



Reading Progression



Nursery to Year 6

Our reading pathway: strong language and phonological awareness in Nursery; systematic synthetic phonics through Read Write Inc.; a carefully managed transition into comprehension teaching; and ambitious whole-class reading through Ready Steady Read Together in Key Stage 2.

Reading for fluency • Reading for meaning • Reading for pleasure

The whole-school pathway

Phase	Main provision	Core purpose	Transition point
Nursery	Language-rich provision; stories, rhymes and pre-RWI phonological awareness	Listening, spoken language, sound discrimination, rhyme and oral blending	Children are prepared to begin formal RWI teaching when developmentally ready.
Reception	Daily RWI phonics; sound blending; matched ditties and colour-banded storybooks	Secure the alphabetic code and read simple texts with growing fluency and understanding	Increasing independence with matched books and simple comprehension.
Year 1	Daily RWI phonics and matched colour-banded storybooks	Complete and consolidate the phonic code; improve accuracy, fluency and comprehension	Pupils move on when decoding is secure, while targeted RWI continues where needed.
Year 2	RWI completion and RWI Comprehension; Ready Steady Read Together introduced in summer	Shift from learning to decode towards fluent, purposeful reading	Supported familiarisation with whole-class reading routines before KS2.
Years 3-6	Ready Steady Read Together	Read increasingly demanding texts fluently, critically and independently	Each half term includes two weeks each of fiction, non-fiction and poetry.

Important: Scheme placement is responsive to assessment. A pupil's teaching should match their current reading stage, even when this differs from the typical year-group pathway.

2. EYFS progression: Nursery and Reception

Area of progression	Nursery	Reception
Reading culture and language	Enjoy frequent stories, rhymes, poems and songs. Join in with repeated phrases, talk about pictures and events, retell familiar stories through play and learn new words through meaningful talk.	Listen to and discuss increasingly varied stories, information books, rhymes and poems. Retell in sequence, make simple predictions and explain ideas using vocabulary from texts.
Phonological awareness	Develop attention and listening; discriminate environmental, instrumental and voice sounds; explore rhythm, rhyme, alliteration, syllables and oral blending. Pre-RWI experiences are playful and developmentally appropriate.	Follow the RWI sequence. Hear, say and recognise taught sounds; orally blend and segment; blend sounds to read words and use Fred Talk increasingly efficiently.
Word reading	Recognise own name and familiar signs or logos. Notice print and understand that print carries meaning. Begin to blend orally before being expected to read printed words.	Read taught grapheme-phoneme correspondences, blend decodable words, read taught common exception or 'tricky' words and apply phonic knowledge to ditties and matched colour-banded RWI books.
Fluency	Recite familiar rhymes and repeated refrains with expression. Develop memory, phrasing and confidence through repetition.	Re-read matched texts to improve accuracy, pace and expression. Move from sounding out every word towards smooth reading of familiar words and phrases.
Comprehension	Answer who, what and where questions; anticipate familiar events; talk about characters' feelings and connect stories with own experiences.	Demonstrate understanding through talk about vocabulary, events, characters and information; sequence a text; predict likely events; answer simple retrieval and inference questions.
Independence and response	Choose books, handle them carefully, turn pages in order and talk about preferences.	Read matched books with growing independence; discuss favourite parts; use pictures to support meaning after decoding; respond through talk, drawing, role play and early writing.
Typical evidence	Observation in story sessions and provision, rhyme and blending games, book talk, retelling and engagement with print.	RWI assessments, accuracy and fluency in matched books, responses to questions, retelling, vocabulary use and application in independent reading.

End of Reception: secure foundations

- Children use taught phonics to decode words and simple sentences.
- They re-read familiar matched texts to build confidence and fluency.
- They understand what they read and can discuss characters, events and information.
- They enjoy books and select texts for pleasure as well as for practice.

