



**St James's C of E
Primary School**

Let Your Light Shine

Reading Policy

Ratified on: Thursday 3rd July

Ratified by: Lee Salton-McLaughlin

Review date: September 2026

Written by: Z.Troth

Vision

We believe that every child is made in the image of God; inherently valuable and unique. Jesus is the light of the world and God has placed the light of the Holy Spirit within each of us:

Let your light shine to reach your God-given potential.

Let your light shine courageously.

Let your light shine as a beacon of hope.

Let your light shine ~ be the best we can be!

Reading at St James's

Intent

At St James's, it is our intention to nurture well-read, insightful, knowledgeable and inquisitive readers by immersing our pupils with a high-quality texts and experiences.

Reading lies at the **heart of the curriculum**. We believe reading is key for success and we are dedicated to enabling our pupils to become life-long learners. At St James's, we value reading as a crucial life skill and we aim to teach the skills our pupils need to access, understand and enjoy different texts. Through teaching a robust, individual and progressive programme of phonics in Nursery, Reception and Key Stage 1, we empower children to have a **lifelong love of reading** and the confidence, fluency and expression to approach any future aspirations both verbally and written. Our readers are equipped with the tools to tackle unfamiliar vocabulary.

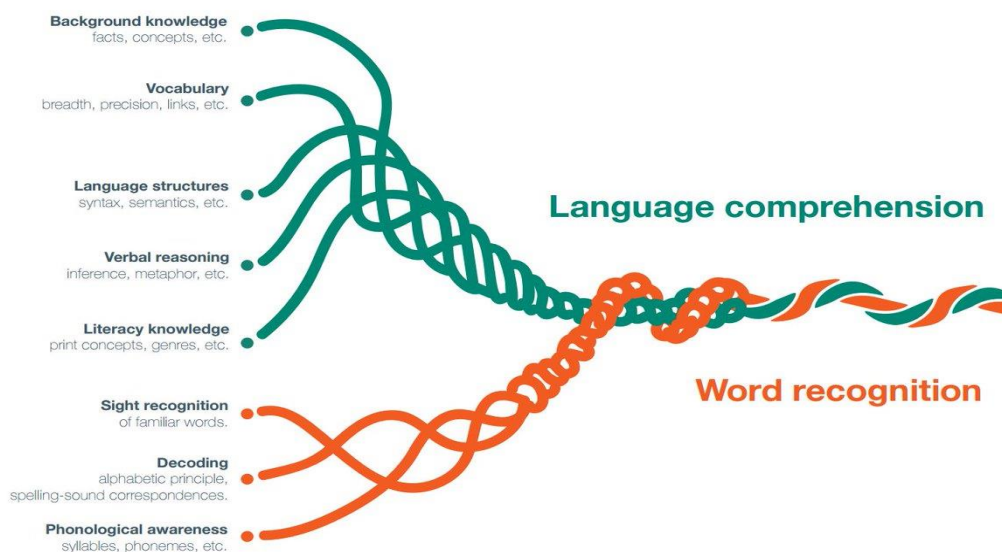
Our aim is that by the time pupils leave St James's, they see themselves as **competent readers** who read confidently for meaning and regularly enjoy reading for pleasure.

Implementation

1. Overview

Reading is taught by recognising the complex nature and number of skills which combine to create skilled readers. Staff view Scarborough's Reading Rope (figure 1) as a useful model - it likens reading to a rope comprised of multiple strands. The two main strands, word recognition and language comprehension, are supported by a broad academic consensus and underpinned by research evidence. These two main strands are composed of sub-strands that need to 'become entwined' as pupils learn to co-ordinate the different components of reading.

FIGURE 1: THE MANY STRANDS THAT ARE WOVEN INTO SKILLED READING⁷



In addition, the 'reading comprehension house' (figure 2) illustrates that word reading and language comprehension are underpinned by a number of other building blocks of reading. These component parts build on one another and connect together as children learn to read.

