

Press release: FOREIGN FLAGGED SHIPS UNDER DETENTION IN THE UK DURING NOVEMBER 2017

During November, there were eight new detentions of foreign flagged vessels in a UK port. seven vessels remained under detention from previous months. A total of seven vessels remain under detention at the end of November.

1. In response to one of the recommendations of Lord Donaldson's inquiry into the prevention of pollution from merchant shipping, and in compliance with the EU Directive on Port State Control (2009/16/EC as amended), the Maritime and Coastguard agency (MCA) publishes details of the foreign flagged vessels detained in UK ports each month.
2. The UK is part of a regional agreement on port state control known as the Paris Memorandum of Understanding on Port State Control (Paris MOU) and information on all ships that are inspected is held centrally in an electronic database known as THETIS. This allows the ships with a high risk rating and poor detention records to be targeted for future inspection.
3. Inspections of foreign flagged ships in UK ports are undertaken by surveyors from the Maritime and Coastguard Agency. When a ship is found to be not in compliance with applicable convention requirements, a deficiency may be raised. If any of their deficiencies are so serious they have to be rectified before departure, then the ship will be detained.
4. All deficiencies should be rectified before departure if at all possible.
5. When applicable, the list includes those passenger craft prevented from operating under the provisions of the EU Directive on Mandatory Surveys for the safe operation of regular Ro-Ro ferry and high speed passenger craft services (1999/35/EU).

Notes on the list of detentions

- Full details of the ship. The accompanying detention list shows ship's International Maritime Organization (IMO) number which is unchanging throughout the ship's life and uniquely identifies it. It also shows the ship's name and flag state at the time of its inspection.
- Company. The company shown in the vessel's Safety Management Certificate

(SMC) or if there is no SMC, then the party otherwise believed to be responsible for the safety of the ship at the time of inspection.

- Classification Society. The list shows the Classification Society responsible for classing the ship only.
- Recognised Organisation. Responsible for conducting the statutory surveys: and issuing statutory certificates on behalf of the Flag State
- White (WL), Grey (GL) and Black lists (BL) are issued by the Paris MoU on 01 July each year and shows the performance of flag State.

SHIPS DETAINED IN NOVEMBER 2017

Vessel Name: DOLLY C

GT: 652

IMO: 7222310

Flag: St Vincent & Grenadines (Grey List)

Company: No Information

Classification Society: No Information

Recognised Organisation: No Information

Recognised Organisation for ISM Doc: No Information

Recognised Organisation for ISM SMC: No Information

Date and Place of Detention: 29th November 2017 at Falmouth

Summary: Eight deficiencies with eight grounds for detention

Defective item	Nature of defect	Ground for Detention
01209 – Manning specified by the minimum safe manning doc	Missing	Yes
01214 – Endorsement by flagstate	Missing	Yes
07111 – Personal equipment for fire safety	Missing	Yes
01199 – Other (Certificates)	Other	Yes
11116 – Distress flares	Missing	Yes
05103 – Main installation	Missing equipment	Yes
10105 – Magnetic compass	Not as required	Yes
14103 – Segregation of oil and water ballast	Not as required	Yes

This vessel was still detained on 30th November 2017

Vessel Name: HORIZON GEOBAY

GT: 3502

IMO: 7801556

Flag: Panama (White List)

Company: Horizon Survey Co

Classification Society: ABS

Recognised Organisation: ABS/DNV GL

Recognised Organisation for ISM Doc: BV

Recognised Organisation for ISM SMC: BV

Date and Place of Detention: 23th November 2017 at Aberdeen

Summary: Twenty deficiencies with two grounds for detention

Defective item	Nature of defect	Ground for Detention
10101 – Pilot ladders and hoist/pilot transfer arrangements	Unsafe	No
99101 – Other safety in general	Other	No
10106 – Compass correction log	Not as required	No
06199 – Other (cargo)	Other	No
10114 – Voyage data recorder (VDR)/Simplified Voyage data recorder (S_VDR)	Not as required	No
11118 – Lifejackets inc. provision and disposition	Not as required	No
18408 – Electrical	Unsafe	No
07105 – Fire doors/openings in fire-resisting divisions	Unsafe	No
07105 – Fire doors/openings in fire-resisting divisions	Not as required	No
01213 – Evidence of Basic Training	Missing	Yes
99101 – Other safety in general	Other	No
99101 – Other safety in general	Other	No
01126 – Document of compliance dangerous goods	Missing	No
10127 – Voyage or passage plan	Not as required	No
10129 – Navigation records	Not as required	No
16101 – Security related defects	Not as required	No
05115 – Radio log (diary)	Not as required	No
15150 – ISM	Not as required	Yes
10138 – BNWAS	Malfunctioning	No
07105 – Fire doors/openings in fire-resisting divisions	Malfunctioning	No

