



West Rainton Primary School

Reading policy

Date: September 2025

To be reviewed: September 2027

“So please, oh PLEASE, we beg, we pray,

go throw your TV set away,

And in its place you can install,

A lovely bookshelf on the wall.”

Roald Dahl, ‘Charlie and the Chocolate Factory’

Aims:

Reading is essential to attainment and success across all subjects. At West Rainton Primary School, we believe that all children are born readers, and that is it our aim in school to find the inner reader in every child, regardless of their ability, background and opportunities outside of school. The aim of our school is to teach every pupil to read well, for meaning and for pleasure. We know that the ability to read is fundamental to pupils’ development as independent learners, during their time at school and beyond. We understand that reading successfully and with enjoyment is critical to children’s long term life chances. It is central to our ability to understand, interpret and communicate with each other and the world around us. Therefore, reading is given high priority at our school, enabling children to become enthusiastic, independent and reflective readers across a wide range and types of literature, including different text types and genres, books, posters, magazines, signs, comics and newspapers.

As a school we are committed to:

- Ensuring all pupils make progress in their reading skills including decoding, accuracy, fluency, understanding and response to texts.
- Ensuring children are aware of their own progress and development as a reader, by placing a degree of responsibility on themselves as individuals, to aspire to be the best reader they can be.
- Ensuring children are able to read and enjoy a variety of different texts e.g. fiction, non-fiction, play scripts, poetry, reports and understand their purpose
- Creating a positive reading culture where children enjoy reading, want to read regularly and discuss their reading.
- Encouraging reading outside the classroom through forging strong links with home, through parental meetings, coaching sessions for parents, open house policy in regards to supporting reading at home, and regular reading in school with a variety of adults.
- Developing the reading experience for our children through a wide variety of high quality texts including the use of class sets of books, well stocked bookshelves in classrooms, libraries, ICT and other available media.
- Teaching children to apply the skills they learn in reading across the curriculum, through our well developed, enriched curriculum, utilising every possible opportunity to reinforce and practice the skill and pleasure of reading.

At West Rainton Primary School, we believe that children should:

- Be encouraged to enjoy books and reading so that they develop a lifelong love for books
- Develop as independent readers who read for meaning with accuracy, fluency, confidence and expression.
- Develop and apply reading strategies appropriate for a range of reading activities including both fiction and non-fiction.
- Develop the ability to read a variety of texts and genres, including poetry, for a variety of purposes. • Learn the specialist knowledge and language associated with reading.
- Read as writers, with an explicit awareness of the fundamental link between these activities.
- Receive additional support according to their needs, from working towards age related expectation or working at age related expectation to greater depth.

Teaching reading

It is a child's right to be literate and enjoy literature, regardless of the social and economic circumstances of their neighbourhoods, their ethnicity, the language spoken at home and any special educational needs or disabilities. The teaching and learning of reading should be a positive and enjoyable experience that should be taught systematically and consistently across the whole school, with a shared technical reading vocabulary, which will allow children and adults to have discussions around reading.

Children should be taught the full range of reading strategies including: phonic knowledge (visual information); grammatical knowledge (structural information); word recognition and graphic knowledge (visual information); contextual knowledge (meaning), with a focus on self-monitoring and self-correction leading to independence.

Rigorous assessment of individual pupils' progress, phonic knowledge and skills is vital to quickly identify the pupils who are not working at age related expectations, or those who are in danger of falling behind, to ensure they catch up with their peers. Effective provision for pupils to close the gap must be put in place early and that there must be high expectations of what **all** pupils can achieve.