3. Key Stage 1 progression: Years 1 and 2

Area of progression	Year 1	Year 2
Core programme	Continue daily RWI phonics. Pupils apply taught sounds to RWI ditties and matched colour-banded storybooks. Teaching remains closely matched to regular assessment.	Continue RWI until the phonic code and word reading are secure. Move into RWI Comprehension when ready. In summer, begin to adopt Ready Steady Read Together routines and text study.
Decoding and word recognition	Blend unfamiliar words containing taught graphemes; read common suffixes and taught exception words; recognise an increasing number of words automatically.	Read accurately by blending, including words of two or more syllables and words with common suffixes. Read most familiar words quickly without overt sounding and blending.
Fluency	Re-read matched texts to improve accuracy, pace, phrasing and expression. Attend to full stops, question marks and exclamation marks.	Build automaticity and stamina. Read aloud with appropriate pace, phrasing and expression; use punctuation and meaning to support prosody.
Vocabulary	Discuss word meanings, link new meanings to known vocabulary and notice recurring story language.	Clarify unfamiliar vocabulary using context and explanation; explore synonyms, word choices and language patterns across fiction, non-fiction and poetry.
Literal understanding	Retrieve explicitly stated information and sequence main events using oral rehearsal and evidence from the text.	Retrieve and record key information; summarise the main points of a section; distinguish important detail from less important information.
Inference and prediction	Make simple inferences from what a character says or does and predict what might happen next.	Infer feelings, motives and likely actions using evidence. Make and revise predictions by drawing on what has been read.
Text structures and genres	Experience stories, traditional tales, poems, rhymes and simple non-fiction through reading lessons and the wider curriculum.	Discuss how fiction, non-fiction and poetry are organised. In summer, practise Ready Steady Read Together routines across the three genres.
Response and discussion	Take turns, listen to others, explain preferences and answer orally before recording concise responses.	Discuss and explain ideas using evidence; answer in complete sentences; begin to record responses with increasing independence.
Assessment and support	RWI assessments, phonics screening preparation through normal teaching, matched-book reading and comprehension checks. Immediate keep-up is provided.	RWI and fluency checks, comprehension evidence and teacher assessment. Pupils who are not secure continue targeted phonics and matched decodable reading.

Year 2 summer transition: Ready Steady Read Together should be introduced gradually. Pupils learn the routines of exploring a shared text, discussing vocabulary, locating evidence, rehearsing answers and recording a response, while phonics support continues for any pupil who still needs it.

4. Key Stage 2: Ready Steady Read Together

In Years 3-6, Ready Steady Read Together provides the shared structure for reading instruction. Every half term contains six weeks of focused reading: two weeks of fiction, two weeks of non-fiction and two weeks of poetry. Text complexity, independence and the sophistication of pupils' responses increase year by year.

Weeks	Genre	Teaching emphasis	Possible outcomes
1-2	Fiction	Fluent reading; vocabulary in context; character, setting and plot; retrieval; inference; prediction; authorial choices and viewpoint.	Annotated text, oral and written answers, character inference, summary, prediction, comparison or extended response.
3-4	Non-fiction	Purpose, audience and organisation; navigation features; precise retrieval; summarising; vocabulary; fact and opinion; reliability and cross-text links.	Notes, retrieval grid, summary, explanation, comparison of sources or evidence-based response.
5-6	Poetry	Performance and prosody; imagery; vocabulary; form and structure; figurative language; interpretation; comparison and personal response.	Rehearsed performance, annotated poem, explanation of effect, comparison, personal interpretation or modelled imitation.

A consistent teaching sequence

Prepare	Activate relevant prior knowledge, explore essential background knowledge and preview carefully selected vocabulary.
Read	Hear an expert model and take part in echo, choral, paired or independent reading as appropriate.
Clarify	Resolve unfamiliar vocabulary, references and ideas; reread sentences and sections where meaning has broken down.
Explore	Retrieve, infer, predict, summarise, compare and consider how language, structure and presentation shape meaning.
Respond	Discuss, orally rehearse and record concise or extended answers supported by evidence.
Review	Return to the learning focus, reflect on understanding and revisit useful vocabulary or fluency targets.

Balance across the lesson: Written comprehension is one part of reading. Pupils also need substantial time to read aloud and silently, listen to fluent models, discuss ideas, revisit challenging passages and enjoy complete texts.

5. Year-by-year progression in Key Stage 2

Year	Fluency and word reading	Comprehension	Genre and authorial craft	Discussion and written response
Year 3	Read age-appropriate texts accurately, using phonics and morphology to tackle unfamiliar words. Develop a steady pace through repeated and assisted reading.	Explain unfamiliar words in context; retrieve and record information; identify main ideas across a short section; infer feelings and actions with clear evidence; predict logically.	Recognise key features of narrative, information texts and poetry. Discuss characters, settings, headings, paragraphs, rhyme and simple imagery.	Contribute to discussion and record short, complete answers. Refer directly to words or events in the text with teacher guidance.
Year 4	Read a wider range of texts with growing automaticity, stamina, phrasing and expression. Self-correct when reading does not make sense.	Use context and word parts to clarify meaning; retrieve across a text; summarise several paragraphs; justify inferences; compare ideas and make evidence-based predictions.	Explain how organisational features support the reader and begin to comment on the impact of vocabulary, viewpoint, imagery and structure.	Build on others' ideas, explain interpretations and select relevant evidence. Write increasingly developed answers using accurate reading vocabulary.
Year 5	Sustain fluent reading across longer and more demanding texts. Adjust pace and expression for purpose, genre and audience; navigate complex sentences and vocabulary.	Infer motives and relationships from evidence across a text; summarise themes and main ideas; distinguish fact and opinion; compare information and viewpoints; evaluate predictions.	Analyse how language, structure and presentation contribute to meaning. Explore figurative language, atmosphere, bias and authorial intent across all three genres.	Develop and defend interpretations, selecting and combining evidence. Produce well-organised written responses and make links within and across texts.
Year 6	Read complex, age-appropriate texts with accuracy, independence, stamina and expressive control. Monitor comprehension and choose strategies when meaning breaks down.	Synthesise information from different parts or sources; make nuanced inferences; summarise precisely; evaluate viewpoint, reliability and bias; compare themes, ideas and conventions.	Evaluate the impact of language, form, structure and presentation. Discuss ambiguity, tone, symbolism, themes and how texts reflect differing contexts and perspectives.	Lead and sustain thoughtful discussion, challenge ideas respectfully and justify interpretations with precise evidence. Write concise and extended analytical responses independently.

