

Intent

At St Wilfrid's RC Primary, we value reading as a key life skill, and are dedicated to enabling our pupils to become lifelong readers. We believe reading is the key to widening children's knowledge and understanding of the world, and achieving success across the full curriculum.

At St. Wilfrid's our aim is to provide a rich English curriculum across all classes, where children encounter a range of whole texts, reading or sharing these with confidence, engaging and responding to narrative and using their knowledge of these to influence and inform their skills as writers. We aim to develop children as keen researchers and analytical readers, using their reading skills as a tool to expand vocabulary, deepen their understanding of the subjects they are learning and for discovery beyond the lesson and classroom.

Implementation

Early Years

As soon as children join us in nursery at St. Wilfrid's, they are engaged in carefully planned pre-literacy activities that help them to develop the skills needed to read and write. We use the Launchpad for Literacy approach to carefully assess each child's readiness to begin learning phonics.

All children are taught to read at St. Wilfrid's, using the synthetic phonics programme – Sounds Write. This structured scheme teaches children reading and spelling alongside one another, ensuring clear and strong links between the two skills are embedded.

The children are taught the initial code in early years, learning the sounds that are spelt with a single letter, and then are able to apply these to longer words, becoming 'expert' and fluent in these before moving to more complex sounds.

Reading books are given to children as they learn new sounds and spellings. These are fully decodable, ensuring that the children have the opportunity to practise the phonics they are currently learning, revisit prior learning and enjoy success with reading from the start.

Alongside decodable books, children take home reading for pleasure books, that are not always decodable, but can be read with someone at home. These books are at an appropriate interest and experience level for the children and help them, with support from home, to learn more about stories, characters, how books work and of course, new vocabulary.

Key Stage 1

As children move into Key stage 1 (Year 1), they continue to learn to read and spell, using the Sounds Write programme.

The extended code is introduced to children in Year 1 – where two or more letters spell a single sound (ee, ou etc), and continue to develop their understanding and application of phonemes (sounds) and graphemes (letters) throughout Year 2. Children work daily, as a whole class, building, reading and spelling words containing the new phonic knowledge, and learning to apply these in their own writing. Throughout Year and most of Year 2, children continue to read decodable books until their phonic knowledge is secure and they are able to transition to our accelerated reader scheme.

Key Stage 2

In Key Stage 2, children continue to read, using the Accelerated Reader programme to encourage children to read independently, at a level that offers both success and challenge. This programme allows children to practise comprehension skills through online quizzes that teachers can use to monitor children's progress. The Accelerated Reader library includes a wide range of children's fiction and non-fiction books, which are levelled to ensure the children will be able to read and understand the books they choose. Children's reading achievements are recognised in whole school assemblies every half term, when we celebrate and reward their successes together.

In spelling and decoding activities across Key Stage 2, the Sounds Write approach is used to trigger prior knowledge, and apply this to tackling longer or tricky words and spellings.

Children who need further support with phonics benefit from carefully planned Sounds Write and Launchpad for Literacy based interventions, delivered one to one or within smaller groups, at their level, to help to narrow any gaps in their learning.

Across All Classes

Teachers carefully select fiction and non-fiction texts by award winning authors, that are engaging, stimulate book talk and of course widen valuable vocabulary, as well as being excellent models for pupils' own writing.

Across all classes, children engage in daily reading activities. Pupils read both individually and within guided reading groups with the teacher or teaching assistant, embedding decoding skills, comprehension and book talk at all levels. These sessions focus carefully on individuals' word reading and comprehension targets, and are used to track progress and inform planning. Teachers use the VIPERS acronym, and resource materials to support the understanding and teaching of key comprehension skills across school in all reading activities. Parents also have VIPERS prompts and ideas in reading records to support home reading.

As part of daily English lessons, pupils engage in shared reading sessions as a whole class. These are teacher led, and link to the current class text or lesson learning outcome. Children are encouraged to read as writers and write as readers, drawing from reading experiences to inform their comprehension skills, working walls, and their own writing.

At St. Wilfrid's, reading across the curriculum is key. In all classes, reading corners are used to promote research and independent learning in current class topics. Durham Learning Resources are used to supplement school topic books, ensuring a wide diet of cross curricular reading is updated every half term to reflect current learning. Reading corners are timetabled for groups, ensuring all children are able to access these at least weekly.

