

Reading Policy

Meir Heath Academy



Approved by: Mrs M Southern / Mr J Spencer **Date:** January 2025

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Next review due by: September 2025

*I opened a book and in I strode.
Now nobody can find me.
I've left my chair, my house, my road,
My town and my world behind me.
I'm wearing the cloak, I've slipped on the ring,
I've swallowed the magic potion.
I've fought with a dragon, dined with a king
And dived in a bottomless ocean.
I opened a book and made some friends.
I shared their tears and laughter
And followed their road with its bumps and bends
To the happily ever after.
I finished my book and out I came.
The cloak can no longer hide me.
My chair and my house are just the same,
But I have a book inside me." — **Julia Donaldson***

Introduction

At Meir Heath we recognise that reading is a complex skill with many components but it is also the key to accessing the school curriculum and the wider world and therefore we ensure that reading has a high priority on a daily basis.

This policy has been agreed with staff to develop and establish a consistent whole school approach to the teaching of reading.

Aims

This policy aims to ensure that pupils learn to read easily, fluently and with good understanding.

- At the beginning of the learning process this is achieved through teaching children phonics and the recognition of familiar printed words, including common exception words, so that children can develop skills for reading words. Understanding texts is developed through high quality discussions with the teacher during sessions reading to the whole class or a group of children, shared reading sessions and guided reading sessions as well as reading a wide range of texts across the curriculum.
- We also encourage children to develop an interest in, and a love of books, through encouraging children to become attentive listeners and independent and reflective readers. This is achieved through immersing children in a reading culture, providing a wide range of text types and content and ensuring children are given opportunities to read for pleasure, for learning and for information.

A Reading Culture

The school seeks to develop a reading culture so that all pupils perceive reading as desirable and useful. Children are encouraged to read fiction, non-fiction and poetry but we recognise that, like adults, children may have a favourite genre and when reading for pleasure may not *always* wish to be challenged but to enjoy their book in their own way.

There are opportunities for pupils to experience print around them through classroom notices, labels and signs. These are discussed with the children and take a variety of forms such as single words, phrases and complete sentences. In Early Years, texts form part of the continuous provision for the teaching of reading and can be linked to any area of the curriculum.

Reading is promoted in each classroom through an identifiable reading area that allows children to choose texts that are appropriate to their age and ability and to share “recommended reads” and book reviews with their class mates. Each class teacher shares a class novel with the pupils; on occasion teachers, visitors or authors read to other classes too as a “guest” reader.

We seek to promote the enjoyment of reading through taking part in events such as World Book Day, star reader badges shared in assembly and a recommended read book is sent home weekly. We also link an annual theatre visit to a text and use the text as a basis for a whole school learning theme. National Book Week is used to share reading with children beyond the teacher’s own class, to encourage families to carry out a wide range of recommended home/family holiday reading activities and challenges, the opportunity to dress as a book character, to listen to stories read by other teachers and a “Drop Everything And Read” session where reading for pleasure is encouraged. The school holds an annual Book fair so that children can enjoy the thrill of choosing a new book with their parents.

All adults act as good role models for children and model both reading aloud and silent reading.

School programme for the teaching of reading:

The following programme has been agreed to ensure progression in reading throughout the school and a cohesive approach to the teaching of reading.

Phonics

All children in EYFS and Key Stage 1 are taught phonic skills through a daily Supersonic Phonic Friends lesson. This takes place in whole class groupings for Reception and differentiated groups based on phonic knowledge in Key Stage 1.

EYFS and KS1 teachers share information with parents at the start of the year in their ‘Welcome to’ packs, to inform them of the sounds the children are learning and to request support for the re-enforcement of sounds identified during assessments so that the learning process is a partnership. Supersonic Phonic Friends activities are set as homework so that children can reinforce taught sounds at home. Parents are supported in the correct pronunciation of phonics through online links provided in the phonics area of the school website.