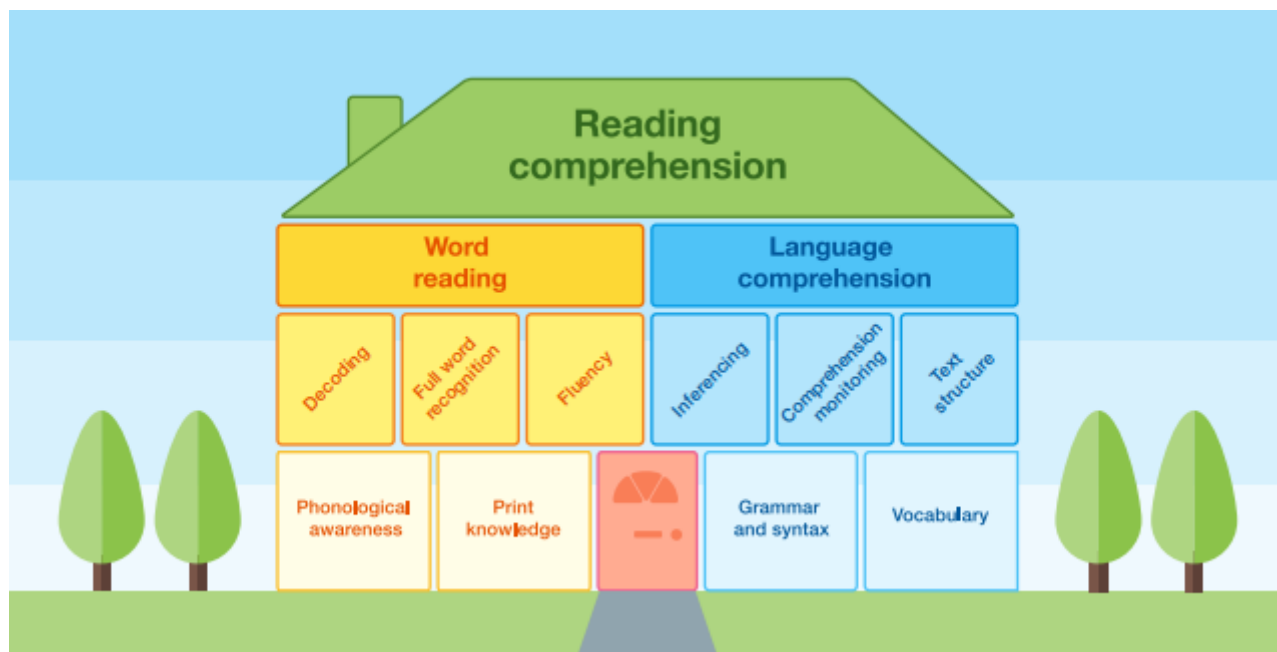


Figure 2: Reading comprehension—the sum of many parts Adapted from Hogan, Bridges, Justice, and Cain (2011)

2. Reading Leader

Because we believe teaching every child to read is so important, we have a Reading Leader who drives the early reading programme in our school. This person is highly skilled at teaching phonics and reading, and they monitor and support our reading team, so everyone teaches with fidelity to the *Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised* programme. The Reading Leader ensures that the teaching of reading

continues in KS2, following on from the Little Wandle programme, continuing to develop fluency, comprehension and love of reading in a consistent format.

3. Phonics

3.1. Overview

At St James's CE Primary, we believe that all our children can become fluent readers and writers. This is why we teach reading through *Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised*, which is a systematic and synthetic phonics programme.

We follow the [Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised progression](#), which ensures children build on their growing knowledge of the alphabetic code, mastering phonics to read and spell as they move through school. As a result, all our children are able to tackle any unfamiliar words as they read. At St James's CE Primary, we also model the application of the alphabetic code through phonics in shared reading and writing, both inside and outside of the phonics lesson and across the curriculum. We have a strong focus on language development for our children because we know that speaking and listening are crucial skills for reading and writing in all subjects.

