

ST MARY'S CE (A) FIRST SCHOOL

Whole School Reading Policy

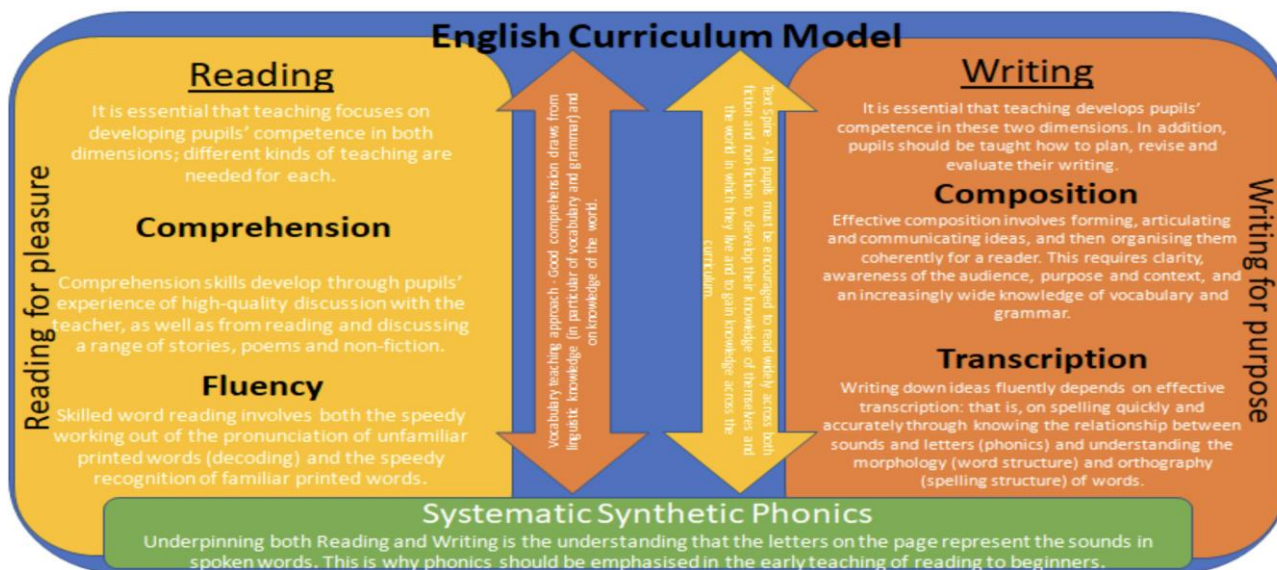
Philosophy

At St Mary's, reading is our key endeavour: driving our purpose, linking together our entire curriculum, encompassing all of our teaching and learning. Our aim is to equip every child with the knowledge, drive and character necessary for success at every stage of their development from their individual starting points and as they move on to middle school and beyond. In order for every child to meet their challenging targets and reach our high aspirations, they must become highly proficient, fluent readers, able to read effectively and productively. Our ambition is to systematically cultivate in our children the habit of reading, to develop their confidence in reading, and to ensure that they acquire a love of reading that will last a lifetime. We aim to inspire and engage readers through our vocabulary and language rich reading curriculum that meets the diverse needs of every child. We believe that the study of reading develops a child's ability to listen, speak, read and write for a wide range of purposes, including the communication of their ideas, views and feelings, incorporating the school's Christian ethos of love and respect for others as they communicate. We encourage and expect children to express themselves clearly, creatively and imaginatively. This enables them to become enthusiastic and critical readers of stories, poetry and drama, as well as of non-fiction and media texts. They use their knowledge, skills and understanding in reading and discussing a range of different texts, for various purposes and audiences.

Intent

The Curriculum:

We believe that reading is the keystone of our English Curriculum, providing opportunities for our children to ignite their imaginations and fan the flames of their curiosity. We aim to underpin the strength of high-quality texts and our children's response to reading them by building in opportunities for reading into writing and applying the use of taught vocabulary. Our English Curriculum has been carefully designed to combine our cohesive approach to the teaching of English as a whole, whilst recognising the various component strands (see our 'Writing' and 'Vocabulary' policies for more details). All of the strands complement each other and support our children's development and success. The diagram below illustrates how the teaching of systematic synthetic phonics and reading for pleasure are woven around writing for purpose:



Books:

With a knowledge of the very best that has already been thought and said, exposure to a wide range of high quality, age appropriate texts and media, opportunities for discussion and debate, appreciation of the intent of authors and the range of techniques used to harness the power of words, our children will thrive and achieve whilst sailing on a raft of possibilities and opportunities to learn about the world around them.