This vessel was still detained on 30th November 2017

Vessel Name: SSI EXPEDITION

GT: 32987

IMO: 9446714

Flag: Marshall Islands (White List)

Company: Atlantis

Classification Society: LR

Recognised Organisation: LR

Recognised Organisation for ISM Doc: LR

Recognised Organisation for ISM SMC: LR

Date and Place of Detention: 24th November 2017 at Teesport

Summary: Twenty deficiencies with three grounds for detention

Defective item	Nature of defect	Ground for Detention
07109 – Fixed fire extinguishing installation	Not as required	No
10109 – Lights, shapes, sound-signals	Inoperative	No
03108 – Ventilators, air pipes, casing	Corroded	No
10105 – Magnetic compass	Not as required	No
11101 – Lifeboats	Not properly maintained	No
11113 – Launching arrangements for rescue boats	Not as required	No
07108 – Ready availability of fire fighting equipment	Inoperative	No
11110 – Stowage and provision of liferafts	HRU improp. Fitted	No
07103 – Division – decks, bulkheads and penetrations	Not as required	No
03106 – Windows, sidescuttles and deadlights	Cracked	No
18312 – Galley, handlingroom (maintenance)	Missing	No
18407 – Lighting (Working spaces)	Inoperative	No
18408 – Electrical	Not as required	No
02117 – Decks – corrosion	Holed	Yes
03104 – Cargo & other hatchways	Damaged	No
07112 – Emergency escape breathing device and disposition	Not as required	No
03107 – Doors	Corroded	No
18314 – Provisions quality	Missing	No
07114 – Remote means of control (opening, pumps, ventilation, etc.) Machinery spaces	Not as required	Yes
15150 – ISM	Not as required	Yes

This vessel was released on 27th November 2017

Vessel Name: OCEAN SPIRIT

GT: 1717

IMO: 8325793

Flag: Russian Federation (White List)

Company: F2 Ltd

Classification Society: RINA

Recognised Organisation: RINA

Recognised Organisation for ISM Doc: RMRS

Recognised Organisation for ISM SMC: RMRS

Date and Place of Detention: 21st November 2017 at Aberdeen

Summary: Fourteen deficiencies with eight grounds for detention

Defective item	Nature of defect	Ground for Detention
08110 – Closing water-tight doors alarm	Inoperative	Yes
10138 – BNWAS	Inadequate	No
10138 – BNWAS	Malfunctioning	Yes
1110 – Rescue boats	Not ready for use	Yes
10101 – Pilot ladders and hoist/pilot transfer arrangements	Unsafe	No
99101 – Other safety in general	Other	Yes
18317 – Food personal hygiene	Not hygienic	No
10118 – Speed and distance indicator	Inoperative	Yes
13102 – Auxilary engine	Not as required	No
07106 – Fire detection and alarm system	Not as required	Yes
07105 – Fire doors/openings in fire-resisting divisions	Not as required	No
15150 – ISM	Not as required	Yes
10117 – Echo sounder	Inoperative	Yes
18418 – Winches & capstans	Missing	No

This vessel was still detained on 30th November 2017

Vessel Name: ANJA

GT: 2996

IMO: 9116187

Flag: Netherlands (White List)