KS2 pupils who do not pass the retake of the Y1 phonics test in Y2, or are not secure at phase 5 at the end of KS1 are tracked through KS2 to ensure appropriate provision for their needs. The teaching of phonics in KS2 is delivered in a single phonics group that KS2 children only attend, when their own assessed needs are being taught. We recognise that

some children will not use phonics as their main strategy to support reading and so where a child demonstrates secure reading and comprehension skills they will no longer access the KS2 phonic intervention.

Teachers assess children's phonic knowledge at several points throughout the year; this can be at the end of teaching a group of sounds or after teaching several groups of sounds. Teachers use Phonics tracker as a way to assess and analyse the data. This process involves assessing a child's ability to read particular sounds on their own and within words, assess their segmenting and blending skills and tricky word knowledge. The assessment tool allows teachers to identify gaps in the child's learning which then informs their planning of not only their whole class teaching, but also targeted 'catch up' phonic sessions for children who require additional support. The phonics coordinator will report progress and areas of development to the leadership team and governors termly.

Pupils in KS2 follow the programme of spelling in Curriculum 2014 as part of their daily Grammar, Punctuation and Spelling session.

Whole Class Reading

In Early Years and Year 1 children have a one to one read with the class teacher or TA each week.

In Year 2 all children take part in 4 whole class reading lessons per week. Within each lesson there are opportunities for shared, modelled and independent reading. Lessons focus on particular reading skills and aims to support fluency. The school uses a scheme of work from 'The Teacher Hub', a local based Staffordshire business ran by Claire Hubbard who is a teacher, consultant and moderator for KS1 and KS2. The range of books covered is recorded on iPad planning or in the teachers' "Guided Reading" folder.

In KS2, we follow a Mastery approach to English through the programme *Pathways to Read*. Units of work are delivered using high quality texts and children in all year groups are given varied opportunities for reading. Skills are built up through repetition within the units, and children apply these skills in the reading activities provided.

The *Pathways to Read* programme is delivered through whole class shared reading lessons. For pupils still needing support with phonics from years 2-6, we provide individual reading support that has phonically decodable texts at the heart of it. In our whole class reading, there is a clear teaching focus with the opportunity to master key reading skills in each session.

Many opportunities for widening children's vocabulary are given through the *Pathways to Read* approach and this builds on the extensive work we do in school to provide our children with a rich and varied vocabulary.

You will find the end of year expectations for reading for each of our year groups in the appendix. For further detail on the skills that your children are learning on a termly basis, please contact your class teacher.

Shared Reading

Shared Reading can take place in any lesson. This sometimes includes big books, but more frequently texts are displayed on the Interactive Whiteboard. During this time all children are expected to read as much as they can along with everyone else. This is an opportunity to teach or reinforce reading conventions, to discuss the use of language and widen the children's vocabulary beyond the English lesson and to show how reading supports all areas of the curriculum. Children of any ability can be selected to read part of the text alone – this supports teacher assessment and ensures children understand that reading has a real purpose beyond a reading lesson.

Each class also has their own novel which staff share at the end of the day. In Y1, they continue the EYFS structure and have a choice of two books each day. The children vote for their favourite book. In Y2 and KS2, the novels are topic based or recommended texts.

Individual Reading

All children will have at least one Individual reading book from the school's reading scheme. If children complete their scheme reader, they may also bring a book of their own choice from home with the agreement of their teacher.

Early Years

In Early Years, children begin their reading journey by taking home wordless books. These books help children to develop their understanding of book handling and vocabulary through careful observations of the illustrations to try and share their thoughts and ideas of what is happening in the story and why. Teachers encourage children to think about characters thoughts and feelings and introduce basic inference skills. When children can confidently orally segment and blend sounds in CVC words, worded books are then given. Children are heard to read individually at least once a week by school staff, this is led by the teacher or teaching assistant, using phonically decodable books that contain phonic sounds that the children are secure in.