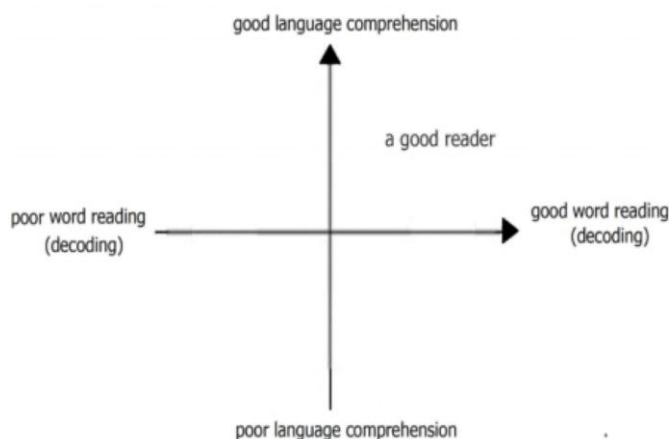
At St Mary's, we aspire to provide every child with opportunities to:

- Decode and read fluently, with prosody and confidence,
- Read with enjoyment and engagement,
- Achieve at least expected standards that match, or exceed, their individual targets,
- Have access to a range of quality texts across genres and curriculum areas,
- Develop a love of reading and read for pleasure.

Implementation

Reading:

A range of strategies are employed to teach reading. These strategies are organised and managed by the teachers. We recognise the need to balance the teaching of decoding and develop fluency and prosody through increasingly challenging, quality texts, whilst developing comprehension skills and fostering a love for reading. To ensure progression and a cohesive approach, we aim to develop good word reading (decoding) and good language comprehension. The following model informs and guides our reading practice model and illustrates the importance of both decoding and comprehension to develop strong readers:



'The Simple View of Reading'

Phonics:

We are committed to ensuring that every child has the best foundation for reading success through the development of decoding strategies. We aim for every child to keep up from the start, whilst recognising that some children, for example those requiring adapted learning to meet additional needs, may require more time, support and practise. We teach phonics through the Twinkl Phonics Scheme every day across the Early Years and KS1, and in Key Stage Two depending on the children's needs. Children take home a reading book matched to their phonics level and reading age. We ensure fidelity to our phonics programme by using Big Cat Phonics home reading books.

Reading Intervention:

- Same day Twinkl Phonics intervention materials used where necessary with individuals or small groups
- Accelerated Reading intervention (developed by Staffordshire and Warwickshire educational psychologists) will be used daily to support children who are reading below their reading age.
- Baseline assessments, weekly assessments and end of 12-week assessment will inform next steps. This programme is based on daily 15-minute teaching and encourages fluency in reading key words, blending and the use of "real books" to develop vocabulary.

Reading Skills (how to read for comprehension):

When children successfully complete level 5 of the Twinkl Phonics scheme, they progress to our reading skills curriculum. (Level 2, 3, 4 and 5 reading activities form part of the Twinkl Phonics scheme) We explicitly teach reading skills, including vocabulary, inference, prediction, explain, retrieval, sequence and summarise. Reading skills lessons (guided reading or dialogic reading) are taught daily, using a range of strategies. Children practise and apply their learning through a wide variety of texts and genres, which are linked to our English curriculum. Our 'Gather Practise Apply' approach to the teaching of writing centres around high-quality, age-appropriate texts that are carefully sequenced by their increasing complexity, themes and potential to inspire children's creativity, curiosity and opportunity (see our 'writing policy' for further details). These texts provide the springboard for learning from which our reading diet and curriculum has been meticulously designed and developed:

Every pupil will take part in guided reading sessions with their teacher, on a weekly basis (this could take the form of dialogic reading for younger children)

