



## **Literacy Policy, rationale and teaching strategies.**

### **Aims**

At Stokes Wood, our central ambition is to give the children the skills they need to speak, read and write well. Although good literacy skills are crucial to being able to learn across the curriculum, they reach beyond this and significantly influence the opportunities that children and adults have available to them in countless aspects of daily life. Evidence shows that disadvantaged pupils are 20% less likely than their peers to reach expected standards in reading and writing by the end of key stage 2.

To excel in literacy, pupils need high quality teaching and extensive opportunities to practise reading and writing.

This policy seeks to set out how our school enables all children to reach expected standards, building on the firm foundations laid down in Early Years and Key Stage 1, and then throughout KS2, to become skilled readers and writers who are ready to take on the challenges of secondary school.

### **Reading**

The goal when teaching reading is to enable children to comprehend written texts. To do this, pupils need to build both word reading and language comprehension skills. In turn, word reading and language comprehension skills are underpinned by a number of other building blocks. These component parts build on one another and connect as children learn to read.

To become proficient at word reading, children need to build an awareness of the sound structures of language (phonological awareness). Skilled readers begin to recognise some full words automatically after repeated encounters with them and learn to read with fluency.

Below are the approaches we use at Stokes Wood to ensure that our children become proficient at word reading by the end of **KS1**.

### **Early Reading**

Leaders and class teachers articulate to parents and pupils the importance of learning to read and practising reading skills at home. Children receive home/school reading records, which are regularly checked. Children are expected to read every night at home and books are changed regularly. Any children who may not be reading as frequently as expected are addressed as 'in school readers' and parents are encouraged to support this at home too.

Classrooms within the EYFS and KS1 have reading corners, which promote a love of reading, with a well thought out selection of books and story baskets for the children to enjoy. A significant number of new books are purchased each year to replace old tatty books and books are displayed to encourage children to choose them.

Teachers read to children daily from the school's reading spine selection, but also use the rising stars interactive stories to engage the children with their reading journey. This allows the reading journey to be engaging and exciting.

Teachers and TAs in EYFS /KS1 have recorded short stories for pupils to listen to at home to increase the children's vocabulary and the number of stories they are hearing. The children can access these videos from home to enjoy. Stories are selected from a progressive reading spine as well as other well-known authors additionally. The videos that staff have made, model good practice to parents.

In addition, EYFS post the rhyme of the week, weekly on the website and Facebook.

The children also have access to an extensive library, taking stories they have selected home and to share with their families. They are also able to take a reading quiz on the book, which encourages the understanding of the text and the want to read more!

### **Phonics**

The teaching of phonics begins in nursery and continues throughout EYFS and KS1. Those pupils struggling to grasp early phonics receive extra support through additional interventions. Activities in EYFS provision aim to consolidate and embed phonic knowledge and its application. Pupils are taught how to apply their phonic skills in all their learning throughout KS1 when reading and writing. It is recognised that without improvement in reading, most of the other school improvement targets cannot be achieved.

The school uses KTC which has been retitled ALS phonics. This is a validated scheme and matches the expectations of the National Curriculum and Early Learning Goal. It has a clear progression from Nursery to Year 2 and has assessments at the end of each phase to track progress.

ALS phonics begins with phase 1 in Nursery and focusses on tuning in the children's listening skills. Phase 2 begins right at the start of Reception. Phonics is taught daily and where required twice daily. An additional teacher is used to supplement phonics teaching with extra interventions to support pupils who are significantly behind. (NELI, speech and language activities and bespoke phonics intervention activities).

All phonics sessions are taught in a quiet environment with few distractions. Children receive the phonics teaching that is appropriate to their levels and are regularly monitored. Phase 2 begins in Reception and consists of 23 phonemes. Phase 3 is then taught once the children are secure in phase 2. The expectation is that all Reception children will complete phase 3 by then end of the academic year. Phase 4 is taught in Reception when assessments show that pupils are ready. Phase 4 is continued and phase 5 is taught in Year 1 and at the beginning of Year 2 for those who still need continued support in phonics.

