



## Reading at St Catherine's Catholic Primary School

### INTENT

At St. Catherine's, we prioritise reading as a fundamental life skill and are fully committed to nurturing our students into competent, lifelong readers. Our curriculum places a strong emphasis on reading and books, recognizing their crucial role in expanding vocabulary and enhancing comprehension skills across various subjects. Our goal is to provide children with access to high-quality texts, foster vocabulary growth, encourage confident and capable reading, and ultimately promote a genuine love for books. We understand that these aspects are interconnected, each contributing to our students' journey toward becoming lifelong readers.

Our school serves a community facing economic challenges. Within our diverse student body, we have over 30 different languages spoken, and a higher-than-average proportion of pupils speak English as an additional language. Additionally, a significant number of students are eligible for pupil premium support, and many have special educational needs.

To address this gap, we prioritise a rigorous and robust approach to reading. Fluent reading is essential for our students to access a broader curriculum. Research underscores the strong link between children's achievement and a school's reading culture. Therefore, our structured approach aims to overcome these challenges, ensuring our students leave our school as successful and competent readers.

### IMPLEMENTATION

Reading proficiency rests on five essential cornerstones:

Phonemic awareness: The ability to recognize and manipulate individual sounds.

Phonics: Understanding letter-sound relationships and decoding words.

Fluency: Reading smoothly, accurately, and with expression.

Vocabulary: Building a rich word bank.

Comprehension: Understanding and interpreting text.

At our school, we have carefully designed plans to teach each of these aspects. Our routines and structures ensure comprehensive reading development across the Primary phase. This includes:

- Daily phonics lessons for pupils in Reception and KS1
- Reactive daily intervention phonics lessons for pupils in Reception and KS1
- Weekly phonics intervention sessions for pupils in KS2 who did not pass the phonics screen check
- Daily class reading
- Weekly reading sessions 1-1 or in a small group
- Daily Guided Reading lessons
- Reading books which are sent home weekly and are matched to pupil ability
- Access to a comprehensive school and class library for pupils to choose their own book to read to develop a love of reading.

### Phonics

As a school, we follow Read, Write Inc. This is a comprehensive Systematic Synthetic Phonics (SSP) programme which supports all pupils from Reception to Year 2 with learning the skills to become a successful reader.



More detail of our phonics programme can be found in our separate Early Reading statement.

### Reading in the Classroom

We have been on a journey to develop our 'teaching of reading' and use of high quality texts in the classroom. We have worked hard to develop our 'teaching of reading' and use of high-quality texts in the classroom. This has been very successful, created a whole school curriculum for English that is comprehensive and progressive, improved the quality of teaching and children's acquisition of key reading skills. We encourage our teachers to continually review their class texts so that they are relevant, engaging and challenging to the pupils in their class.

Children enjoy daily story times across Early Years, KS1 and KS2. This focuses on developing listening skills, story structure, recall and enjoyment with the aim of fostering a lifelong love of reading.

KS2 reading lessons are taught with 4-x weekly, thirty-minute lessons throughout a two-week period using whole class Guided Reading. Week one will start by focusses on unpicking the text and really understanding it - looking at the text type, features, explaining anything that is unfamiliar etc. Children will then spend a day or two answers questions about the text, based on question strands (Vocabulary, Inference, Prediction, Explanation, Summarise/Sequence). There will also be a reading for pleasure session in the school library, and staff will use this to hear 1-1 readers.

Week two will be a carousel of activities - a follow up task, reading comprehension, reading for pleasure, 1-1 reading with the teacher.

### Reading at Home

#### Early Years

Each week children will be able to choose a story book from our class library to share with their family, these books are to promote reading for pleasure. When they are ready, children will take home a Read, Write Inc book, that they have studied in their lessons, to share with their families. The home reader is a consolidation book. Children are also provided with a packet of key words and phonemes in their reading folders, to practise at home. Virtual Read, Write Inc lessons will also be sent home via SeeSaw.

#### KS1

Reading within KS1 is closely matched to our phonics scheme, Read, Write Inc. Pupils are given their reading book each week to read at home. This is a book which has already been read in school. Each child is also given a reading for pleasure book each week. This book is intended to be shared reading between the child and their parent. This again helps to foster a love of reading across the school. Pupils working in the bottom 20% of the class, or who are working below age related expectations read at least three times a week extra, but often daily.

Parent workshops and virtual lessons are delivered during the year to help parents support their child's reading at home.

#### KS2

Once the children have finished Read, Write Inc, they are given a book that matches their ability from the Oxford Reading Tree scheme of books. These are a set of 56 books which move through the phonics phases. They allow pupils to practice the phonics while developing their comprehension skills with questions after each chapter. The books are engaging and age appropriate for all KS2 children.



Children do not need to read every book in the set before moving on. Once a child has completed the stages, they become a free reader.

Children are encouraged to bring their reading records and reading book into school every day. Books can be changed whenever they are completed. Pupils in Year 5 and 6 are encouraged to make their own comments in their reading records.

Pupils also choose a library book to read in addition to their home reading book. Pupils are given free choice of their library books but are often given advice and direction by their teacher.

### Intervention

Additional phonics-based sessions for children who are not meeting age related expectations, both in KS1 and KS2.

### **RWI**

Read, Write Inc which supports children in KS1 who are not meeting age related expectations in their phonics and reading. In KS2, pupils who did not pass the Phonic Screen test receive additional phonics interventions.

### **Fresh Start**

RWI Fresh Start is a targeted phonics intervention designed for older primary pupils (usually KS2) who are struggling with reading. It uses age-appropriate texts and systematic phonics teaching to quickly build decoding skills, fluency, and confidence, helping pupils catch up with their peers.

### **School Library**

As a school, we have invested heavily in creating a school library, which is bright, comfortable and encouraging. It is stocked with a wide variety of fiction, not only popular authors, but also authors our children would not normally encounter. A range of non-fiction texts have been specifically matched to the topics studied across the wider curriculum. At St. Catherine's, we actively encourage each class to visit the library at least once every two weeks. During these visits, all children have the opportunity to choose a library book, in addition to their regular Reading Book, which is kept in their classroom. We value pupil input in selecting reading materials, through pupil voice and reading ambassadors. Additionally, we organise sponsored reads and other fundraising activities annually to enhance our existing reading resources. The funds raised contribute to updating and expanding our school library, ensuring a wide range of books is available to our students.

### **Partnerships**

At our school, we've established an exciting partnership with Seven Stories, a renowned centre for children's literature. Together, we've created a 'Reading for Pleasure Spine.' This initiative allows students from Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) to Year 6 to collectively choose a set of books to read as a class. By encouraging shared reading experiences, we aim to promote a genuine love for reading among our students. The diverse selection of books engages their imaginations, sparks curiosity, and fosters a lifelong appreciation for literature.

### IMPACT

The impact that reading has on pupils can be hard to measure as we are trying to establish a culture of reading across the whole school which inspires a love of reading.

We take immense pride in our school's reading instruction, and the evidence indicates that our approach effectively enhances both fluency and comprehension. Recent interviews with pupils reveal a positive shift: they now genuinely enjoy reading, find pleasure in reading lessons, and perceive improvements in their reading abilities. A recent pupil voice showed that children "love reading", and are really excited about their class library sessions.