



**Holy Family High School**  
**Reading Strategy Summary Document**  
**2024-2026**

## Reading is the thread in all that we do.

We understand the importance of every pupil, no matter what their starting point, reading confidently and fluently. We recognise that reading for learning is at the heart of everything we do and is therefore a whole-school priority in every subject. Our aim is for all pupils to be reading above their chronological reading age - enabling them to confidently access the KS4 curriculum and achieve success in their exams.

Our reading Governor is Mrs Claire Dunn, she supports the reading leaders (Deputy Head Teacher, Quality of Education, Reading Intervention Leader, and Reading for Learning Leader) to drive the reading strategy which is explained in this document.

A good level of reading is essential for pupils' acquisition of knowledge and their ability to make connections between the things that they know, both within and across their subjects. The average reading age required to access GCSE level texts and examination papers is almost 16 years. We therefore have a comprehensive and rigorous approach to reading within subjects, which ensures that our pupils develop the knowledge, vocabulary and reading fluency to access the curriculum and their exams, and that they leave school with sufficient reading skills for future learning and employment.

We ensure that our pupils read widely and constructively, and pupils' reading supplements our curriculum to ensure that pupils leave us with sufficient knowledge and cultural capital to succeed in life. Our approach to reading develops pupils' reading skills, comprehension, and accuracy, builds their confidence and develops an enjoyment of reading. To create our reading strategy, we have drawn on expertise and training as well as current research including The EEF 'Improving Literacy in Secondary Schools'.

## Building confident readers

Evidence suggests that there is a strong positive relationship between reading frequency, reading enjoyment and attainment. It is an important part of school life at Holy Family, that we promote regular reading, particularly with pupils who are reading at below age-related expectations. We believe that all teachers and staff have a responsibility to promote reading by exposing pupils to a wide range of novels, non-fiction texts, poems, scripts, newspaper, and magazine articles.

We have a reading room which is replenished frequently and all pupils at KS3 have a weekly reading lesson. Reading lessons ensure pupils hear and read sustained and challenging texts at least weekly. This regular exposure develops an understanding of the world around them and immerses them in a diverse range of texts that develop the vocabulary they need to effectively express themselves. In reading room lessons, we cultivate the behaviours needed to be discerning readers as pupils read frequently and widely using self-regulation strategies and discuss what they read. Reading room lessons deliberately increase opportunities for reading, which increases fluency and stamina, which in turn increases pupils' enjoyment of reading.

In the KS3 English curriculum, all pupils read at least two complete novels of increasing complexity starting in Year 7 with *The House with Chicken Legs* by

Sophie Anderson, building up to *Private Peaceful* by Michael Morpurgo and *Ghost Boys* by Jewell Parker Rhodes in Year 9.

Our school Reading Patron is Simon Adepetun who holds creative writing workshops as well as promoting reading with our pupils. <https://simonadepetun.co.uk/>

We offer the pupils a varied diet of enrichment centred on a love of reading. For example, we invite 'The Book People' into school to sell books and allow pupils to use the book vouchers that they have earned. We host events by visiting authors, challenge pupils with reading competitions, go on visits to the local and central library and book shops. We also share book reviews with pupils and parents on social media.

Teachers encourage pupils to talk about what they are reading and reading activities regularly take place in form time.

The school supports parents in many ways including publishing a list of recommended books on the school website, a regular Parent Reading Newsletter and information to encourage parents to support reading at home.

### Reading for learning in lessons (Disciplinary Literacy)

It is the responsibility of all teachers to teach pupils how to read within their subject area. This is a whole-school priority and, to aid this, we have a 'Reading for Learning' Leader who promotes and co-ordinates our whole school approach. All teachers have received ongoing professional development in reading for learning strategies to use in the classroom. **Please see Appendix 1**

The subject curriculum has been broken down into component knowledge – bite-size pieces of knowledge that pupils need to know to make progress. A key component of this is for teachers to clearly identify subject specific vocabulary which pupils must know to make progress. The identification of subject specific vocabulary, along with specific strategies to support pupils to read and understand, is detailed in each Subject Curriculum Map.

To help pupils actively engage with what they are reading we focus on two techniques - reciprocal reading and 'read alouds'. Reciprocal reading is a structured approach to teaching (questioning, clarifying, summarising and predicting) that pupils can use to improve their reading comprehension in any subject. Read alouds are methods to hear expert reading aloud in a variety of ways including using a visualiser, choral chanting, 'I say, we say, you say' and other methods.

### Whole-school strategies to improve pupils' reading.

All pupils access Sparx Reader which is designed for pupils to access at home on a mobile phone, computer, or tablet. Sparx is a complete literacy improvement package with an extensive library of fiction and non-fiction books. Pupils are expected to complete 300 Sparx Reader Points for homework each week.

