

# Reading Policy

## St Andrew's Church of England Primary School

We believe that 'Everyone is different. Everyone is special. Everyone is our neighbour.' As Jesus taught us to love unconditionally, so we strive to nurture respect for all; to provide a rich and stimulating curriculum that considers the individual; and to care for the intellectual, social and spiritual well-being of our whole school community - encouraging positive engagement with the wider world, as affirmed through our school values and parable of the Good Samaritan.

Jesus said, "Love the Lord your God ..." and, "Love your neighbour as yourself." Luke 10:27



At St Andrew's we are committed to keeping pupils and staff safe. Our school policies are an essential part of the way we safeguard all members of our diverse school. We support democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. These principles help us to listen to each other and learn from each other to create a safe and rich learning environment for pupils and staff alike.

**Approved by:**

TLIS

Date: 05/03/26

**Last reviewed on:**

March 2026

**Next review due by:**

March 2028

## Reading Policy

‘Children and young people who are the most engaged with reading and writing in their free time have significantly better mental wellbeing than their peers who are the least engaged.’

National Literacy Trust, Sept 2018.

### Introduction

At St Andrew’s C E Primary School, we share a passion for reading and a love of books. We believe that the development of reading skills is central to a child’s life, and we are determined that every child will learn to read, as this is the most important gift that we can give to them.

Rooted in the parable of the Good Samaritan, we understand reading as a means of encountering the lives, experiences and perspectives of others. Through literature, pupils are invited to develop empathy, moral discernment and a deep sense of neighbourliness. In this way, reading becomes not only an academic skill, but a vehicle for living out our Christian vision in daily life.

Success in, and love of, reading opens the doors to a world of knowledge and lifelong learning. All our children should read at age-related expectations or above by the time they leave our school. Our consistent, whole school approach to the teaching of reading supports children to make rapid progress, and to become confident and fluent readers.

### Contents

Evidence and Rationale.....	3
Our aims.....	3
Teaching Reading.....	4
Synthetic Phonics.....	4
EYFS.....	4
KS1.....	4
KS2.....	5
Whole-Class Reading through English Lessons (Power of Reading).....	5
Reading Approaches within Power of Reading.....	5
Shared and Modelled Reading.....	5
Rereading and Close Reading.....	5
Talk for Reading.....	5
Vocabulary and Language Development.....	6
Response to Text.....	6
Text Choices.....	6
Opportunities for further reading.....	6
Reading for information across the curriculum.....	6
Reading with others.....	7
Independent reading.....	7
Classroom reading areas.....	7
Peer – recommendations.....	7

Enrichment activities .....	7
Independent Reading.....	7
Decodable Books and Home Reading Books .....	8
KS2.....	9
The Library .....	9
Assessment .....	9
Teacher Assessment .....	9
Early Reading Assessment.....	9
Monitoring and Evaluation .....	9
Inclusion .....	10
SEND.....	10
Pupil Premium.....	10
Summary .....	11

### Evidence and Rationale

This policy reflects current national guidance and research into effective reading instruction. The Department for Education’s Reading Framework (2023) underpins our commitment to systematic synthetic phonics and to securing both accurate decoding and strong language comprehension.

Our practice also draws on the Education Endowment Foundation’s guidance reports Improving Literacy in Key Stage 1 and Improving Literacy in Key Stage 2, particularly their recommendations around vocabulary development, structured talk, modelling and fluency.

Our use of CLPE’s Power of Reading is informed by its research base, which demonstrates the impact of sustained study of high-quality texts on comprehension, engagement and writing. Together, these sources provide a clear foundation for the strategic decisions set out in this policy.

### Our aims

- To encourage a love of books and a passion for reading amongst all children so that they become lifelong learners.
- To deliver a structured and consistent whole school approach to reading.
- To develop reading strategies and skills so that children can read fluently, accurately and with understanding.
- To provide early intervention and support for those children who are not making expected progress.
- To extend children’s knowledge and understanding of grammar and vocabulary through reading.
- To introduce children to a wide range of fiction and non-fiction literature, in order to develop their knowledge of themselves and the world in which they live, to allow them to access the wider curriculum and to become lifelong learners.
- To enable children to discover different types of reading material in order to make independent choices about what they enjoy reading.