Where children are not making expected progress or are not heard to read at home they are given additional daily reading opportunities through volunteers and/or Y6 reading buddies.

Children's books are changed once a week by the teacher or TA. Three physical books are sent home each week and is recorded in the child's school reading record and the parents complete the child's reading diary which is used as a liaison between parents and teachers. Parents are expected to listen to their child read at least 3 times a week at home and ask questions about the book to check comprehension, making comments in the reading diary.

The teacher monitors each child's progress through independent reading and phonics and sets targets based upon this. The targets are shared with parents and children through parent consultation meetings (recorded on the parent consultation information sheet).

Tricky words are also sent home each week and form part of the Supersonic Phonics Friends Parent Newsletter that also shares the phonic sounds the children have been learning that week.

Key Stage 1

Pupils in KS1 mainly read from reading scheme books linked to their ability level. Their reading diaries are checked weekly to ensure that they are being heard to read at home. If there are no parent signatures, teachers will monitor this and contact family members to discuss.

All children are heard to read individually by a member of staff. For the children who are still learning to read, this is on a weekly basis, whilst for the more able pupils, this is once per half term on a one to one basis with the class teacher and also during the whole class reading session (for Year 2 pupils). Lower ability readers are also heard to read by a range of volunteers and some children have a KS2 reader leader buddy.

The first week of each half term children, who are reading Turquoise banded books or beyond, read 1:1 with their class teacher. This allows staff to ensure that their texts are at an appropriate level to secure challenge and progress. This is recorded in the teacher's guided reading file.

The teacher monitors each child's progress carefully either by using Phonics tracker or through the whole class reading sessions, and sets targets based upon this. Targets for reading are set for each child and discussed and developed in the reading session each week. The targets are shared with parents and children through parent consultation meetings and recorded on the parent consultation information sheet.

Tricky words are also sent home each week and form part of the Supersonic Phonics Friends Parent Newsletter that also shares the phonic sounds or spellings rules the children have been learning that week.

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Lower Key Stage 2

In Y3 and 4, most children begin to read brown level (Y3) or grey level (Y4). They are supported in their independent reading book choices and encouraged to choose books from within particular texts appropriate to their skills. When a book has been used for whole class reading, it is made available to particular groups so that they can complete the book for pleasure.

Targets for reading are set for each child and discussed and developed in the whole class reading session each week.

Children are encouraged to keep their own record of the independent books they read and to record whether their choice was fiction, non-fiction or poetry. A member of staff checks this record weekly to ensure breadth and challenge in the children's reading choices.

Children are expected to make a short comment for a range of books once they have been finished, though this is not expected on every occasion. Parents are expected to listen to their children read and discuss the text as homework, making comments in the reading diary, these reading diaries are checked and signed by the class teacher on a weekly basis.

Opportunities for children to change their scheme reader books are given on a weekly basis. They have the opportunity to change their free choice daily.

Upper Key Stage 2

In UKS2, the children will have a weekly scheme reader book. This is changed once a week if completed. Children are responsible for regularly changing their reading books. Each pupil is expected to keep a record of the books read and to comment upon some books, when completed, in their reading diaries. They use the reading diary to log this information.

Reading diaries will be checked on a weekly basis by a member of staff. Targets for reading are set for each child and discussed and developed in the whole class reading session each week. Whilst it is not expected that parents will *hear* their child read, daily involvement in the process is still important. Discussions about the books read and understanding of issues covered help to improve reading skills. Parents are encouraged to sign the reading diary three times a week. If this is evident, the children will receive a class Dojo.

Reading Aloud

There are opportunities planned for children to read aloud to a variety of audiences. These could be through English work, whole class reading, class assemblies or performances to audiences including the whole school and parents.

