- We operate industry leading network and host-based intrusion detection systems and best in class endpoint security technologies – including 24x7x365 Managed Detection and Response (MDR) with unlimited incident response support from highly regarded global cyber security specialists