

Reading Policy 2026–2027

Whole-School Reading Strategy – Context and Rationale

Reading is central to our curriculum and is the primary driver for improving life chances. A significant proportion of pupils enter school with speech, language and communication skills below age-related expectations. Many pupils experience disadvantages, including reduced exposure to high-quality texts, limited opportunities for sustained talk and a restricted vocabulary base.

Our strategy is deliberately designed to address these barriers. We prioritise systematic phonics, explicit vocabulary instruction, structured oracy development and regular exposure to ambitious texts. Reading provision is carefully sequenced to ensure that all pupils, particularly those facing disadvantages, develop decoding, fluency, comprehension and confidence.

Reading is embedded across the wider curriculum. Texts are deliberately selected to support learning in history, geography, science and other subjects. Teachers explicitly model how reading skills transfer across disciplines, enabling pupils to retrieve information, infer meaning, explain reasoning and evaluate evidence.

Phonics

Children begin phonics in Week 2 of Reception following the Twinkl Phonics scheme. Teaching is daily, systematic and follows a clearly structured progression.

Phonics teaching includes:

- Explicit teaching of grapheme-phoneme correspondences.
- Daily blending and segmenting practice.
- Application of phonics in reading and writing.
- Regular revisit and review to secure retention.
- Precise modelling of articulation and pronunciation.

Assessment takes place every six weeks. Where pupils are not making expected progress, targeted intervention is delivered in addition to whole-class teaching. Interventions are informed by assessment data and may be delivered 1:1 or in small groups.

Decodable home reading books are closely matched to pupils' phonological knowledge. Pupils do not access non-decodable texts until blending is secure.

In Year 1, pupils continue through the progression and are prepared for the statutory Phonics Screening Check. Keep-up and catch-up sessions ensure no pupil falls behind.

In Year 2 and Key Stage 2, pupils who have not secured phonics receive continued daily phonics and intervention. Persistent difficulties are discussed with the SENDCo and further assessment considered where appropriate.

Guided Reading

Guided Reading develops fluency, comprehension, vocabulary and oracy. Sessions are structured and based on high-quality, challenging texts.

Core features include:

- Texts matched to pupils' reading ability.
- Explicit vocabulary instruction (New Word Learning).
- Structured partner talk and discussion routines.
- Progressive teaching of reading domains and VIPERS.
- Application of reading skills across the curriculum.

Reception and Year 1

- Guided Reading follows the **Rhino Readers** progression. Texts are closely matched to pupils' phonological knowledge.
- As pupils progress through Year 1, structured written comprehension activities are introduced to prepare them for the Year 2 reading model.

Year 2

- Guided Reading continues to support pupils requiring Stage 1 comprehension approaches, progressing on to Stage 2 comprehensions (based on phonological capability), alongside increasing use of KS1 Fluency Shed resources.

Key Stage 2

- Guided Reading takes place three times per week (not during PPA mornings). Lessons follow Fluency Shed scheme from the Literacy Shed

Session structure:

One text is used over three lessons.

- A **new** text each week from Summer Year 1 to the end of Year 6.
- A **consistent** weekly framework that builds **mastery** through repetition.
- Three 30-minute dedicated Fluency Shed lessons per week.
- Curated selection of classic and contemporary fiction, non-fiction and poetry. Progressive difficulty from Summer Year 1 through Year 6.
- Each text is chosen to build critical content, world and discourse knowledge—essential components for deep reading comprehension.
- All work is recorded in Guided Reading books.

This ensures pupils are immersed in coherent learning experiences and can apply knowledge across subjects. Strong readers develop into strong writers; therefore, exposure to rich texts directly supports written outcomes.

Home Reading

Home reading is a non-negotiable expectation across the school.

- Pupils read at least three times per week.
- Reading is recorded and signed in the reading record.
- In KS1, books should be reread to build fluency, confidence and prosody. This expectation is communicated clearly to parents during Meet the Teacher sessions.
- In KS2, pupils may read sections of longer texts. Pages read must be clearly recorded.
- All pupils complete a running record/benchmark within the first three weeks of the academic year. Reading books are allocated based on this assessment.
- Book bands are continuously reviewed. Where staff believe a pupil is ready to move bands, a running record must confirm suitability. Changes are recorded in the reading record.
- Book banding for all pupils is formally reviewed during the final week of each half term.
- Books are changed on Monday evenings during staff meeting time. Where books are not returned, reminders are issued via the office or through direct communication with parents. Where home reading expectations are not met, parents are contacted to reinforce the importance of regular practice.

Target Readers

Each class identifies five Target Readers per half term.

These pupils read three times per week with an adult in the classroom:

Selection may include:

- SEND
- Pupil Premium
- Limited home reading
- Pupils working towards ARE or Greater Depth

Target Readers are reviewed half termly. Reading sessions and absences are recorded in the class reading folder.

Reading for Pleasure

Key Stage 1

Teachers read aloud to pupils regularly to model fluent, expressive reading and support comprehension through structured discussion.

As pupils progress through Year 2, independent reading for pleasure is introduced as appropriate.

Key Stage 2

Reading for Pleasure takes place daily:

- Three sessions per week: independent reading
- Two sessions per week: class novel (teacher-led or shared reading)

During independent sessions, pupils may read their banded home reading book or a book of their choice from their classroom or school library.

Class novels are selected to provide rich language, thematic depth and opportunities for discussion, further strengthening vocabulary and comprehension.

Target Readers

Each class identifies five Target Readers per half term. These pupils are heard read three times per week.

Selection may include:

- Pupils with SEND.
- Pupil Premium pupils.
- Pupils who do not read regularly at home.
- Pupils working towards Age-Related Expectations or Greater Depth.

Target Readers are reviewed half termly to ensure impact. Reading sessions are recorded and monitored.

Reading for Pleasure

In KS1, teachers read aloud daily through whole class story time, to model fluent, expressive reading and expose pupils to ambitious vocabulary and themes.

In KS2, daily reading for pleasure time is allocated, including independent reading and shared class novels. Texts are chosen to broaden cultural capital and deepen understanding of curriculum themes.