Reading Area

Each class has their own class reading area, which should be tidy, well organised and easily accessible. The school co-ordinates the non-fiction and poetry books so that each class can have a “refreshed” set of books each half term that match either the class topic or pupil requests/interests. Fiction books will be refreshed half termly through each class swapping books with their peer class. All children from Y3 upwards are entitled to take home class library books (their independent reading book) and make a note in their reading diary of when the book is taken and returned.

The Role of Teaching Assistant

Teaching Assistants are expected to take an active role in supporting children with their reading as directed by the class teacher. This can include running intervention programmes to boost phonic knowledge and support one to one reading.

The Role of Volunteers

The school encourages people who have some time to come into school to hear readers. The volunteer will be allocated to a class and the class teacher will then select children who would benefit from the extra reading to an adult. The volunteer will be in charge of changing scheme reader books on a weekly basis. Volunteers will highlight the books children have read and returned, as well as highlighting any comments to the class teacher. The class teacher is responsible for ensuring that the volunteer has the support needed to help them carry out the role effectively, particularly ensuring their understanding of the role of “phonics first” and the correct pronunciation of sounds, when working with Early Years and KS1.

Working In Partnership with Parents

The teaching of reading is greatly helped if there is a strong communication and support

from parents. The school Reading diary is a way in which communication is easily achieved. Reading information meetings are also held to advise parents on the reading strategies used in school and how best they may help their child at home.

Assessment and Record Keeping

Children are assessed in line with the school's assessment policy using a variety of means. Reading is assessed by the teachers as part of whole class reading sessions (Afl) and through the use of SATs in Y6, the Y1 phonics assessment, the Rising Stars Optional Tests (Y3, 4 and 5) and Phonics tracker for children receiving Supersonic Phonic Friends lessons. Teacher assessments are moderated by the reading leader and have found to be accurate. If there are any misjudgements, the reading lead will discuss with the relevant class teacher.

The school uses a single commercial assessment as an additional tool for the assessment of reading Rising Stars (with a diagnostic aspect) to validate the teacher assessment and to ensure that the school can report progress to parents effectively and with meaning as the school no longer uses levels (since 2014). The assessment information is used to inform parents, to group children effectively for targeted support in guided reading or to allocate scheme books and identify appropriate books for independent reading and to ensure that all groups of pupils are making progress or identify which pupils require intervention. The data is shared with all staff and governors so that all staff have an overview of progress across the school and any areas of development are quickly identified by SLT.

SEN and Equal Opportunities

Those children who as a result of test or normal classroom activities are identified as needing extra support will be monitored closely by the class teacher and the SENCO. Specific interventions will be put in place to support those children. Support for reading will form part of an IEP for children who are at the additional support level or have an EHCP. Other intensive programmes may be used if the need arises.

Inclusion

At Meir Heath Academy teachers set high expectations for **all** pupils. Teachers take account of their duties under the equal opportunities legislation that covers race, SEN/disability, gender, religion or belief and sexual orientation. They plan, using adaptive teaching methods in order to stretch those pupils who are working significantly above expected standards, and for those pupils who have low levels of prior attainment and or are from disadvantaged backgrounds. Teachers use appropriate assessment in order to set deliberately ambitious targets. Teachers ensure that there are no barriers to learning and that **all** pupils access the full curriculum.

Our policy is monitored to ensure that all pupils have equality of access to a range of reading opportunities and experiences so that all pupils achieve their best.

APPENDIX

**Please note that information in brackets shows where the national curriculum statements link specifically to the end of key stage content domain.*



Pathways to Read Overview of objectives – Year 3

Reading skills	Au1	Au2	Sp1	Sp2	Su1	Su2
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Listen to and discuss a wide range of fiction, poetry, plays, non-fiction and reference books or textbooks• Read books that are structured in different ways and read for a range of purposes• Increase their familiarity with a wide range of books, including fairy stories, myths and legends, and retelling some of these orally• Check that the text makes sense to them and discuss their understanding• Participate in discussion about books• Predict what might happen from details stated and implied (2e)• Explain meaning of words in context (2a)• Retrieve and record information (2b)• Use dictionaries to check the meaning of words that they have read• Identify themes and conventions in a wide range of books• Discuss words and phrases that capture the reader's interest and imagination(2g)• Ask questions to improve understanding• Draw inferences (inferring characters' feelings, thoughts and motives from their actions); justify with evidence (2d)• Identify main ideas drawn from more than one paragraph and summarise (2c)• Identify how language, structure and presentation contribute to meaning (2f)• Retrieve and record information from non-fiction (2b)						