Reading For Pleasure – Encouraging a Love of Reading

At St. Wilfrid's our aim is to encourage a love of reading in all of our pupils, and to provide opportunities for children to read for both pleasure and purpose across all age ranges. We believe that books should be hands on and accessible to pupils at all times and in a range of contexts – during direct teaching time, snuggles in a reading corner, during a history lesson.

These include:

- Book Talk Guided reading sessions, led by teachers and teaching assistants within small groups of around six pupils
- Reading Journey Suitcases in each class. Each class has a suitcase, containing their core English books (selected by teachers) and books from Pie Corbett's Reading Spine that complement core books, build reading stamina, develop language and of course engage the reader. These are read aloud by teachers, other adults in school and are available to pupils to become well acquainted with in class reading corners.
- Visits to the local library. We are lucky enough to be within walking distance of our local library. All classes will visit the library at least once in the academic year.
- Secondary texts. Class teachers select secondary and complimentary texts that support the current focus. For example – when studying The True Story of the Three Little Pigs, other traditional tales and alternative tales are provided in reading corners. In this way, children can explore and deepen their understanding of different text types independently.
- Cross curricular reading – reading for research. Each class utilises its reading corner to provide opportunities for cross curricular learning and research. These are updated at least half termly to reflect current topics and allow pupils to develop their use of non-fiction texts and widen curriculum knowledge. Texts are also used within cross curricular lessons as sources to inform teaching and learning.
- Home reading
- Regular author and story teller visits and workshops – we invite authors and storytellers to visit school regularly as part of a planned programme. Children have the opportunity to interact and learn from authors, read their work, hear them read aloud and take part in reading and writing workshops across school.
- Whole School Reading/Writing weeks – each term the whole school works together to enjoy a spectacular literacy week. The children thoroughly enjoy these weeks – particularly the sense of being part of a whole school literacy community and the immersive nature of the activities. Themes have been: Harry Potter, Pirates/Treasure Island, Winter/The Snow Queen, Jungle Book. Themes and outcomes relate to specific texts, often the classics or text types – instructional writing etc.

As part of the planning process, teachers need to plan the following:

- A cycle of Guided Reading lessons and individual one-one reading with the teacher/TA, using a wide range of different texts, matched to children's ability
- Question stems, using VIPERS which are used to develop vocabulary and comprehension skills progressively;
- Reference to VIPERS skills during shared, guided and one-one reading sessions
 - The scaffolding of response to texts, and answering questions
 - Opportunities to widen, understand and apply new vocabulary across a range of text types and curriculum subjects
- Weekly access for all pupils to reading for pleasure corners, that include current and relevant secondary texts (relating to class text), research texts relating to current science and humanities topics and 'fun' reading.
- In addition to this, teachers should plan time for children to be tested using the Accelerated Reader program. Once children have completed reading an AR book, they must take an online quiz.
- Teachers should assess children's progress in quizzes at least fortnightly, in order to make a professional judgement about whether they are ready to move on. 80% of questions answered correctly is a pass.
- Children who are not ready to move on at the assessment point are added to a class hotlist, where the teacher/TA will focus on their reading for the coming fortnight.
- Teachers should assess and record learning, attainment and target progress regularly against the Reading Key Performance Indicators (in Years 1-6) and against the Reading Early Learning Goal (in EYFS) using stranded sheets. These regular assessments inform planning and allow teachers to identify any gaps in learning.

Impact

Through the teaching of systematic phonics, our aim is for children to become fluent readers, decoding automatically by the end of Key Stage One. Comprehension skills are then able to be further developed, allowing children to gain understanding, knowledge and inspiration from texts across a range of genres, curriculum areas and sources.

Attainment in reading is measured using the statutory assessments at the end of Key Stage One and Two. These results are measured against the reading attainment of children nationally. Attainment in phonics is measured by the Phonics Screening Test at the end of Year 1.

However, we firmly believe that reading is the key to all learning and so the impact of our reading curriculum goes beyond the results of the statutory assessments. We give all children the opportunity to enter the magical worlds that books open up to them. As well as promoting reading for purpose across the curriculum, children are encouraged to develop their own love of genres and authors, creating a lasting love of reading for pleasure.

Written by Brigit Kinsey (September 2020)

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