

READING CURRICULUM DESIGN

"KEEP READING. IT IS ONE OF THE MOST MARVELLOUS ADVENTURES ANYONE CAN EVER HAVE."
- LLOYD ALEXANDER



KNOWING



BECOMING



FEELING



Reading is the most important indicator of future academic success, as well as the social mobility that is linked to this. We know that reading is the key that unlocks all learning – and that to access other subjects, we need to take children on the journey of both learning to read, and then reading to learn. But we also know that reading isn't just a subject, an academic discipline, or a means to an end – rather, we want to grow life-long lovers of literature, by helping children find the books that lead them to develop a habit of reading for pleasure. Quality texts also open the doors to other cultures, emotions and different experiences – something that we prioritise in our context as part of our personal development work.

The first core component of reading is understanding the systematic code of Phonics. To achieve this, we follow the highly structured Little Wandle Systematic Synthetic Phonics programme through EYFS, KS1 and into KS2 where needed. Fidelity to this scheme is vital, as it provides children with basic knowledge they need to decode texts. Where children have gaps (whether moving from other schools / countries, or due to barriers to learning), they are provided with additional catch up sessions to ensure that the foundations of phonics are secured. Building on these, we introduce the generative knowledge of comprehension under the domains of Vocabulary, Inference, Prediction, Explanation, Retrieval and Summarising. These form the cornerstones for pupils' increasing depth of insight into the texts they encounter. In addition, such knowledge undergirds personal development – as pupils enhance their empathy, become informed citizens, and develop and articulate their arguments and opinions. Vocabulary acquisition and understanding is fundamental within our Reading curriculum; as pupils build knowledge of words, etymology and morphology they can access new learning across other subjects (e.g. through historical sources or scientific texts etc.). The final aspect of reading knowledge we introduce relates to texts themselves: studying authors, genres, styles and literary features. These are all introduced through high quality books – with a view to embracing diversity, fostering engagement, and widening the scope of pupils' literary experiences.

When we think about pupils 'becoming readers', we mean much more than people who can decode a text and answer questions about it. Our reading curriculum is designed initially to provide pupils with the fluency and automaticity they need in order to reduce the cognitive load of decoding and thus to focus on the wider elements of reading. Pupils can then read with a writerly eye – to inform and inspire their work as authors. We build on this analytical approach towards understanding authorial intent – critical to children's next steps into Key Stage 3. We encourage pupils to read aloud to develop prosody – becoming performers, storytellers, presenters, predictors and debaters. Through understanding word-origins, pupils become familiar with the science of linguistics – excavating our language and playing with vocabulary. Personalised class libraries with a wide range of genres available provide children with access to quality, stimulating and challenging texts from which they can make their own choices and selections in KS2. As we read together, talk about books, explore language and listen to stories, the whole school community is involved in modelling and fostering a love of reading to ignite children's delight in the written word.

A book is a doorway to another world – and, indeed, another's world. Reading is the perfect vehicle to explore and experience emotions safely – from an introductory level unpicking a character's feelings in a simple story in EYFS or KS1; through to developing deeper empathy with complex texts in later years. Through frequent book-talk, pupils get to evaluate and recommend texts to one another – empowering their flexibility and ownership of the reading process. Guided evaluation by expert questioning in lessons supports children in understanding authorial intent and their own responses to this, and support is given to pupils in selecting a breadth of texts, authors and genres to capture their enthusiasm. SEND pupils in particular benefit hugely from learning the vocabulary of feelings and having these validated through reading; indeed, developing the language of emotion for all pupils allows them to better understand their own hearts, and provides children with the means to express themselves as they process their complex lives.