

ST. ANDREW'S C.E. JUNIOR SCHOOL

READING POLICY

Our Vision

'Through experiences rooted in Christian Values and through mutual respect, we guide children to develop compassion, responsibility and resilience in a caring environment'

The ability to read is fundamental to many aspects of life and is central to general progress, development and understanding in a wide range of areas of the curriculum. Reading is a multi-strategy approach in understanding the written word. It is not simply the decoding of the letters on a page but involves the ability to read with understanding a wide range of different texts, including fiction, non-fiction and real-world texts (labels, captions, instructions and lists for example).

Success in reading has a direct effect on a pupil's progress in all areas of the curriculum and is crucial in developing children's self-esteem, confidence and motivation; therefore the teaching of reading is given high priority by all the staff. Alongside this, we place great importance on encouraging children to read for enjoyment—helping them discover books that spark curiosity, imagination and a lifelong love of reading.

Aims

- Read aloud with confidence, fluency and expression.
- Read for meaning.
- Read texts critically.
- Read a wide range of fiction, poetry and non-fiction materials.
- Use phonic, visual, contextual and grammatical strategies for reading.
- Extend and develop children's vocabulary through shared and guided reading.
- Help children to enjoy reading and recognise its value.
- Read alone and with others.

Independent Reading

Children are given the opportunity to read independently in order to build confidence, stamina and fluency, as well as develop their experience of a range of books, magazines, newspapers and authors.

Each class has a weekly session in the school library as well as access to their own smaller class reading area. The library is run by year 6 volunteer children and overseen by the reading co-ordinator.

Children choose a book from the school's reading scheme (which contains a selection of fiction and non-fiction choices) and this book is recorded in the class teacher's file and the child's own reading record diary. The children are expected to read during quiet times in school and at home with their parents. We have a small number of volunteer parents who, after receiving training, listen to the children read their reading books. In other classes, buddying up with another child is also sometimes used as a way to encourage and support children who find reading a bit more of a challenge.

Each class is also expected to spend between 60-90 minutes per week in school accessing the online subscribed program Reading Plus (except those children accessing phonics or precision teaching).

Phonics

At St Andrew's, we use the Little Wandle to support children who need additional help with phonics through its Rapid Catch-Up provision. This structured intervention is designed specifically for children aged 7 and above who are not yet reading at age-related expectations. It mirrors the core phonics programme and ensures children build on their knowledge of the alphabetic code to master decoding and spelling. Children identified for catch-up receive short, focused phonics lessons daily, tailored to their specific gaps using diagnostic assessments. These sessions are delivered by trained staff and aim to close the attainment gap quickly and effectively, enabling all learners to become confident, fluent readers.

Book Banding

At St Andrew's, all reading books are colour banded according to age-related expectations using the national Book Band system. This ensures that children are reading texts matched to their current reading ability while providing appropriate challenge and progression. We use a wide range of reading schemes including Oxford Reading Tree, Ginn, and other high-quality texts. These books are carefully assessed and re-banded to align with the correct Book Band colour, allowing for consistency across different publishers and ensuring that pupils have access to a rich and varied reading experience. This approach

supports fluency, comprehension, and confidence in reading across all year groups.

Reading Plus

Reading Plus is an adaptive, evidence-based online reading intervention program designed to support students in developing silent reading fluency, comprehension, vocabulary, and overall reading proficiency. It begins with the InSight assessment, which identifies each student's reading level and places them on a personalized learning path. The program adjusts dynamically to student progress, offering tailored texts and activities that build stamina and confidence. With a rich library of engaging literary and informational content, Reading Plus empowers learners to read more efficiently and with greater understanding. It is particularly effective for students in Years 3–6 who require additional support to meet age-related expectations, and has been shown to accelerate reading growth significantly in a short period of time.

Guided Reading

Children who require phonics teaching attend daily intervention groups and these groups are reviewed half termly or as the need presents. Children who no longer need phonetic input spend 2 or 3 sessions per week within class reading age-appropriate texts and receiving specific teaching from the class teacher. A range of resources are used for guided reading, including published schemes, fiction, poetry and reference books and other sources relevant to the class.

Planning

The curriculum objectives for reading are reflected in long term, medium term and short term planning. In all plans there should be consideration for each term's global goal and whole school value while also considering activities that are matched to a range of abilities. Short term plans will list specific objectives for each lesson and will be reflected upon at the end of each session. Further lessons take into account the previous learning and achievement of each child.

The selection of texts (linked to the whole school topics) have been chosen specifically to engage pupils' interest, encourage a love of reading, to widen children's vocabulary and expose them to a range of genres, including: picture books, fiction, non-fiction, (auto)biographical, historical, poetry and classic literature. Each class has a class reading book which is read aloud to the children daily. This allows children to listen to texts which are at or above their reading ability while also building enthusiasm enjoyment and rich vocabulary.

During the school year, teachers may include short term themes in their planning, which promote favourite authors, popular titles or other aspects of the world of children's literature and reading for pleasure. Periodically, Authors and poets visit the school to work with each year group, inspiring a lasting love of reading and writing.

Assessment

Reading is assessed termly by class teachers using PIRA and Headstart tests to gain a reading age, standardised score and an indication if the children are working at expected standard. Assessments are shared with parents at parents' evenings and on each child's end of year report. Reading speed and attainment is also tracked through Reading Plus and is shared with pupils during reading plus sessions. Termly pupil progress meetings are held with each class teacher and a member of SLT.

Governors are kept informed of current reading assessments and progress made towards age related expectations and national averages.

Date: June 2026

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