## Teaching Reading

The teaching of reading can be divided into two skills: word reading (decoding) and comprehension. At St Andrew's, we teach both these skills in tandem. Skilled word reading involves both the speedy working out of the pronunciation of unfamiliar printed words (decoding), and speedy recognition of familiar printed words (whole word reading). Underpinning this is the understanding that letters (graphemes) represent sounds (phonemes), which is why phonics in the early teaching of reading is so important. Good comprehension draws from linguistic knowledge (vocabulary and grammar), and on knowledge of the world. Comprehension skills develop through pupils' experience of high-quality discussion with the teacher, as well as from regularly reading and discussing a range of stories, poems and non-fiction independently and with others. In EYFS and KS1, decoding is taught explicitly through daily phonics lessons.

### Synthetic Phonics

Children are taught to decode using the systematic teaching of synthetic phonics. Children learn to sound out and blend phonemes to read unknown words. This starts in Reception Year and continues in KS1. Targeted phonics teaching is provided to those children in Year 3 and beyond who need additional phonics support. St Andrew's uses the Read, Write, Inc. programme, flashcards and reading books to support phonics teaching throughout EYFS and KS1.

### EYFS

In the Reception class (EYFS) we emphasise the alphabetic code and, by the end of the year, children will learn a grapheme to represent each of the 44 phonemes in the English language. We use the 'Read, Write, Inc' (RWInc.) phonics programme to ensure a systematic approach. The phonic sounds are taught at a rapid pace, with children being introduced to 4 phonemes (sounds) per week; this learning is consolidated daily. Simple mnemonics (rhymes to help remember the phonemes) help children to grasp this quickly. Children have frequent practice of reading useful words beyond their current phonic knowledge (referred to as "red" words and taken from the RWInc. programme). Parent and carers are made aware of the letter sounds as they are introduced, so that they can work on these at home. Each child is given a list of the mnemonics used in RWInc.

### KS1

Children in KS1 receive a daily 25-minute phonics session every morning. In Year 1, children start by recapping the graphemes introduced in Reception Year, with a focus on sounding and blending CVC words for reading (RWInc, Set 1 and 2). This is followed by teaching of vowel sounds in the order given by the RWInc. programme (RWInc. Set, 2 and 3) and further spelling patterns from the National Curriculum. Children develop confidence in segmenting and blending sounds for reading and writing in daily phonics sessions and by following the series of carefully graded RWInc Ditties and books.

In Year 2, children are taught as a whole class for term 1 to recap the long vowel sounds learnt in Year 1 (starting from RWInc. set 2 and 3), with a focus on increasing children's speed and accuracy in sounding and blending of decodable words for reading. Children are assessed at the end of the term to evaluate those children who will need a separate, targeted small group phonics session from term 2 to embed specific sounds, and to practise segmenting and blending sounds for reading. Most of the class progress from term 2 to learning to read words with common suffixes, further spelling rules and common exception words as outlined in the National Curriculum. By the end of Year 2, children

should be reading 95% of an age-appropriate text fluently, using their phonics knowledge to decipher unfamiliar words.

## KS2

Systematic support continues for those who have not yet secured fluency and automaticity. Pupils entering Year 3 who have not yet met the KS1 reading expectations are assessed to identify any gaps in decoding and fluency. Those who are not yet reading with sufficient accuracy and pace, continue to receive targeted phonics intervention using the Read Write Inc. programme in small groups. These sessions are sharply focused and based on regular assessment to ensure rapid catch-up. Pupils must be able to decode accurately and read at a speed that allows full comprehension of age-appropriate texts.

### Whole-Class Reading through English Lessons (Power of Reading)

At St Andrew's, from Year 2 upwards, reading is taught primarily through whole-class English lessons using the CLPE Power of Reading approach. High-quality, carefully selected core texts form the centre of English teaching. Through structured sequences of lessons, all pupils engage deeply with the same text, regardless of reading attainment.