Company: Holwerda Ship Management BV

Classification Society: DNV GL

Recognised Organisation: DNV GL

Recognised Organisation for ISM Doc: DNV GL

Recognised Organisation for ISM SMC: DNV GL

Date and Place of Detention: 7th November 2017 at Immingham

Summary: Sixteen deficiencies with eight grounds for detention

Defective item	Nature of defect	Ground for Detention
Other		No
03102 – Freeboard marks	Not readable	No
07105 – Fire doors/openings in fire resisting divisions	Not as required	Yes
06101 – Cargo Securing Manual	Not as required	No
07112 – Emergency escape breathing device and disposition	Not properly stowed	NO
18409 – Dangerous areas	Unsafe	Yes
18416 – Ropes and wires	Not as required	No
18325 – Training and qualification of ship's cook	Not as required	No
10127 – Voyage or passage plan	Not as required	Yes
10133 – Bridge operation	Lack of familiarity	Yes
04109 – Fire drills	Lack of training	Yes
04108 – Muster list	Incomplete	Yes
09235 – Fitness for duty – work and drest hours	Work hours exceeded	Yes
01306 – Shipboard working arrangements	Not as required	No
10136 – Establishment of working language on board	Not established	No
15150 – ISM	Not as required	Yes

This vessel was released on 10th November 2017

Vessel Name: DS SOFIE BULKER

GT: 17663

IMO: 9310604

Flag: Marshall Islands (White List) Company: Dramar Denizciuk Ticaret AS

Classification Society: NKK

Recognised Organisation: NKK

Recognised Organisation for ISM Doc: NKK

Recognised Organisation for ISM SMC: NKK

Date and Place of Detention: 7th November 2017 at Tilbury

Summary: Seven deficiencies with one grounds for detention

Defective item	Nature of defect	Ground for Detention
15150 – ISM	Not as required	No
01308 – Record of seafarers' daily hours of work or rest	Incorrect entries	No
01220 – Seafarers' employment agreement (SEA)	Invalid	Yes
07105 – Fire doors/opening in fire-resisting divisions	Not as required	No
18203 – Wages	Not according SEA	No
10111 – Charts	Missing	No
02107 – Ballast, fuel and other tanks	Not as required	No

This vessel was released on 10th November 2017

Vessel Name: CETUS STAR

GT: 19828

IMO: 9278741

Flag: Malta (White List)

Company: Stam Shipping SA

Classification Society: NKK

Recognised Organisation: NKK

Recognised Organisation for ISM Doc: NKK

Recognised Organisation for ISM SMC: NKK

Date and Place of Detention: 3rd November 2017 at Liverpool

Summary: Eleven deficiencies with two grounds for detention

Defective item	Nature of defect	Ground for Detention
10111 – Charts	Missing	Yes
10127 – Voyage or passage plan	Not as required	No
04109 – Fire drills	Lack of control	No
10105 – Magnetic compass	Not as required	No

04103 – Emergency, lighting, batteries and switches	Inoperative	No
07113 – Fire pumps and its pipes	Not as required	No
07105 – Fire doors/openings in fire-resisting divisions	Not as required	No
02105 – Steering gear	Not as required	No
13102 – Auxiliary engine	Not as required	No
13101 – Propulsion main engine	Not as required	No
02101 – Closing devices/watertight doors	Not as required	No
15150 – ISM	Not as required	Yes
13104 – Bilge pumping arrangements	Not as required	No
01326 – Stability information booklet	Not as required	No

This vessel was released on 7th November 2017

Vessel Name: KOMET III

GT: 4169

IMO: 8919831

Flag: Antigua & Barbuda (White List)

Company: Planet Schiffahrts GmbH

Classification Society: RINA

Recognised Organisation: RINA/BV/GL

Recognised Organisation for ISM Doc: BV

Recognised Organisation for ISM SMC: BV

Date and Place of Detention: 2nd November 2017 at Ipswich

Summary: Twenty one deficiencies with seven grounds for detention

Defective item	Nature of defect	Ground for Detention
10111 – Charts	Missing	Yes
10111 – Charts	Not updated	Yes
10127 – Voyage or passage plan	Not as required	Yes
10135 – Monitoring of voyage or passage plan	Not as required	Yes
14104 – Oil filtering equipment	Inoperative	Yes
18312 – Galley, handling room (maintenance)	Not as required	No
11124 – Embarkation arrangement survival craft	Not properly maintained	No