Class teachers share vocabulary lists and support pupils by using a range of strategies for explicit vocabulary development. The vocabulary is then used in a range of contexts so that pupils can see its use being modelled. All classrooms have

a visualiser so that pupils can read along with their teacher and see the vocabulary on the large screen.

## Reading assessment and identification of need

All pupils have their reading assessed at least annually using the Sparx Reading Assessment. This online assessment takes place in school with the support of the form teacher and a reading leader. The assessment takes forty minutes and produces a reading age and a detailed report about the strengths and areas of weakness for each pupil. This information is shared with the SENDCo and class teachers on Class Charts.

Pupils who are identified as red or amber readers also undertake the **Salford Sentence Reading and Comprehension Test** which takes place with a specialist teacher or teaching assistant and takes approximately ten minutes. The Salford Reading Test quickly assesses a pupil's reading accuracy and comprehension ability using sentences aligned to the National Curriculum. It generates a reliable reading age, comprehension age and, by hearing reading, we can spot any pupils who are not confidently decoding words.

This process takes place annually for all year groups Y7-11. Additionally, at the end of Year 9, all pupils are assessed using the GL Lucid Exact screening test to check for handwriting, typing, dictation and word recognition issues in preparation for beginning GCSE examinations.

The reading information communicated to all teachers on Class Charts so that they can use this information to seat pupils and support pupils appropriately. This reading age information is also shared with parents.

## Reading Intervention

**Please see Appendix 2.**

Salford and Sparx assessments accurately identify pupils who need support to improve reading. A low reading score triggers a tiered approach, led by the Reading Intervention Team who are experts in the Fresh Start Phonics Programme. Additionally, when a decoding or phonetical issue is identified, the SENDCo will consult parents and may offer a SEND screening assessment.

If a parent has any concerns about their child's reading, they should contact Kate Samra [k.samra@holyfamilyhighschool.co.uk](mailto:k.samra@holyfamilyhighschool.co.uk)

### **Red readers – pupils who are part of the phonics intervention programme.**

If a pupil cannot confidently decode words or have a low reading score, we deliver a secondary school systematic, synthetic phonics programme: Fresh Start Phonics (Read Write Inc.). It is well-structured and meets the needs of the National Curriculum. This is supplemented with our own resources and reading materials so that we can provide secondary age-appropriate books.

Red readers begin with 1-2-1 support moving to small group intervention when ready. Frequent, low stakes assessments help the Intervention Leader to tailor the programme according to need. Time is allocated in the pupils' timetable to support this because we believe it is an essential skill to allow access to the secondary curriculum. As part of the intervention, we ask pupils to take reading books home and complete a reading record. We ensure the reading books match the sounds and letters, so they are appropriate and help to build up fluency.

A workshop is held with parents of red readers to provide them the skills to support reading at home. This is typically held in the first term of Year 7.

Red readers are identified to colleagues (red spots on Class Charts and a reading profile) and we ask that teachers ensure that lesson materials are adapted appropriately to support pupils. Teachers and teaching assistants have all received training to support pupils who are not yet 'secondary ready' readers.

### **Amber readers – pupils who have fluency and comprehension issues.**

Amber readers can decode successfully but may have some difficulty with fluency and comprehension. This may mean they read more slowly than some of their peers, or struggle to understand words or use them correctly in more complex sentences.

Amber readers are identified through the reading assessments and also monitoring declining progress in reading. If a pupil started well, but their reading is not improving as rapidly as we would like, essentially their reading is declining and this may indicate that they need to increase the quantity and the quality of the texts that they are accessing.

Amber readers are identified to colleagues (amber spots on Class Charts and a reading profile) and given extra weekly practice and small group intervention. This group are retested more frequently to monitor impact.

## Appendix 1

### Staff Professional Development 2022/23

#### External training for reading leaders.

- Ruth Miskin Fresh Start Phonics
- Liverpool School Improvement Reading Programme
- Reading by Laura Kay
- Reciprocal Reading in Primary School
- FFT Reciprocal Reading in Secondary School
- KS3 Curriculum and reading by Anne Seneviratne
- Liverpool Archdiocese Reading Conference
- Salford Sentence Reading and Comprehension Test training.

#### Professional Development for all Teachers

- Reciprocal Reading Training (Introduction) by Amy Routledge, Disciplinary Reading Leader
- Reciprocal Reading Training (Advanced) by Amy Routledge, Disciplinary Reading Leader
- Phonics training for Secondary Teachers by Kate Samra KS2/3 Intervention Leader
- How to use reading Assessment Information by Karen Parker, DHT

#### Professional Development for all Teaching Assistants

- Reciprocal Reading Training by Amy Routledge, Disciplinary Reading Leader
- How to use GL assessment information by Michelle Palmer SENDCo
- Effective strategies to read with pupils - Kate Samra, KS2/3 Intervention Lead

