



# Reading Policy

## Rationale

Being able to read enables us to access a world of information, imagination and enjoyment. It is a functional life skill as well as a leisure activity. Reading helps to foster an enjoyment of language and communication; it widens our world and offers us access to other places, cultures and points of view; it answers our questions and opens us up to new ideas.

Through sharing texts of all kinds we focus on developing positive attitudes towards reading. For some pupils this will result in being able to read independently and functionally, while for most of our pupils being read to, sharing texts and reading together provides an enjoyable leisure experience.

We hope that when pupils leave St Giles, they will continue to enjoy sharing texts and where possible read for their own pleasure and enjoyment.

## Subject Aims

Reading can be identified as the recognition of objects, pictures, symbols and words to elicit meaning. We expect all pupils to make good and outstanding progress in developing their reading skills in line with their cognitive development, social and emotional understanding and individual learning needs.

**All** of our children have access to a rich language and reading environment and experience stories, poems and texts when being read to or when they participate in sensory stories or poems.

**All** of our children are supported to identify favourite texts and choose their own books to read or be read to.

**Most** of our children develop a bank of sight words and symbols and can use them to support their communication and functional skills e.g. to take the class register or choose an activity.

**Some** of our children will learn to decode words independently and will read for enjoyment as well as using reading to access learning across the curriculum and as a functional life skill e.g. reading a shopping list or following written instructions.

## Language Development

Almost all our pupils have some form of language processing difficulty or delay which impacts on their ability to retain or understand spoken and written language. This naturally impacts on their reading fluency as they are delayed in acquiring vocabulary and comprehension skills.

Pupils are supported to develop their vocabulary and understanding through modelling by adults, the use of Makaton signing, Speech and Language Therapy (SALT) programmes and the development of symbol recognition. For many pupils the use of specific symbols is necessary in order to build on pupils' ability to communicate and improve their access. Reading schemes and comprehension activities will further develop the language skills of our most able pupils.

## **Strategies**

### **Pupils with Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulties (PMLD)**

Reading with pupils with PMLD gives opportunities for the pupils to develop shared attention, anticipation, responsiveness and initiation. Like all children at early stages of development these pupils enjoy repetition of well-known and engaging stories where they can begin to anticipate what will come next.

Sensory stories are used across our PMLD classes as a vehicle for experiencing book language and poems. These stories have reduced text and are supported by sensory and interactive experiences. Such stories can be enjoyed by pupils, without being understood, as they are told interactively through shared experiences, voice and emotion, rather than words and pictures. The stories can be built up gradually and adapted for pupils to support their next steps targets and early communication and social skills.

Some pupils with PMLD may develop an understanding of objects of reference, photos and key symbols particularly related to their daily routine or favourite activities. These can be used to enable the pupil to make choices and to know what is coming next.

### **Pupils with Severe and Moderate Learning Difficulties (SLD and MLD)**

Pupils begin to learn to recognise that print and symbols convey meaning through a variety of methods including:

- Shared rhymes and songs, involving repetition of phrases and rhythms
- Symbols – timetable, places of reference, making choices
- Shared texts forming the basis of class topic work
- Shared story creation
- A rich reading environment - symbol and word labels for displays
- Library time when books are shared and children are given the opportunity to take a book or communication resource home.
- Role play and drama activities
- Opportunities to read across the day and across the curriculum
- Computerised reading support
- Modelling by adults

### **Approaches to Reading**

Pupils experience early reading through a wide range of communication led activities. Reading readiness is reliant on the cognitive development of pupils and their exposure to reading and appropriate texts. Pupils at St Giles all have significant learning difficulties which delay their reading readiness. This delay means that the teaching of early reading skills continues across the key stages.

We believe that effective teaching of reading is best achieved by using a variety of methods suited to the varying needs of our pupils. These methods are identified through reading assessment and communication passports as well as the pupils' cognitive development.

Many of our pupils learn to read symbols to support their communication. However, all pupils benefit from the use of symbols to support their understanding and improve their ability to decode written language.

Some pupils are able to use synthetic phonics to decode and to break down words to increase fluency. For others the fluent recognition of common words helps to extend their sight words and aids reading

development. The use of visual, contextual, grammatical and punctuation cues all help support the reader in developing their reading skills.