Each phase uses a scripted lesson plan to ensure the lessons follow the same approach daily, to build up the children's confidence with reading and writing.

Tricky words are taught alongside each phase too

Interventions for those falling behind run along-side and in addition to whole class or group teaching in phonics.

Once assessments are completed at the end of each phase, classes may then be streamed into ability groups to ensure children are being taught the phase matched to their current ability level. During the period after Covid, this is found to be necessary and supportive to pupils who have fallen significantly behind. Generally, pupils who don't reach the Year 1 phonics threshold are those with SEND or very early acquisition of English (EAL).

The assessment of phonics is well-planned and it is used at the end of the teaching of each phase. Children are assessed on their grapheme- phoneme correspondence as well as their ability to segment and blend to read.

The outcomes of these assessments are then used to plan when to move on and when to revisit. Children that need to revisit a phase will also have interventions with the additional teacher to ensure they can catch up as quickly as possible.

This assessment corresponds with the child's phonics group, to ensure future appropriate phonic teaching, which will enable the child to catch up quickly and successfully.

All staff are fully trained in delivering ALS phonics to ensure a consistent approach and have regular opportunity for further development and training.

All staff involved with reading are kept updated with any changes.

Staff observe good practice in school and at other schools.

The school improvement target in reading for Year 2 pupils is to increase the % of pupils achieving age related outcomes in reading so it is in line with the % of pupils achieving the phonics threshold at the end of KS1. This requires an accelerated improvement in the development of vocabulary, language and comprehension for those pupils achieving the phonics threshold but not achieving age related expectation in reading.

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The school has purchased a series of phonetically decodable books which matches the phonics progression of the pupils through the ALS phonics programme. This ensures that pupils are practising the phonics sounds appropriate to their level. The books they take home are also at the appropriate level, based on phonics/ reading assessments and the child's phonics level. Pupils are encouraged to re-read books to build fluency. This is explained to parents.

Leaders have delivered workshops on Zoom which support parents on how they should listen to their children read and strategies to use.

Teachers ensure that the books do not contain words where pupils will have to guess using pictures or repetition, unless these have been pre-taught during a reading session. All the words in the books are underpinned by sounds children have been taught/know and children should not be expected to decode words with sounds they have not yet been taught.

The phonics lead (EYFS and Year 1 lead), curriculum/Literacy lead ( Deputy Head Teacher) and Head Teacher monitor the delivery of early reading through learning walks, lesson observations, hearing children read and interviewing children about their reading. The provision is constantly evaluated and reviewed.

### **Interventions**

Additional quality first teaching is used to address the issue of the bottom 20% falling behind in reading using pupil premium and catch-up funding.

Reading is identified in all subject learning as well as discretely daily or twice daily. Those pupils who need it, receive additional interventions such as phonics and/or BRP/Precision teaching/Changing the Story.

### **Shared and guided reading**

Reading is also taught throughout our guided and shared reading sessions and children will be read to from the school's reading spine book selection at the end of each day to increase their love of reading.

As part of shared and guided reading session, pupils use Voice 21 and reading sentence stems to talk about what they are reading. Children discuss the title, authors and key events within these sessions and discuss their likes and dislikes about the books they are reading. Pupils are encouraged to discuss their favourite books and authors throughout.

**End of KS1 end points**

Below are the desired outcomes which are from the Parks Progression In Reading Map (updated 2022).