We believe:

- That children's prior knowledge and experiences should be built on, valued and harnessed to support them in making links and connections.
- There should be a variety of opportunities (shared, guided and independent reading) through which children can experience texts and apply their reading skills, including the Shakespeare for Schools project, leading to a performance of a 30 minute extract of a Shakespearean play on the Gala Theatre stage in Durham.
- Children should experience appropriate, high quality literature from the very beginning as the best way of developing positive attitudes to reading, whilst simultaneously expanding their vocabulary and broadening their knowledge and understanding of the world through exposing them to experiences they mightn't otherwise have.
- In creating a rich, inspiring, organised and safe reading environment in which children can browse, select and enjoy books.
- Stories are fundamental to language and literacy development, and a sense of story not just enables children to make sense of their own lives but supports them in being able to tell stories, whether it's a recount of their journey to school or tale about a firebreathing dragon.
- That children's creativity, imagination and critical thinking can be ignited by a rich reading diet.
- That children should have an interest in words, how they work and their meanings to support both their spelling and their language choices - striving towards a rich and aspirational vocabulary for all.
- Pupils need to hear texts read aloud daily, including a range of genres.
- The development of speaking and listening skills is a fundamental element of learning to read and is a skill for life.
- That parents/carers have an essential role in developing children's reading skills and love for reading.

We aim to develop, through our teaching of reading, the following attitudes:

- Curiosity and interest;
- Pleasure and thoughtfulness;
- Critical appraisal;
- Independence;
- Confidence;
- Perseverance;
- Respect for other views and cultures;
- Reflection.

To ensure progression and a cohesive approach, the following guidance must be followed:

Phonics:

Phonics teaching must be consistent, well-structured, fast paced and multi-sensory. All children will be taught skills within RWI in dedicated phonics lessons, up to the end of Year 1. Pupils who do not pass the Year 1 phonics check will continue their RWI lessons until the end of the Autumn term in Year 2. At this point, a judgement will be made as to whether or not to continue with RWI, or try another approach using high frequency words. Children will be grouped after being assessed every half term, to ensure that they are in the correct group to meet, yet challenge, their needs.

Individual reading:

In school, all children will be heard read regularly according to their needs. Children will read to and with a variety of adults in school, as well as by their teacher. **Children of all abilities will read to adults in school until the end of Year 6.** As part of these dedicated reading sessions, pupils will be questioned using the 'Bloom's Taxonomy' questions, to develop their skills in remembering, understanding, applying, analysing, evaluating and creating. It is a key part of our reading programme to develop these skills when reading, as well as promoting the sheer love of reading for enjoyment. Children will also be assessed against objectives for their year group, to prompt their next stages of development within reading. This will be used to help inform assessment of children on track. Adults in school will also comment in their reading record to inform parents of the discussion which takes place and to prompt further intervention at home.

Shared Reading:

This takes place during English lessons and is included on weekly planning. As part of our enriched curriculum, high quality, challenging class texts are used in the main part of the English lesson. Shared and guided reading are a fundamental part of lessons, as well as discussion and questioning linked to

'Bloom's Taxonomy.' During this time specific reading skills or features of genre will be taught and modelled. This is an opportunity to discuss the use of language and widen the children's vocabulary.

'When someone reads aloud, they raise you to the level of the book. They give you reading as a gift.'* Daniel Pennac, *The Rights of the Reader.

Reading aloud to children is a vital part of our reading curriculum. It is through this that our reading community is developed. When we read collectively, we have the opportunity to share our thoughts, to listen to each other and to build on each other's interpretations. Through these teaching opportunities, practitioners are able to foster children's positive attitudes to reading, with reading for pleasure and purpose placed at the heart of the sessions. Staff can draw children into a story, inviting them to comment and to predict. They can demonstrate early reading behaviours and problem solving strategies whilst modelling fluency, phrasing and expression. They can also expose children to rich vocabulary, language structures, situations, places and worlds that may be outside of the child's personal experiences. Shared texts may take on many different forms, from traditional books to ICT based texts, from big books to leaflets. Children might not be able to access these books independently but through the nature of the task will be able to appreciate them, make critical judgements which they are encouraged to share with others whilst progressing their own reading skills.

Reading Record:

The Reading Record is used as a liaison between parents and teachers. From Foundation Stage to the end of KS2, parents are expected to listen to their child read, discuss the book and write a comment each time they read with their child. Parents are encouraged, through support sessions in school, to question and discuss the content of the book their child is reading, and encourage them to enjoy the text together. All children must bring their reading book and record to school every day.

S Firth

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