01308 – Record of seafarers' daily hours of work or rest	Incorrect entries	No
01218 – Medical certificate	not properly filled	No
04118 – Enclosed space entry and rescue drill	Not carried out	No
01315 – Oil record book	Not as required	No
10133 – Bridge operation	Lack of familiarity	No
11117 – Lifebuoys incl. provision and disposition	Not as required	No
07105 – Fire doors/openings in fire-resisting divisions	Unsafe	No
18407 – Lighting (Working spaces)	Insufficient	No
18315 – Provisions quality and nutritional value	Not as required	No
07199 – Other (fire safety)	Other	No
18401 – Medical equipment, medical chest, medical guide	Expired	No
10109 – Lights, shapes, sound signals	Damaged	No
07118 – International shore connection	Not as required	No
15150 – ISM	Not as required	Yes

This vessel was released on 8th November 2017

DETENTIONS CARRIED OVER FROM PREVIOUS MONTHS

Vessel Name: APELLA

GT: 662

IMO: 7607613

Flag: Sierra Leone (Black List)

Company: 4M Lojistir Hizmetleri Ltd

Classification Society: PSC0

Recognised Organisation: PSC0

Recognised Organisation for ISM Doc: PSC0

Recognised Organisation for ISM SMC: PSC0

Date and Place of Detention: 27th October 2017 at Plymouth

Summary: Twenty deficiencies with eighteen grounds for detention

Defective item	Nature of defect	Ground for Detention
01137 – Civil liability for Bunker oil pollution damage cert	Missing	Yes

01139 – Maritime Labour Certificate	Missing	Yes
01106 – Document of Compliance	Missing	Yes
01122 – International ship security certificate	Missing	Yes
01113 – Minimum Safe Manning Document	Entries missing	Yes
01123 – Continuous Synopsis Record	Invalid	No
01209 – Manning specified by the Minimum Safe Manning document	Not as required	Yes
01214 – Endorsement by flagstate	Missing	Yes
07110 – Fire fighting equipment and appliances	Not properly maintained	No
05118 – Operation of GMDSS	Lack of familiarity	Yes
10112 – Electronic charts (ECDIS)	Not as required	Yes
10116 – Nautical publications	Missing	Yes
18201 – Fitness for duty – work and rest hours	Not as required	Yes
04108 – Muster List	Not updated	Yes
01326 – Stability information booklet	Not approved	Yes
01315 – Oil record book	Entries Missing	Yes
11116 – Distress flares	Expired	Yes
13102 – Auxiliary engine	Not as required	Yes
11104 – Rescue boats	Not properly maintained	Yes
07105 – Fire doors/opening in fire-resisting divisions	Missing	Yes

This vessel was released on 22nd November 2017

Vessel Name: BLUE ALFA

GT: 1887

IMO: 7921007

Flag: Denmark (White List)

Company: Blue Star Line

Classification Society: RINA

Recognised Organisation: RINA

Recognised Organisation for ISM Doc: DNV GL

Recognised Organisation for ISM SMC: DNV GL

Date and Place of Detention: 29th October 2017 at Aberdeen

Summary: Fifteen deficiencies with five grounds for detention

Defective item	Nature of defect	Ground for Detention
02109 – Permanent means of access	Not properly maintained	No
10105 – Magnetic compass	Not as required	No
10105 – Magnetic compass	Not as required	No
10105 – Magnetic compass	Not as required	No
10104 – Gyro compass	Inoperative	No
18408 – Electrical	Not as required	No
01101 – Cargo ship safety equipment (including exemption)	Not properly filled	No
10109 – Lights, shape, sound signals	Inoperative	No
01201 – Certificate – for master and officers	Missing	Yes
10133 – Bridge operation	Lack of familiarity	Yes
10110 – Signalling lamp	Missing	No
07125 – Evaluation of crew performance (fire drill)	Lack of training	Yes
07125 – Evaluation of crew performance (fire drill)	Lack of training	Yes
18201 – Fitness for duty, work and rest	Unfit for duty	No
15150 – ISM	Not as required	Yes

This vessel was released on 7th November 2017

Vessel Name: REGGAE

GT: 1567

IMO: 8500408

Flag: Panama (White list)