<b>Y2 Word Reading</b>	<b>Y2 Grammar for reading</b>	<b>Y2 Comprehension strategies continued</b>
I use phonic knowledge to decode new text from automatically and fluently	I use punctuation to help me to read with expression and to keep track of information in longer sentences.	I know how non-fiction text is presented differently to fiction text.
I sound out new words quickly in my head including words with alternative phonemes for graphemes	I can track simple pronouns to help me to understand text.	I make simple inferences based on what is being said and done
I read most words except new or unfamiliar words without having to sound and blend out loud.	I understand the information in expanded noun phrases and use this to help me to understand.	I can say the information in a sentence in my own words using my working memory.
I read a range of common exception / tricky words I say which part of the word is tricky	<b>Y2 Reading comprehension strategies</b>	<b>Y2 Response to text including reading across the curriculum</b>
I read words with common suffixes ed, ing, est, er, ful	I talk about and clarify the meanings of words, linking new meanings to what I already know If I don't know the meaning of a word, I read the whole sentence to try to work it out. I can think of alternative words for specific words in the text.	I listen to and can talk about different poetry, stories and information text including what I like and don't like
I read words of two or more syllables using a range of graphemes	I can understand basic jokes	I understand what I read in books and can comment on characters and events
I read and understand words with missing letters e.g. I'm, I'll, we'll	I recognise when I don't understand a word. I check that each sentence makes sense to me.	I talk about how non-fiction books are structured e.g. contents, index, glossary, titles, sub title and I know the purposes of these.
<b>Y2 Wider decoding skills</b>	I can use subheadings as labels that summarise what a text is about. I recall specific information from my reading or look back at the text to find information	I identify structural features of some stories and poems.
I re-read books with fluency, expression and intonation	I discuss the sequence of events in books and how information is related	I explain and discuss my understanding of books, poems, and other writing that I read for myself. I identify parts of the text that make me respond in different ways and link this to other texts
I check that the text makes sense to me as I read, thinking does it look right and make sense and I correct my mistakes. I notice when a small mistake I make doesn't fit with the meaning.	I can make simple pictures in my head as I move beyond reading picture books	I recognise simple recurring literary language in stories and poems I talk about my favourite words and phrases and identify familiar patterns in language
I scan the information in the classroom to find what I need. I scan text to find answers to questions or specific words.	I can visualise settings and characters and recognise when they change. With support, I recognise when the picture in my head may be wrong.	I know and can recite stories and poems with appropriate intonation to make the meaning clear.
I re-read sentences from the beginning if I stopped to decode a difficult word	I predict what might happen on the basis of what I have read so far	I use wider vocabulary to talk about characters, or events
I am developing my skills to read quietly to myself. I know that to read in my head I need to hear a voice in my head.	I know I need to use knowledge I already have to help me to understand text.	I talk about what I like and don't like in stories and texts and can talk about favourite titles and begin to give reasons for this.
	I answer and ask questions about what I read	I can name my favourite author and explain why I like their stories.

## **KS2**

At the beginning of KS2, we develop children's fluency further through regular oral reading instruction. This allows children to move from word recognition to the comprehension aspect of reading. Teachers model fluent reading, then pupils read the same text aloud with appropriate feedback. Repeated reading, where pupils re-read a short and meaningful passage a set number of times or until they reach a suitable level of fluency, is another strategy used.

During KS2, we continue to teach reading comprehension strategies through modelling and supported practice. We teach specific strategies that pupils can apply to monitor and overcome barriers to comprehension. These include prediction (based on text content and context), questioning, clarifying (vocabulary), summarising and activating prior knowledge. These strategies are identified by the EFF (recommendation 3). Further to this, there are other strategies identified by the Leicester Leadership of Reading, such as applying grammar knowledge, and visualisation. We used the 'Parks Progression In Reading Map' as an additional tool to identify strategies to teach.

The teacher models and scaffolds these strategies, and then supports pupils to increasingly use reading comprehension strategies independently, with less and less prompting from the teacher.

At Stokes Wood, we introduce a strategy through a shared context, then children have a go at applying the strategy themselves. The strategy is then practised in guided and independent reading sessions. As children move through KS2, the number of shared sessions tends to increase, and the number of small, guided groups decrease as children become more independent in their application of comprehension skills.

Further to the development of comprehension skills, our school explicitly teaches children how to respond to texts they have read, including identification and discussion of theme, developing a knowledge of favourite authors and giving evidence to justify views.