3.2 Foundations for phonics in PreSchool

- We provide a balance of child-led and adult-led experiences for all children that meet the curriculum expectations for 'Communication and language' and 'Literacy'. These include:
 - sharing high-quality stories and poems
 - learning a range of nursery rhymes and action rhymes
 - activities that develop focused listening and attention, including oral blending
 - attention to high-quality language.
- We ensure Preschool children are well prepared to begin learning grapheme-phoneme correspondences (GPCs) and blending in Reception.

3.3 Daily phonics lessons in Reception and Year 1

- We teach phonics for 30 minutes a day. In Reception, we build from 10-minute lessons, with additional daily oral blending games, to the full-length lesson as quickly as possible. Each Friday, we review the week's teaching to help children become fluent readers.
- Children make a strong start in Reception: teaching begins in Week 2 of the Autumn term.
- We follow the [Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised expectations of progress](#):
 - Children in Reception are taught to read and spell words using Phase 2 and 3 GPCs, and words with adjacent consonants (Phase 4) with fluency and accuracy.

- Children in Year 1 review Phase 3 and 4 and are taught to read and spell words using Phase 5 GPCs with fluency and accuracy.

3.4 Daily Keep-up lessons ensure every child learns to read

- Any child who needs additional practice has daily Keep-up support, taught by a fully trained adult. Keep-up lessons match the structure of class teaching, and use the same procedures, resources and mantras, but in smaller steps with more repetition, so that every child secures their learning.
- We timetable daily phonics lessons for any child in Year 2 who is not fully fluent at reading or has not passed the Phonics Screening Check. These children urgently need to catch up, so the gap between themselves and their peers does not widen. We use the *Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised* assessments to identify the gaps in their phonic knowledge and teach to these using the Keep-up resources – at pace.
- If any child in Year 3 to 6 has gaps in their phonic knowledge when reading or writing, we plan phonics following the Little Wandle Rapid Catch Up programme. These daily lessons are to ensure that children rapidly learn to read.

4. Teaching reading

4.1 Reception and Year 1 - Reading practice sessions three times a week

- We teach children to read through reading practice sessions three times a week. These:
 - are taught by a fully trained adult to small groups of approximately six children
 - use books matched to the children's secure phonic knowledge using the *Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised* assessments and book matching grids on pages 11–20 of 'Application of phonics to reading'
 - are monitored by the class teacher, who rotates and works with each group on a regular basis.
- Each reading practice session has a clear focus, so that the demands of the session do not overload the children's working memory. The reading practice sessions have been designed to focus on three key reading skills:
 - decoding
 - prosody: teaching children to read with understanding and expression
 - comprehension: teaching children to understand the text.
- In Reception these sessions start in Week 4. Children who are not yet decoding have daily additional blending practice in small groups, so that they quickly learn to blend and can begin to read books.

Year 2

- In Year 2 children will exit the Little Wandle reading scheme if they have passed the Year 1 phonics check and read with accuracy and fluency. Children will then read our main colour banded books.

4.2 Comprehension

Reading comprehension begins in the EYFS where staff explore books they share with pupils through thinking out loud as a reader, visualising and asking and answering questions. Reading comprehension is also an important part of the Little Wandle reading sessions which take place in Reception, Year 1 and for some children Year 2.

Following on from the Little Wandle Reading programme, reading comprehension is developed by teaching pupils specific strategies including how the strategy is used, and why and when to use the strategy. Each of the strategies are taught through explicit instruction and extensive practice. Staff apply the gradual release of responsibility model over time:

1. an explicit description of the strategy and when and how it should be used;
2. modelling of the strategy in action by teachers and/ or pupils;
3. collaborative use of the strategy in action;
4. guided practice using the strategy with gradual release of responsibility; and
5. independent use of the strategy.

Within each English unit 'Read and Explore' and some 'Rip It' lessons will have a reading focus and further teaching of reading takes place in daily whole class reading lessons.

Discrete Reading lessons in KS2 (and KS1 once pupils complete the Little Wandle phonics and reading programme) follow the same weekly cycle (days may vary):

Monday	Shared Reading	Teachers model: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Comprehension monitoring• Fluency• Visualisation Activation of prior knowledge
Tuesday	Vocabulary boost	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Using STAR (select, teach, activate and review) techniques children learn and use new vocabulary.
Wednesday	Model and Practise	Teachers model a comprehension skill or strategy Pupils practise that skill or strategy Pupils conclude the session by practising answering mixed skill/strategy questions.
Thursday	Application of comprehension skills	Independent application of comprehension in written form or Pupils may also meet in groups to discuss comprehension questions based on books they have read independently in advance.