Company: Voda Denizcilik Ve Disticet Ltd

Classification Society: NKK

Recognised Organisation: NKK

Recognised Organisation for ISM Doc: National Shipping Adjuster Inc

Recognised Organisation for ISM SMC: NKK

Date and Place of Detention: 27th June 2017 at Leith

Summary: Nineteen deficiencies with four grounds for detention

Defective item	Nature of defect	Ground for Detention
07112 – Emergency escape breathing device and disposition	Not as required	No

18425 – Access/structural features (ship)	Missing equipment	No
04109 – Fire drills	Lack of training	No
04108 – Muster List	Incomplete	No
10105 – Magnetic compass	Not readable	No
09232 – Cleanliness of engine room	Insufficient	No
15150 – ISM	Not as required	No
03108 – Ventilators, air pipes, casing	Damaged	No
02101 – Closing devices/watertight doors	Inoperative	No
07105 – Fire doors/openings in fire-resisting divisions	Not as required	No
18203 – Wages	Not according SEA	Yes
11117 – Lifebuoys incl. provision and disposition	Missing	No
02105 – Steering gear	Not as required	No
11108 – Inflatable liferafts	Insufficient	No
01220 – Seafarers' employment agreement (SEA)	Not as required	Yes
18314 – Provision quantity	Insufficient	Yes
18204 – Calculation and payment of wages	Not according SEA	Yes
10116 – Nautical publications	Not updated	No
13102 – Auxiliary engine	Missing	No

This vessel was released on 2nd November 2017

Vessel Name: TAHSIN

GT: 1598

IMO: 9055187

Flag: Panama (White list)

Company: Voda Denizcilik IC Dis Tacaret Ltd

Classification Society: NKK

Recognised Organisation: NKK/NASHA

Recognised Organisation for ISM Doc: NKK

Recognised Organisation for ISM SMC: NKK

Date and Place of Detention: 2nd June at Sharpness

Summary: Twelve deficiencies with eight grounds for detention

Defective item	Nature of defect	Ground for Detention
18327 – Ventilation (working spaces)	Inoperative	Yes
10116 – Nautical publications	Missing	Yes

01214 – Endorsement by flagstate	Missing	No
01220 – Seafarers’ employment agreement (SEA)	Invalid	Yes
11128 – Line-throwing appliance	Expired	No
11129 – Operational readiness of lifesaving appliances	Expired	No
01202 – Certificate for rating for watching	Missing	Yes
18203 – Wages	Not according SEA	Yes
10111 – Charts	Missing	Yes
05106 – INMARSAT ship earth station	Not as required	Yes
15150 – ISM	Not as required	Yes
03104 – Cargo & other hatchways	Damaged	No

This vessel was still detained on 30th November 2017

Vessel Name: MALAVIYA SEVEN

GT: 3001

IMO: 9087312

Flag: India (Grey List)

Company: GOL Offshore Ltd

Classification Society: IRS

Recognised Organisation: IRS

Recognised Organisation for ISM Doc: IRS

Recognised Organisation for ISM SMC: IRS

Date and Place of Detention: 5th October 2016 at Aberdeen

Summary: Five deficiencies with five grounds for detention

Defective item	Nature of defect	Ground for Detention
07105 – Fire doors/openings in fire resisting divisions	Not as required	Yes
07113 – Fire pumps and its pipes	Not as required	Yes
18203 – Wages	Missing	Yes
01220 – Seafarers employment agreement (SEA)	Invalid	Yes
18204 – Calculation and payment of wages	No records	Yes

This vessel was still detained on 30th November 2017

Vessel Name: SEA TRIDENT

GT: 964.

IMO No: 7393169.

Flag: PANAMA (white list)

Company:

Classification Society: Expired

Recognised Organisation: Expired

Recognised Organisation for ISM DOC:

Recognised Organisation for ISM SMC:

Date and Place of Detention: 17 June 2016, West Cowes

Summary: Seventeen deficiencies with seventeen grounds for detentions

Defective item	Nature of defect	Ground for Detention
01101 – Cargo ship safety equipment cert	Expired	Yes
01102 – Cargo Ship safety construction cert	Expired	Yes
01104 – Cargo ship safety radio cert	Expired	Yes
01108 – Loadline cert	Expired	Yes
01117 – IOPP (International Oil Pollution Prevention cert	Expired	Yes
01119 – International Sewage Pollution Prevention cert	Expired	Yes
01124 – International Air Pollution Prevention cert	Expired	Yes
01137 – Civil liability for bunker oil pollution damage cert	Expired	Yes
01199 – Other certs (Certificate of class)	Expired	Yes
01201 – Certificates for master and officers	Missing	Yes
10111 – Charts	Not updated	Yes
10116 – Publications Nautical	Not updated	Yes
11108 – Inflatable liferafts	Expired	Yes
11116 – Distress flares	Missing	Yes
07109 – Fixed fire fighting extinguishing installation	Not as required	Yes
07110 – Fire fighting equipment & appliances	Not as required	Yes
01140 – Declaration of Maritime Labour Compliance	Missing	Yes

This vessel was still detained on 30th November 2017

Vessel Name: CIEN PORCIENTO (General Cargo)

GT: 106.

IMO No: 8944446.

Flag: Unregistered.

Company: Open Window Inc.

Classification Society: Unclassed.

Recognised Organisation: Not applicable.

Recognised Organisation for ISM DOC: Not applicable.

Recognised Organisation for ISM SMC: Not applicable

Date and Place of detention: 4 March 2010, Lowestoft

Summary: Thirty deficiencies including seven grounds for detention

This vessel was still detained on 30th November 2017

Notes to Editors

- The MCA is a partner in the Sea Vision UK campaign to raise awareness and understanding of the sea and maritime activities. Sea Vision promotes the importance and economic value of the sector and works to highlight the exciting range of activities and career opportunities available to young people within the UK growing maritime sector at www.seavision.org.uk

- Follow us on Twitter: @MCA_media

For further information please contact Maritime and Coastguard Agency Press Office, on: +44 (0) 2380 329 401 Press releases and further information about the agency is available [here](#).

Policy paper: Reducing pollution from agriculture across Wessex

This document explains how the Environment Agency is working with partners and the farming community to reduce the effects of pollution in Wessex, by ensuring farming practices do not result in pollution now or in the future.

News story: Consultation on an

application to operate an ECL scheme

The government will soon publish a consultation on an application by the Copyright Licensing Agency (CLA) to operate an Extended Collective Licensing (ECL) scheme.

ECL allows collective management organisations (CMOs) to offer copyright licences which cover the works of all relevant rights holders in the sector. This Includes those who have not directly mandated the CMO to represent them.

The CLA has applied for authorisation as required by The Copyright and Rights in Performances (Extended Collective Licensing) Regulations 2014. The government is seeking views from anyone with an interest.

The consultation will run until early February 2018. In the meantime, questions on the consultation process should be directed to collectiverights@ipo.gov.uk.

Press release: More legal aid support for victims of domestic violence

The current 5 year time limit on abuse evidence in the family courts will be scrapped, while the range of documents accepted as evidence of abuse will be widened to include statements from domestic violence support organisations and housing support officers. The changes will come into effect from January.

The move represents the latest step to protect and support victims of domestic abuse. Earlier this year the government announced a £17 million fund to support 41 projects across the country to tackle violence against women and girls.

Justice Minister Dominic Raab said:

We have listened to victims' groups and carefully reviewed the criteria for legal aid for victims of domestic abuse in family cases.

These changes make sure that vulnerable women and children get legal support, so their voice is properly heard in court.

Legal aid is available to people involved in private family disputes if they are victims, or are at risk of becoming victims, of domestic violence or child abuse. To qualify, applicants must provide objective evidence of the

abuse while their case is also subject to means and merits tests.

The changes announced today follow a review of the evidence requirements set out in the Legal Aid, Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders Act (LASPO) 2012. A Statutory Instrument amending the relevant regulations will be laid in Parliament in the coming days.

The government has also committed to bringing forward a landmark Domestic Violence and Abuse Bill which will ensure that no stone is left unturned in protecting and supporting victims and children.

Notes to editors

- Currently documentation is accepted as evidence of abuse from social services, law enforcement and medical professionals.
- Evidence provided by domestic violence support organisations or housing support officers as part of an application for legal aid in disputed family court cases will need to include:
 - a statement that in the letter writer's reasonable professional opinion, the applicant is a victim of domestic violence or at risk of being a victim;
 - the matters relied on in support of that opinion;
 - and a summary of the support the individual or organisation provided following the determination.
- The SI will also amend the regulations to accept evidence of abuse against previous partners, to better evidence an applicant being 'at risk' of domestic violence.
- The Legal Aid Agency has existing powers to withdraw funding in the event that evidence of domestic violence is proven to be false.