**Please note that information in brackets shows where the national curriculum statements link specifically to the end of key stage content domain.*



Pathways to Read Overview of objectives – Year 4

Reading skills	Au1	Au2	Sp1	Sp2	Su1	Su2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Listen to and discuss a wide range of fiction, poetry, plays, non-fiction and reference books or textbooks Read books that are structured in different ways and read for a range of purposes Increase their familiarity with a wide range of books, including fairy stories, myths and legends, and retelling some of these orally Check that the text makes sense to them and discuss their understanding Participate in discussion about books Predict what might happen from details stated and implied (2e) Explain meaning of words in context (2a) Retrieve and record information (2b) Use dictionaries to check the meaning of words that they have read Identify themes and conventions in a wide range of books Discuss words and phrases that capture the reader’s interest and imagination (2g) Ask questions to improve understanding Draw inferences (inferring characters’ feelings, thoughts and motives from their actions); justify with evidence (2d) Identify main ideas drawn from more than one paragraph and summarise (2c) Identify how language, structure and presentation contribute to meaning (2f) Retrieve and record information from non-fiction (2b) 						



Pathways to Read
Overview of objectives – Year 5

Reading skills	Au1	Au2	Sp1	Sp2	Su1	Su2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue to read and discuss an increasingly wide range of fiction, poetry, plays, non-fiction and reference books or textbooks Read books that are structured in different ways and read for a range of purposes Increase their familiarity with a wide range of books, including myths, legends and traditional stories, modern fiction, fiction from our literary heritage, and books from other cultures and traditions Participate in discussion about books Explain and discuss understanding of reading Provide reasoned justifications for views Recommend books to peers Predict what might happen from details stated and implied (2e) Explore meaning of words in context (2a) Retrieve, record and present information (2b) Ask questions to improve understanding Identify and discuss themes and conventions Make comparisons within and across books (2h) Draw inferences (inferring characters' feelings, thoughts and motives from their actions); justify with evidence (2d) Summarise main ideas from more than one paragraph, identifying key details (2c) Identify how language, structure and presentation contribute to meaning (2f) Evaluate authors' language choice, including figurative language (2g) Distinguish between fact and opinion (2d) 						

**Please note that information in brackets shows where the national curriculum statements link specifically to the end of key stage content domain.*



Pathways to Read
Overview of objectives – Year 6

Reading skills	Au1	Au2	Sp1	Sp2	Su1	Su2
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to read and discuss an increasingly wide range of fiction, poetry, plays, non-fiction and reference books or textbooks • Read books that are structured in different ways and read for a range of purposes • Increase their familiarity with a wide range of books, including myths, legends and traditional stories, modern fiction, fiction from our literary heritage, and books from other cultures and traditions • Participate in discussion about books • Explain and discuss understanding of reading • Provide reasoned justifications for views • Recommend books to peers • Predict what might happen from details stated and implied (2e) • Explore meaning of words in context (2a) • Retrieve, record and present information (2b) • Ask questions to improve understanding • Identify and discuss themes and conventions (2d) • Make comparisons within and across books (2h) • Draw inferences (inferring characters' feelings, thoughts and motives from their actions); justify with evidence (2d) • Summarise main ideas, identifying key details (2c) • Identify how language, structure and presentation contribute to meaning (2f) • Evaluate authors' language choice, including figurative language (2g) • Distinguish between fact and opinion (2d) 						

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