Teaching focuses on developing comprehension, language, fluency, and response.

Whole-class reading lessons are inclusive by design. Teachers adapt teaching through:

- targeted questioning
- modelling and shared reading
- pre-teaching of vocabulary and background knowledge
- scaffolded tasks
- visual prompts and adapted texts

### Reading Approaches within Power of Reading

Reading is embedded throughout English lessons and across the wider curriculum. The following approaches are used flexibly within teaching sequences:

#### Shared and Modelled Reading

Teachers read aloud regularly, modelling fluency, expression and prosody. Fluency is explicitly taught and children join in with choral reading and echoed reading. Teachers model thinking aloud about meaning. This supports vocabulary development, comprehension, and enjoyment of texts.

#### Rereading and Close Reading

Texts are revisited across a sequence of lessons to deepen understanding. Pupils learn that meaning develops through rereading, discussion, and reflection.

#### Talk for Reading

Structured talk is central. Pupils discuss characters, themes, language choices, and viewpoints, supporting oral language development and comprehension. These discussions create space for pupils to explore big questions about identity, responsibility, fairness and compassion, fostering spiritual growth alongside academic understanding.

## Vocabulary and Language Development

As St Andrew's has high numbers of children who speak EAL, we recognise the importance of language development in supporting independent readers. Vocabulary is taught explicitly in context. Attention is given to word meaning, morphology, etymology, and how language choices shape meaning, developing breadth and depth of understanding.

## Response to Text

Pupils respond to reading through:

- drama and role-play
- writing in role
- discussion and reflection
- creative and analytical writing

These responses are purposeful and linked directly to the text, strengthening comprehension and engagement.

## Text Choices

Across each school year, pupils engage with a wide range of text types, including high-quality fiction, non-fiction and poetry. Fiction develops empathy, narrative understanding and moral reasoning; non-fiction builds subject knowledge and equips pupils to read for information across the curriculum; poetry sharpens attention to language, rhythm and nuance. This breadth ensures that pupils encounter varied structures, purposes and voices, preparing them to read confidently and critically in secondary education and beyond.

Texts are chosen not only for literary quality but for their capacity to prompt reflection on themes such as justice, trust, forgiveness, friendship and hope. Through structured discussion, pupils are supported to consider how characters' choices align with or challenge our shared values, developing thoughtful and morally aware readers. We have carefully selected texts that reflect the rich diversity of our children, ensuring representation across different cultures and life experiences.

Visual literacy is an important element of our curriculum. In a digital landscape where information is frequently communicated through images rather than words, the ability to interpret, evaluate and question visual texts is essential for safeguarding, critical thinking and informed participation in society. Every year group studies at least one picture book in depth, using illustration as a powerful tool for inference, discussion and creativity.

## Opportunities for further reading

### Reading for information across the curriculum

Teachers create a text-rich environment and seek out opportunities for children to improve their reading and comprehension skills throughout the curriculum whenever possible. This might include whole class, group, paired or individual reading of information texts linked to a topic; reading to research information.

Teachers plan essential vocabulary to be delivered within different curriculum areas. Knowledge and understanding of root words and word families are strengthened when introducing new curriculum or topic vocabulary, as well as decoding skills to discover these new words. Children enjoy

opportunities to read their own writing to an audience, and to read and respond to that of their peers.

#### Reading with others

At St Andrew's, we enjoy the support of parents and members of the local community who volunteer to read 1:1 with our children. Peer reading is encouraged within and between class groups and by arrangement between teachers. This gives older children the opportunity to "mentor" younger children and fosters a reading community within the school. The school takes advantage of special days like World Book Day or National Poetry Day as opportunities for children to share books together.

#### Independent reading

Independent reading for pleasure and information gathering is widely encouraged throughout the school and a wealth of reading material is provided for children to access (Book Corners, Library Books and the Outside Book Box (KS1)). The school regularly invests in its reading resources, and is well-supported to do this through SASA (our parent-teacher association), who fund new books termly for the library.