Speech: Nick Gibb: reading is the key to unlocking human potential

Teaching children to read is the key to unlocking human potential. It is the cornerstone of education. Infinite worlds are laid at our feet; from Charles Dickens's portrayal of ambition and lost values in 19th century England in 'Great Expectations' to Ishiguro's subtle portrayal of repression in the dying days of Britain's great houses in 'The Remains of the Day'.

Reading emancipates us from the everyday. It liberates us to pursue our interests in non-fiction and it introduces us to the great heroes and anti-heroes of the ages. Through the canon, we are invited into the conversation of humankind.

From musing the plight of the human condition to learning about the majesty of space-science, reading is the foundation from which we build knowledge.

That is why improving literacy has been at the heart of the government's drive to improve standards in England's schools. One of the most controversial education reforms introduced by the Conservative-led Government in 2010 was our decision to require schools to use phonics to teach children to read.

In the years just before we came into government in 2010, we knew something was wrong with the way our primary schools taught reading; England was stagnating in the international league tables. The international data also showed a wider gap between top and bottom performers than in most other countries. England was well known for its 'long tail of underachievement'.

I vividly recall visiting classrooms around the country where pupils were being failed; too many were unable to read. Effectively, locked out of achieving their potential. This was not through lack of effort from them or their teachers, but because of a dogmatic romanticism that prevented the spread of evidence-based teaching practices.

Those who stood in the way of evidence-based phonics reaching England's classrooms are responsible for stifling human potential and negatively affecting the life chances of countless children.

We are the only OECD nation where literacy is no better amongst the 16-24 year olds than amongst the over 55s. What more stark statistic could there be to exemplify the damage dogmatists have inflicted on our education system?

Prior to our reforms, schools were using variations of a method called 'look and say' to teach reading, in which children encountered frequently used words over and over again until they were recognised automatically. Where schools were using phonics they were mixing and matching with these other methods, which significantly inhibited its effectiveness. Contextual clues encouraging children to guess at words – rather than sound them out – were widely encouraged, breaking the link between the alphabetic code and spoken language.

The theory was that this was an easier way to learn to read than learning the 44 sounds of the alphabet and how to blend them into words. In reality, there was no evidence to support the 'look and say' approach; it was simply in keeping with the philosophical opposition to formal instruction, which was so ubiquitous in teacher training colleges and education faculties.

The trouble was that this method was letting down too many children, particularly the least able. Decades of evidence from around the world – including the influential longitudinal study from Clackmannanshire in Scotland – pointed to systematic phonics as the most effective way to teach children to read.

Phonics teaches children to sound out words sound by sound and then 'blend' these sounds together, unlocking the code of written English.

When we came into office in 2010, therefore, one of the first things we did was to strengthen the National Curriculum, explicitly requiring schools to

teach reading using phonics. We funded training and phonics materials and books for schools. And, most controversial of all, we introduced a test for all six-year-olds, called the Phonics Screening Check.

This test consists of a list of 40 words that the child reads to their teacher. Half the words are ordinary words and the other half are made up 'pseudo-words', which are demarcated by a cartoon alien so that children are not confused by these unfamiliar words. The inclusion of these pseudo-words is important, as it is impossible to guess how to pronounce them, ensuring children have been taught to decode words using phonics rather than learning words by sight.

In 2012, the first year of the Phonics Check, just 58% of six-year-olds reached the pass mark of 32 out of the 40. This year, 81% of six year olds reached that standard, with 92% of children reaching that standard by the end of year 2.

Reading is the fundamental building block to a successful education. Securing the mechanical ability to translate the hieroglyphics of letters on the page into words is a necessary component to achieving fluency in reading; allowing children to build their speed of reading, their comprehension and to develop a joy and habit of reading for pleasure.