Some pupils appear to favour a particular approach but all methods are shared and used appropriately in order to support the pupil in developing their reading fluency. When teaching pupils to decode texts the emphasis on understanding what they are decoding is paramount in creating pupils who read for meaning.

## **Symbols**

Adults use symbols to support teaching across the curriculum. For some pupils this is their main method of communication but for all pupils they can be used to

- offer choices,
- prepare for transition,
- teach new vocabulary,
- support pupils in recognising conventional print,
- support pupils to answer questions,
- support retelling of stories,
- support creative and factual writing,
- support pupils to share their ideas

Symbols can be displayed in large A4 format for group use, smaller symbols for individual choices or in grids for more advanced users.

Personalised books using photos and symbols create a motivating and personalised way in to early reading.

Many pupils have communication books and communication aids which use symbols.

The school uses PCS symbols to support early symbol recognition and this symbol library is used for personal communication books; including Pragmatic Organisation Dynamic Display Communication Books (PODD) and the majority of AAC (Augmentative and Alternative Communication) devices.

Widget symbols are used to support subject language and extend vocabulary.

Teachers work with SALT and other adults supporting AAC users to ensure symbols are used systematically for individual pupils and across the school.

## **Phonics**

Early introduction of rhythm and rhyme supports the development of phonic awareness; this includes simple poems, nursery rhymes and songs. Some children will find this approach supports them in accessing phonics while others may not. All pupils are exposed to phonics and where developmentally appropriate will be taught synthetic phonics using Letters and Sounds Phases as the main resource.

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/190599/Letters\\_and\\_Sounds\\_-\\_DFES-00281-2007.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/190599/Letters_and_Sounds_-_DFES-00281-2007.pdf)

Pupils may be taught synthetic phonics as individuals or as part of a group. This approach will be extended to develop pupils sounding out, segmenting and blending as well as their application of GPCs (Graphic-Phoneme Correspondence) in reading and writing through spelling development.

## **Whole Word Recognition**

Some pupils are supported by learning a bank of common high frequency words which support their fluency when reading. The use of flash cards and reading software aids pupils in decoding these words; this approach is supported by learning to spell these words as well. The New National Curriculum focuses on using GPC spelling strategies to develop fluency in recognising common words which supports writing as well as reading. This approach is used more successfully with pupils who are readily able to access a phonic approach. The use of symbols also supports the development of whole word recognition

## **Contextual clues**

As pupils develop fluency they can use context to help decode unknown words including picture cues. Reading aloud with pupils supports them to understand the text and make appropriate attempts at unknown words. This approach relies on the pupil understanding the text they are reading and supports the comprehension development of pupils. 'Guessing' at unknown words is only beneficial when other factors are also incorporated such as understanding the text, using phonic cues and recognising the vocabulary.

## **Grammar and Punctuation Cues**

In particular syntax and punctuation support the understanding of meaning so reading aloud introduces these cues as part of the early reading experience. Teaching pupils to use these cues as part of their reading development is introduced as pupils reading skills, fluency and comprehension develops.

## **Higher Level Reading Skills**

As pupils develop reading fluency they require other reading skills to aid them in becoming functional, independent readers. The ability to skim and scan text is taught so pupils can retrieve information and respond to questions about texts. This skill is used across the curriculum to support pupils in finding information for a variety of subjects.

## **Comprehension**

Spoken language comprehension is supported across the school through Makaton signing and symbols. A systematic approach to this is encouraged in order to aid pupils in acquiring shared language and support language development. This approach supports the pupils in developing their vocabulary and their understanding of what they are reading. The priority for all readers is that they can make sense of what they are reading at all levels of their reading development. Pupils who are beginning to read simple words and texts are encouraged to decode texts and respond to oral questions which support simple retrieval skills. As their reading stamina and fluency increases they are taught to retrieve more complex information and are also encouraged to respond to texts including building on their ability to infer and deduce information from texts.

As the above skills are consolidated, the range of reading increases, and so pupils have the opportunity to understand a wider variety of texts, their organisation and purposes.

## **Assessment**

### **Formative Assessment**

Assessment is an on-going process using observation, recordings and documented reading records. Regular reading assessments feed into summative assessment and targets. Progress is shared, and annual targets, are set as part of Annual Reviews with parents and carers.

**Early Years:** Pupils in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 following the Early Years curriculum are assessed against the Early Years Developmental Bands. Progress is identified annually from base-lining in the autumn term and end of summer term assessment.