6. Content domains and pupil terminology

The Ready Steady Read Together implementation overviews organise comprehension teaching through the national reading content domains. These domains support planning and assessment, but do not replace the full National Curriculum.

Domain	Progression focus
1a / 2a Vocabulary	Draw on vocabulary knowledge to understand texts; progress from explaining familiar words in context to evaluating shades of meaning and figurative language.
1b / 2b Retrieval	Identify key aspects and explicit information; progress to locating, recording and synthesising precise details from fiction and non-fiction.
1c Sequence	In Key Stage 1, identify and explain the sequence of events and how information is connected.
1d / 2d Inference	Make inferences from what is said and done; increasingly explain and justify inferences with well-chosen evidence.
1e / 2e Prediction	Predict from what has been read; progress to using both stated and implied details and evaluating predictions after further reading.
2c Summary	Identify main ideas from more than one paragraph, select supporting details and summarise concisely.
2f Whole-text meaning	Explain how information or narrative content is related and contributes to meaning as a whole.
2g Language choice	Explain how words and phrases enhance meaning and evaluate their impact on the reader.
2h Comparison	Make comparisons within a text and, as pupils mature, across texts, genres, themes and viewpoints.

Terminology introduced and revisited

Year group	Reading terminology
Year 2	grapheme, phoneme, syllable, sequence, structure, predict, discuss, question
Years 3-4	root word, prefix, suffix, theme, convention, intonation, tone, volume, action, rehearse, perform, present
Years 5-6	figurative language, reasoned justification, justify, fact, opinion, debate, metaphor, simile, analogy, imagery, style, effect, compare

7. Progression in core reading behaviours

Reading behaviour	Early development	Developing	Secure and increasingly sophisticated
Decode and recognise	Hear and blend sounds; use taught grapheme-phoneme correspondences; read matched words and texts.	Decode unfamiliar words efficiently and recognise many familiar words automatically.	Read complex vocabulary accurately, drawing on morphology, etymology and context where helpful.
Read fluently	Re-read short matched texts for accuracy and confidence.	Read with suitable pace, phrasing and expression; attend to punctuation and meaning.	Adapt pace, tone and expression to text, purpose and audience; sustain reading across longer texts.
Clarify vocabulary	Ask about unfamiliar words and connect them with known words, pictures and experiences.	Use sentence context, word parts and explanations to establish meaning.	Explore shades of meaning, figurative language, technical vocabulary, connotation and effect.
Retrieve	Find a clearly stated word, fact or event.	Locate and record information across paragraphs or sections.	Select, combine and synthesise precise information from multiple parts or sources.
Infer	Use a character's words, actions or expression to suggest a feeling.	Combine clues and justify an inference with relevant evidence.	Make nuanced inferences about motive, viewpoint, relationships and themes, weighing alternative interpretations.
Predict	Say what may happen next using story events or pictures.	Predict from stated and implied details and revise after further reading.	Form, justify and evaluate predictions using genre knowledge and evidence across the text.
Summarise	Retell key events in order.	Identify the main idea and summarise a paragraph or section.	Distil and connect key ideas, omitting minor detail and preserving the author's meaning.
Analyse and evaluate	Notice interesting words, repeated phrases and simple text features.	Explain how a word, feature or organisational choice helps the reader.	Evaluate how language, form, structure, presentation and viewpoint shape meaning and influence the reader.
Discuss and respond	Listen, take turns and explain a simple preference.	Build on ideas, speak in complete sentences and support answers from the text.	Sustain evidence-based discussion and produce independent, precise and well-organised responses.

Reading for pleasure

- Every class hears adults read aloud regularly from high-quality texts.
- Pupils have protected opportunities to choose, browse, recommend and discuss books.
- Class and library collections include fiction, non-fiction, poetry, graphic texts and a wide range of authors and perspectives.
- Adults model genuine enjoyment, curiosity and thoughtful book talk.
- Home reading complements, but does not replace, high-quality reading instruction in school.

Curriculum alignment: National Curriculum for English and Literacy Counts Ready Steady Read Together Reading Implementation and Progression Overviews (V25), Years 2-6.