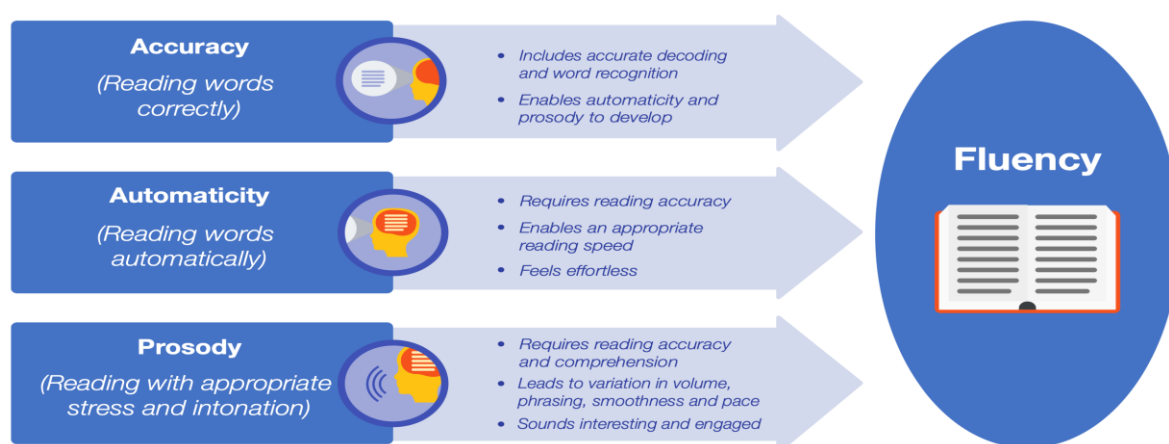
Texts chosen should aim to challenge the children to develop high-order comprehension skills and generate child-led discussion.

Teachers will record and use evidence from these sessions to inform formative assessment.

Each week children will also complete independent comprehension/reading skills activities in their 'reading bug' books. Learning Objectives will be included in these books as a form of self-assessment and formative assessment for the teacher.

Example of Whole Class Reading Skills Teaching

Text	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Fluency	Prosody: smoothness	Prosody: phrasing	Prosody: volume and stress	Prosody: intonation	Prosody: expression
Reading Comprehension	Clarify and questions	Vocabulary and Retrieval	Inference and deduction	Prediction and summarise	Theme



Reading for Fluency:

Step 1: Adult as model	Step 2: Echo reading	Step 3: Text allocation
The adult reads the selected passage of the class text aloud as an 'expert model' of fluency whilst pupils follow the text with their own copy. This may be repeated multiple times as necessary.	Children echo back the section read by the adult, emulating their intonation, tone, speed, volume, expression, movement, use of punctuation, etc.	Children work in pairs or triads. Each group may: 1. all have the exact same short section of text, or 2. a longer section might be split into short parts, so that each group has a different piece.
Step 4: Repeated choral reading	Step 5: Close reading	Step 6: Text marking
In their groups, children read their section aloud, echoing the initial reading by the adult.	In their pairs/triads children make a close reading of their section of text and think about meaning, audience, and purpose. This requires children to look closely at the writer's use of language and consider characterisations, etc.	Each child has a copy of the text to annotate in order to inform their performance. This is discussed and agreed as a group. Prompts are provided to direct their reading.
Step 7: Practise	Step 8: Perform	Step 9: Reflect
Time is provided for groups to rehearse their reading. They may decide to change or add to their performance slightly as a result of their rehearsal.	Each group performs their rehearsed piece. (Adult may record so that children can appraise their own performance).	Children evaluate their own and/or others' performances and give feedback. They may use a reading fluency rubric or the prompts as success criteria to support articulation of evaluations.

Home reading:

All children will have a reading book, chosen by them, at an appropriate level. These books should be 90% readable by the child and the class teacher will monitor this regularly. Children in Foundation and Key Stage 1 will have access to 100% decodable phonic books. Children will be given the opportunity to change their reading books as often as needed but are encouraged to read at least one book a week. Reading activities will also be included in homework tasks.

Colour Banded Books:

We have a colour banded book scheme based on the Reading Recovery system which matches their reading age and phonic reading level. When children have reached the Lime Book Band, teachers may wish to guide and direct occasionally read other books that are not on the Book Banded scheme to encourage wider reading from different authors. At the age of 10+ children they may move onto free readers as well as continuing to read the banded books if they wish. This is to encourage those children that are confident readers to move onto 'real books' (as opposed to books from the colour banded scheme). The scheme will be used to support children's reading development. Children who are not ready to advance to the next band will be encouraged to read more broadly at their appropriate level. We will support and encourage children through these bands, but we will not rush or push children through them when their decoding and/or their comprehension skills are not sufficiently developed.