**Primary and Secondary:** From Year 1 pupils are also assessed against P level descriptors. Bridging Levels are used for pupils who have achieved P8 but are not yet able to work within Milestones (National Curriculum Programmes of Study). Milestones are used when pupils have completed the three Bridging Levels.

### **Summative Assessment**

Summative assessment is completed at the end of the academic year.

End of year results in Reading for all pupils (except Reception) working at P levels are entered onto CASPA by the end of June. End of Year results for pupils working beyond P8 are entered into the school's own tracking system. At the same time targets are set for the following year.

Internal and external moderation of reading for Year 2 and Year 6 pupils is undertaken twice a year to support assessment and share good practice.

### **Statutory Assessment**

Pupils participate in statutory assessment if it is appropriate to their cognitive skills and development.

- All pupils are assessed at the end of their Reception Year pupils using the Foundation Stage Profile.
- If appropriate, Year 1 and 2 pupils are assessed using the Phonic Screening Check
- For all pupils at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 teacher assessments are moderated and submitted to the Local Authority. If appropriate pupils are assessed using SATs or the Interim Teacher Assessment Framework.

The results from statutory tests and teacher assessments are shared with parents and carers and the Local Authority.

### **Testing and Accreditation**

The Secondary English teacher uses agreed standardised tests to identify reading fluency levels as required. The two current reading tests are: The NARA reading test and the BPVS test.

In Key Stage 4 and 5 pupils consolidate their skills and work towards accreditations. Most pupils will achieve Unit Awards or Entry Level certificates in English.

Pupils working above Entry Level 3 have individualised plans to enable them to access appropriate accreditation including GCSE.

Continued research into accreditations are being undertaken to identify appropriate accreditation pathways which meet our pupils academic needs and which they can access.

### **Additional Support and Equal Opportunities**

The teaching of reading is differentiated according to each individual pupil's needs. There is a wide range of texts and reading materials across the school which reflect diversity within the school and the wider world.

Some pupils have weekly additional individual reading support with our experienced reading volunteers.

A variety of tools and resources are used to support pupils to physically access reading including AAC technology, talking books and symbols.

Teachers and identified staff work closely with SALT to support pupils' language development and communication skills, which links to their reading development.

The teacher of English as an Additional Language (EAL) works with identified pupils who are learning English and require support.

The school is advised by the local authority Teacher for the Visually Impaired who supports specific pupils who may need adaptations to font size and colour of text or magnification.

### **Involving Parents and Carers**

Throughout the school we have a home school reading system, which encourages parents and carers to read with their children. Pupils take home reading books each day. In addition, reading related homework is provided if appropriate.

We meet with parents and carers twice a year at Parents' Evenings and once at Annual Review where we can discuss their child's reading progress. Detailed reports about reading progress form part of the report for the Annual Review of the Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP).

### **Reading Resources**

Pupils have access to a wide range of reading resources to support their learning. They include

- Tactile and sound books
- Board books
- Box Books
- Sensory Stories
- Symbols
- Objects of Reference
- Home-made personalised books
- School Library with Fiction and non-fiction books
- Reading games
- Computer based reading games and stories available on the Interactive White Board, computers, iPads and Eye gaze technology

Pupils are encouraged to read and have read to them 'real' books that interest them as well as books that are part of reading schemes. Teachers will decide on the most relevant reading scheme for pupils.

The main reading schemes available are New Reading 360, Oxford Reading Tree, Read Write Inc., Ginn – All Aboard, Sunshine Spirals, Wellington Square, Rapid and Rising Stars (Dockside Series). Wellington Square and Rapid and Rising Stars (Dockside Series) are used exclusively in the secondary department.

Computerised access to reading continues to be extended to support access and AAC users in particular.

As pupils progress in their reading fluency they will no longer be required to read from a scheme but will be free to choose books of their choice and interest supported as required.

### **Monitoring**

The teaching of reading and progress in reading is monitored annually through

- teaching and learning observations,
- monitoring of reading records,
- analysis of pupil progress data,
- monitoring of target setting and pupil evidence

Areas are identified for development and actions agreed.

### **Conclusion**

The pleasure of words and language and the opportunity to share information and knowledge through written communication is available for all pupils at St Giles. We continue to strive to support pupils in acquiring reading skills particularly as the continued improvements in technology and access make it more achievable for pupils with complex needs.