Friday	Reading for Pleasure lesson	Children use the skills acquired to read independently. Children will regularly visit the library during this session.
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5. Additional reading support for vulnerable children

5.1 Children who are falling behind

Where assessment shows pupils need support beyond quality first teaching to meet age-related expectations or greater depth targets the following strategies are used:

- Children in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 who are receiving additional phonics Keep-up sessions read their reading practice book to an adult daily.
- Children in KS2 who are receiving additional phonics Catch -up sessions read their reading practice book to an adult daily.
- In KS2, some children may read in additional groups to improve fluency through reading practice.
- In lessons some pupils may work more frequently in an adult led guided groups.
- Comprehension catch up groups are used to provide further opportunities for modelling and practise of key skills.
- In KS2, Century – an online learning platform is used to provide pupils with a personalised reading learning path. This resources can also be used at home.

5.2 SEND Pupils

Some children need educational provision that is additional to, or different from, that made generally for other children. We ensure that effective provision is put in place to remove barriers to learning and follow the Assess, Plan, Do, Review approach. In the classroom scaffolding will be planned for to allow pupils to access reading lessons. Individual Support Plans may contain reading targets which class teacher oversee and additional time with an adult beyond lessons is usually required to achieve these. This time is planned on Year group provision maps. The school SENCO and in some cases external agencies such as Dudley Learning Support Service work with teachers to monitor, plan and evaluate provision.

6. Ensuring consistency and pace of progress

6.1 Early Reading

Every teacher in our school has been trained to teach early reading, so we have the same expectations of progress. We all use the same language, routines and resources to teach children to read so that we lower children's cognitive load.

Weekly content grids map each element of new learning to each day, week and term for the duration of the programme. Lesson templates, Prompt cards and How to videos ensure teachers all have a consistent approach and structure for each lesson. The Reading Leader and SLT use the Audit and Prompt cards to regularly monitor and observe teaching; they use the summative data to identify children who need additional support and gaps in learning.

6.2 Shared bank of terminology and strategy

In Key Stage 2, we use a shared bank of reading terminology and strategies. This ensures consistency for the pupils, supporting them in making links across texts, lessons and year groups. Reading lessons follow the same sequence and format.

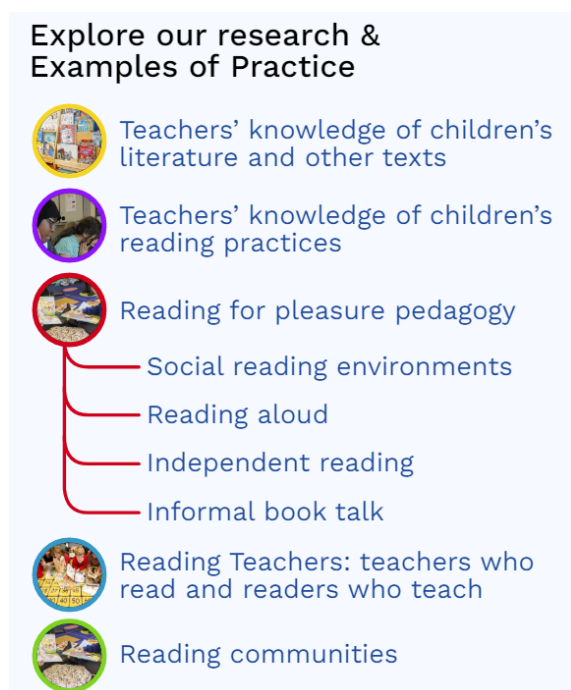
7. Ensuring reading for pleasure

'Reading for pleasure is the single most important indicator of a child's success.'
(OECD 2002)

'The will influences the skill and vice versa.' (OECD 2010)

We value reading for pleasure highly and work hard as a school to grow our Reading for Pleasure pedagogy.