#### Classroom reading areas

Each classroom has an inviting book corner. These are well-stocked and maintained, with a range of fiction, non-fiction and poetry books. Books are age-appropriate, strive to reflect the diversity of our school and are in good condition. They are organised and displayed to entice children's interest, with specific books linked to the class topic, the English reading text for the term and peer recommendations.

#### Peer – recommendations

Children have many opportunities to recommend books to their peers, including:

- written book reviews displayed in classrooms in KS2
- verbal book reviews to a group or the whole class
- opportunities for sharing books within library sessions

#### Enrichment activities

Regular enrichment activities take place throughout the year. These include book clubs, book swaps, World Book Day celebrations and National Poetry Day. We participate in Science and History reading Book Clubs associated with the Royal Society and the History Association. Thanks to our privileged position in Oxford, we are able to attend a number of author events, and our children have been lucky to hear M.G Leonard and A.F Steadman talk about their books in recent years.

#### Independent Reading

At St Andrew's, we work hard to develop and maintain strong relationships with parents, to encourage and support them in supporting their child's learning at home. From Reception class to Year 6, parents are encouraged to share books with their children at home, listening to their child read every day for at least 10 minutes, as well as reading to them whenever possible. Parents are invited into school for Phonics/Early Reading coffee mornings to learn more about how to support their children with reading at home.

### Decodable Books and Home Reading Books

At the beginning of EYFS, children are encouraged to borrow books from a “Going Home” box. These books are for parents to read to their children. Once children have begun their structured phonics lessons and are able to decode simple words using Set 1 sounds, they are sent home with RWI Sound Blending Books, to allow them to practise blending individual words. Following on from this, “Ditty” sheets – sheets with simple words and sentences which are 100% decodable for the children with their phonic knowledge - are sent home. Once RWI Get Writing! sessions have begun, children take home a Book Bag Book, which closely matches their phonic knowledge and mirrors the books they are reading in school. This systematic process ensures early success, boosting confidence and motivating children to keep learning.

In Year 1, children continue to take home RWI Book Bag Books, matching the RWI book they have been reading with their class teacher in school. Once children have reached a level of proficiency, as determined by the teacher, they may also choose from “Rainbow Practice Books” - books to take home and read with an adult at home.

The “Rainbow Practice Books” provide a wide range of home reading books that are graded into coloured bands. Each colour banded box contains a range of high-quality fiction, non-fiction, phonic, reading scheme and non-reading scheme books. These are replenished regularly, are well-presented and are easily accessible in the Reception/Year 1 corridor. Children should be able to read at least 95% of a reading book comfortably to read at a given colour.

Here are the Rainbow Practice Books with estimated age-related expectations:

Colour Band	Age	Year
Lilac	4.5	R
Pink	4.5	R
Red	4.5	R
Yellow	5.6	1
Blue	5.6	1
Green	5.6	1
Orange	6.7	2
Turquoise	6.7	2
Purple	6.7	2
Gold	6.7	2
White	7	2-3
Lime	7	2-3

Children are encouraged to read widely within a colour band before moving onto the next band. All children in EYFS and KS1 have a reading diary for parents to log reading at home, as well as adults reading with children in school. Children should bring their reading diary to school in their book bags every day.

## KS2

In KS2, children are able to select from a range of books in the classroom or the school library for home reading. Teachers will support children with their choice of books and encourage them to try longer books at the appropriate level to help build stamina. Some children also choose to bring in a book from home to read in school. Those readers who still benefit from support in choosing a book with appropriate challenge can select books from the “Rainbow Practice Books” boxes in the Year 2 corridor. These boxes have more colour bands for books, up to Year 6 appropriate texts.

### The Library

St Andrew’s has a well-stocked and comfortable library. The library is regularly replenished with new titles and is up to date with current interests in children’s literature. Children in all year groups have a weekly 30-minute library session, during which they can change their home library book. All children have access to the library during lunchtimes.

## Assessment

### Teacher Assessment

Across the school, teachers regularly assess children against national curriculum learning objectives.