Reading Ages/Reading Schedule:

Children's reading ages will be assessed with the Salford Reading Test every term, and then they will be placed on a class reading schedule. The reading schedule will prioritise 1:1 reading with a teacher or adult. If children are below their reading age they will be heard read every day, if they are meeting their reading age they will be heard twice a week and if they are above their reading age they will be heard once a week. Children reading below their reading age will have access to daily Accelerated Reading.

Reading for Pleasure:

- Each class has a book corner which should be inviting, comfortable and attractive to the children.
- Books should be sorted into fiction, non-fiction, poetry and 'read alone' (EYFS and KS1) sections
- Each half term the book corner should contain a different themed set of books and an author focus (using Author progression ladder)
- Each term the children will learn a poem from a whole school progression list.
- Book corner books at St Mary's have been themed to raise the children's awareness of different genres: fantasy, classics, history, humour, poetry etc.
- Each class has a reading book case "ladder" where the current author focus books will be displayed.
- Stories are read by class teachers after worship each day.
- Visits to the school library and town library will be regularly planned
- Author Boards outside each classroom reflect research of the current class author Whole school themed weeks such as "Story Classics" and "Poetry" will be planned each year, with visits from established authors and drama opportunities
- Reading ambassadors from each class will form part of the 'pupil voice' which helps guide new book purchases and embed an enthusiasm for reading amongst their peers.

Impact

The impact of the teaching of our reading curriculum will be triangulated through continuous and summative assessments, collated using "Focus Education" assessment grids on our iPads. Evidence will be drawn from:

- 1:1 reading with children
- Guided Reading
- End of term PIRA assessments
- Salford Reading and Comprehension
- Running Records for fluency

The Senior Leadership Team will:

- Complete drop- in observations, book scrutiny, pupil interviews and summative assessments.
- The Headteacher and English leader, alongside subject leaders for other areas of the curriculum, will conduct such activities to ascertain the extent that reading is developing generally in the school, within year groups and specifically within their respective subjects that they lead.
- Upon completion of monitoring, action planning for the ongoing development of reading will occur over subsequent years, including regular and effective continuing professional development.
- At St Mary's, we use ongoing monitoring and evaluation systems to embed a culture of ongoing professional development and improvement for all, thus maximising the impact of high-quality learning for every child. We firmly believe that

"The purpose of evaluation is not to prove but to improve."

The English Lead will:

- Ensure continuity in assessment throughout the school and lead staff meetings to support this aim.
- Monitor Reading in school.
- Keep up to date with new developments in reading and keep the staff informed.
- Play a key role in formulating, maintaining and reviewing the Reading Policy.
- Always lead colleagues and be supportive.
- Audit resources regularly.

The Class Teacher will:

- read a story to their class at least three days a week. Teachers are to read books from their themed book areas or share favourite books. Teachers should avoid reading long chapter books to children, as the aim is to share many different books with the children throughout the year.
- be able to recommend books to children in their class and help them expand the authors and genres they are selecting for themselves.
- be responsible for the teaching of reading as set out in this policy.
- provide English plans including guided reading and make these available to the Head Teacher and English Lead and provide work samples to the English Lead.
- assess children's reading evidence to support these judgements.
- use evidence from the teaching and assessment of reading in order to inform future planning.

Updated: October 2025
Agreed by Governor and staff
Review date: October 2027

Appendix 1: Book Bands

LILAC	Below 5	Nursery	Level 1							
PINK	Below 5	Reception	Level 2							
RED	Below 5	Reception	Level 3							
YELLOW	5.00	Reception	Level 3							
BLUE	5.03	Reception	Level 4							
GREEN	5.06	Year 1	Level 5							
ORANGE	6.00	Year 1	Level 5							
TURQUOISE	6.06	Year 1	Level 5							
PURPLE	7.00	Year 2	Level 6							
GOLD	7.06	Year 2	Level 6							
WHITE	8.00	Year 2	Level 6							
LIME	8.03	Year 3	Y3 Spellings							
COPPER	8.06	Year 3	Y3 Spellings							
TOPAZ	9.00	Year 3	Y3 Spellings							
RUBY	9.06	Year 4	Y4 Spellings							
EMERALD	10.00	Year 4	Y4 Spellings							
FREE	10.6	Year 4	Y4							