And this is not an un-evidenced assertion. This is a statement backed up by decades of research. Consider the conclusions from the longitudinal study carried out in Clackmannanshire:

- Improvements in word reading had grown from 7 months ahead of chronological age in Primary 1 to 3 and a half years in Primary 7;
- A similar gain was seen in spelling, with pupils increasing their advantage over the expected chronological age following the use of systematic synthetic phonics, bucking the trend for the effects of education interventions to 'wash out' over time; and
- Reading comprehension scores were still significantly above the expected standard for chronological age by the end of primary school.

Extraordinarily – despite all of the evidence in favour of phonics – we faced opposition from various lobby groups: those opposed to testing; those professors of education who had built a career on teaching teachers to use the 'look and say' approach; and the teaching unions.

We pressed on nonetheless, confident in the evidence base and encouraged by the thousands of teachers who had embraced and supported this method of teaching children to read and who could see the results in their classrooms.

Today, we received the first set of international evidence that confirms that our approach is working. The international study of 9-year-olds' reading ability in 50 countries showed that England has risen from joint 10th place in 2011 to joint 8th place in 2016, thanks to a statistically significant rise in our average score.

Perhaps most importantly of all, today's results show reading has improved

for pupils from all backgrounds, but it is the low-performing pupils who are gaining most rapidly. The tide is rising, but it is rising fastest for those who need it most.

Slowly, but surely – thanks to the government's relentless focus on rigour – England is dealing with the 'long tail of underachievement.'

The pupils who took part in the international survey were the first cohort to have taken the Phonics Screening Check in 2012; the cohort to have been taught to read after we changed the law requiring schools to use phonics.

The details of these findings are particularly interesting; I hope they ring in the ears of opponents of phonics whose alternative proposals would do so much to damage reading instruction in this country and around the world.

For example, the data is clear on the role that the phonics reforms played in these results:

The characteristics that were most strongly predictive of PIRLS performance included prior achievement in the Year 1 Phonics Check, followed by resources at home, both in terms of educational resources (e.g. the number of books the pupil has in their home) and socioeconomic status (as determined by historical free-school-meal eligibility).

Teaching children to decode is crucial to reading comprehension. And the detail of the relationship between pupil scores on the Phonics Screening Check and pupil scores in the PIRLS tests bring this to life:

Pupils who scored full marks in the phonics check were also the highest scoring group in PIRLS 2016, with an average overall PIRLS score of 617. In contrast, pupils who did not reach the 'expected standard' in the phonics check (score below 32) performed below England's overall average, with lower phonics check scores being associated with increasingly lower average PIRLS scores.

These results are stark. They stand in defiance to those who still choose to ignore the evidence.

But the argument of those opposing the use of phonics has always relied more heavily on emotion than evidence. For years, proponents of evidence-based approaches to reading have been wrongly accused of making children 'bark at text', ignoring the importance of reading for meaning and damaging pupil confidence and love of reading.

Whilst the evidence from the PIRLS data demonstrates that phonics has improved reading comprehension levels, there is also data that dispels their other tawdry myths about pupil confidence:

A higher percentage of pupils in England were categorised as being 'very confident' readers (53%) compared to the international average (45%). Pupil confidence in reading was strongly associated with average performance in PIRLS, with the most confident readers in England scoring over 100-points more than those who reported the lowest levels of confidence.

These results are a vindication of the government's boldness in pursuing the evidence in the face of ideological criticism. They are a tribute to the hard work and dedication of primary teachers who have quietly revolutionised the way children are taught to read in this country. And they promise even more in the future.

The 5000 nine-year-olds in England who took part in this international study in 2016, all took the Phonics Check in 2012 when just 58% passed nationally. Future international studies will be of children taught even more effectively as the proportion passing the Phonics Check has risen steadily year on year.

This year, thanks to the government's continued drive for phonics, 154,000 more 6 year olds were on track to be fluent readers than in 2012. Last year, 147,000 more 6 year olds were on track than in 2012. In 2015, that figure was 120,000. These numbers show the trend, but every single one of them is an individual child given a better start to their education.

They show that the government is building a Britain fit for the future, where every child is afforded the best start in life.

And they are a reminder of the damage that can be caused when dogma flies in the face of the evidence.

Slowly but surely, the education sector and the teaching profession are embracing evidence and raising academic standards for all.

Thank you.