In Year 1, children will be assessed termly using the RWI Phonics Assessment and an Early Reading Assessment (PERA) in the summer term. This gives all children a reading age and a phonics age. From Year 2, formal assessment is carried out at the end of every term using the Hodder Progress in Reading Assessment (PIRA). In Year 6, teachers will use a past SAT paper in the Autumn and Spring term, and the formal SAT paper in the Summer term. Children who are achieving below age-related expectations are tracked using their reading age, as provided by a PIRA, PERA or YARC.

### Early Reading Assessment

In EYFS and Year 1, children are also assessed at regular intervals (at least once per term) throughout the year using RWInc. phonics assessments to ensure that they are progressing at an expected level. Children who are not progressing at the expected level receive extra support in class and are provided with additional materials to practice at home. Those children who enter Year 1 with an emerging score in the EYFS profile are most carefully monitored and receive small group support during phonics sessions from a Teaching Assistant (TA) if necessary. All Year 1 children sit the statutory phonics screening test to assess standards in phonics at the end of the year.

Children who enter Year 2 without passing the Year 1 phonics screening check are also carefully monitored. They are assessed at the end of the autumn term using a phonics past paper and receive targeted small group phonics sessions with the class TA from the Spring term before re-sitting the screening test at the end of the year.

### Monitoring and Evaluation

Reading provision and outcomes are monitored rigorously throughout the year to ensure high standards.

Reading success is evaluated through a combination of:

- In-year assessment data, including phonics assessments, standardised reading tests and teacher assessment.
- National data sets, including the Year 1 Phonics Screening Check and Key Stage 2 SATs outcomes.
- Progress and attainment tracking for key groups, including SEND and Pupil Premium pupils.

The English Lead undertakes regular monitoring activities, which include:

- lesson observations and learning walks
- book scrutiny
- pupil voice discussions
- review of reading environments and provision
- fidelity checks of the phonics programme (through the Phonics Lead)

Findings are analysed by the Senior Leadership Team to:

- identify strengths and areas for development
- ensure early intervention for pupils at risk of falling behind
- inform staff training and professional development
- shape priorities within the School Improvement Plan

Governors receive regular updates on reading attainment, progress and the impact of interventions, enabling them to provide effective support and challenge.

### Inclusion

We monitor and support all children with their reading.

### SEND

Children who are falling below age-related expectations are quickly assessed to identify any specific weaknesses in their learning. Assessments are carried out initially by the class teacher and/or the SENDCo to identify gaps or factors that may be holding a child back from making progress in reading. Targeted and effective support is put into place as early as possible to accelerate progress to close the gap. Pre- and post-intervention assessments are also carried out to measure impact and progress.

Some children may require further input to assess and advise on the nature and response to a child's difficulty in Reading. We have the support of specialist services, including a Communication and Interaction Specialist Teacher and an Educational Psychologist (EP), who will assess and advise on specific approaches and interventions for identified children. The SENDCo will also advise on the best choice of intervention for individuals or groups based on evidence-based success.

### Pupil Premium

The school closely monitors the progress of pupil premium children in all areas of the curriculum to ensure that they are making the same progress as their peers. Teachers endeavour to build strong relationships with parents so that they can communicate about children's progress in reading, and to

encourage and share advice about how parents can best support their children at home. Addressing disadvantage in reading is an expression of our commitment to justice, ensuring equitable access to knowledge, opportunity and voice.

Our commitment to early identification and targeted support reflects our belief that every child is uniquely valued and capable of growth. No pupil is defined by their starting point; rather, we act with hope and determination to ensure that become life-long readers.

### Summary

Reading sits at the heart of our curriculum and our Christian ethos. We are uncompromising in our belief that every child can learn to read well, and that secure reading is the foundation for academic success, personal development and lifelong opportunity. Through a systematic approach to early reading, high-quality shared texts, explicit teaching of fluency and comprehension, and a strong culture of reading for pleasure, we aim to ensure that all pupils leave St Andrew's as confident, thoughtful and independent readers. This policy reflects our commitment to high standards, early intervention, inclusive practice and continual reflection, so that every child, whatever their starting point, is supported to thrive as a reader.