At St James' we base our reading for pleasure staff training and provision around the [Open University Reading for pleasure framework and research:](#)



Some of the strategies we use to develop a love of reading are:

- Vibrant, well designed reading areas in each classroom which offer a wide range of text types and reading material. These areas offer pupils a change to read and give recommendations.
- Regular visits to the school library for all pupils
- Children across the school have regular opportunities to engage with a wide range of Reading for Pleasure events (book fairs, author visits and workshops, national events etc).
- Staff model a love of reading and engage in conversation with pupils regularly about books, authors and reading habits.
- Staff actively develop their knowledge of children's books and authors

- Teachers read to pupils at least three times a week in KS2 and daily in KS1
- Staff actively encourage children to widen their reading range e.g. through the selection of book read in class, recommended book lists and author maps
- Celebrating reading through whole school events e.g. World Book Day and the Summer Reading Challenge
- Linking with our local library
- Parent workshops e.g. supporting reading at home

We read to children every day. We choose these books carefully as we want children to experience a wide range of books, including books that reflect the children at St James's CE Primary and our local community as well as books that open windows into other worlds and cultures. Every classroom has an inviting book corner that encourages a love for reading. We curate these books and talk about them to entice children to read a wide range of books.

School Library

We are very proud of our school library. All pupils visit the library at least fortnightly to select a book to take home to share with their families.

8. Home reading

8.1 Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 Home Reading

The decodable reading practice book, used in the child's reading session, is taken home to ensure success is shared with the family. Reading for pleasure books also go home for parents to share and read to children. We use the [Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised parents' resources](#) to engage our families and share information about phonics, the benefits of sharing books, how children learn to blend and other aspects of our provision, both online and through workshop. Resources are available on our school website to support parents and carers with reading at home.

8.2 KS2 Home Reading

Children in KS2 take home a Reading Practice book matched to their reading ability and a Reading for Pleasure book they have selected.

KS2 pupils also have access to Century at home. Century is an online platform which set a personalised programme for children's reading comprehension development based on assessments the children complete. The site provides teachers with analysis information which feeds in to planning at school.

Resources are available on our school website to support parents and carers with reading at home.

8.3 Planners

Planners go home with children from Reception onwards, and parents/carers are asked to make at least three entries a week. Children in KS2 are encouraged to make their own entries. Children who read three times a week, get entered for our 'Premier League' draw where prizes are up for grabs.

Impact

Assessment

Phonics, fluency and comprehension assessments are discussed in termly Pupil Progress meetings with SLT.

Phonics Assessment

Assessment is used to monitor progress and to identify any child needing additional support as soon as they need it.

Assessment for learning is used:

- daily within class to identify children needing Keep-up support
- weekly in the Review lesson to assess gaps, address these immediately and secure fluency of GPCs, words and spellings.

Summative assessment is used:

- every six weeks to assess progress, to identify gaps in learning that need to be addressed, to identify any children needing additional support and to plan the Keep-up support that they need.
- by SLT and scrutinised through online trackers, to narrow attainment gaps between different groups of children and so that any additional support for teachers can be put into place.

Statutory assessment

Children in Year 1 sit the Phonics Screening Check. Any child not passing the check re-sits it in Year 2.

Ongoing assessment for catch-up

Children in Year 2 to 6 are assessed through their teacher's ongoing formative assessment as well as through the half-termly *Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised* summative assessments.

Additional Reading Assessment

Fluency Assessment

Phonic decoding skills must be practised until children become automatic, and fluent reading is established. Staff use Little Wandle fluency assessments to measure the fluency of children in the final stages of Phase 5. At St-James's we understand that fluency and accuracy is required for children to comprehend successfully whilst reading.

Comprehension Assessment

Children's ability to comprehend texts is assessed verbally when pupils are heard to read, in independent comprehension activities within lessons and through end of term NTS assessments.

Statutory assessment

Children in Year 1 sit their Phonics Screening test in June. Children in Year 6 are assessed by sitting a reading paper as part of their SATs in May.