## **Interventions**

If children have not achieved the expected standard in phonics by the end of Y2, they continue to receive daily instruction using the ALS Phonics approach. This intervention continues into Year 4.

BRP is used to support struggling readers on a one-to-one basis in Year 3 and 4. These sessions are delivered by experienced and trained teaching assistants.

In year 5, children use Fresh Start (Read Write. Inc.) in an intervention group. The Reciprocal reading approach has been introduced for a group of children in Year 5 (2022-23) and the success rate for this is currently being monitored.

## **Accelerated Reader**

Stokes Wood has used the Accelerated Reader system for several years. We have a very well-stocked library. Children are able to take quizzes on the books they have read which helps leaders to monitor the amount of home reading and how successfully they are comprehending. Children hand in their home reading diaries every Friday and receive rewards for having their diary signed 4 or more times over a weekly period.

## **Assessment**

Accelerated Reader is used at 3 points over the year to ascertain each child's reading age. By using the Star Reader test, children's reading levels can be accurately updated and their level of book choice for independent reading can be accurately matched.

NFER reading tests are taken at the end of the Summer Term in year 3, 4 and 5 to provide an accurate standardised score and to monitor gaps in comprehension skills.

Rising Stars progress tests are used twice in every half term. These provide a further insight into children's success at applying comprehension skills.

The school uses Benchmarking regularly with children to unpick barriers to comprehension on a one-to-one basis.

Alongside the information gathered from the use of Accelerated Reader, teachers are able to make very robust judgements at the end of each year. This means children are effectively grouped and their reading needs catered for.

## End of KS2 end points

Below are the desired outcomes which are from the Parks Progression In Reading Map (updated 2022).

Y6 Word Reading	Y6 Grammar for reading Continued	Y6 Reading comprehension strategies continued	Y6 Response to texts including reading across the curriculum continued
I apply my knowledge of root words, prefixes, and suffixes to help me to read fluently and understand the meaning of new words.	<i>I can work out the references to characters, places and specific events in text using a range of pronouns, determiners and alternative noun references.</i>	<i>I recognise that my ideas and visualised images can and do change during reading and I am able to change my mind if I have made a mistake.</i>	I can paraphrase a point in a text. I can use a range of evidence to explain or justify my understanding.
<i>I break long polysyllabic words into syllables with speed and read across the entire word.</i>	I can identify complex noun phrases within a text, and I use this information to make inferences and deductions about the noun.	I predict what might happen from details stated and implied and can justify my predictions by reference to both the text and my background knowledge.	I find, record and present information from non-fiction texts efficiently. I know the difference between fact and opinion <i>and can identify this in a text</i>
Y6 Wider decoding	<i>I understand and can explain what different conjunctions mean and how they impact on my understanding of the text.</i>	I can relate a text to my background knowledge and use this to empathise with characters' thoughts and feelings.	I read and understand fictional texts (paper based and digital) that are structured in different ways and read for a range of purposes and can explain the main purpose of these
I read fluently with intonation and expression, pauses, pace and emphasis to interest and entertain the audience. I change my tone to suit my interpretation of the text.	Y6 Reading comprehension strategies	I ask questions ( <i>and wonder</i> ) to improve my understanding <i>actively looking for answers to these</i>	I know that texts have a range of themes and can identify prominent and lesser themes and can make connections between these and others I have read.
<i>I notice mistakes in my reading when reading higher level texts and correct them because the text doesn't make sense. I use a range of breakdown strategies to do this.</i>	I explore the meaning of words in context, and <i>I ask about the meanings of words I don't understand</i> I can identify which strategy to use to help me understand a word I don't know and give reasons for my choice. I can give a range of words with a similar meaning to a given word	I understand how the language, structure and presentation contribute to meaning and that these features vary depending on the audience and purpose of a text.	I comment on how and why a writer has used certain language, including figurative language (e.g., simile, metaphor, personification) <i>and the effect this has on the reader.</i>
<i>I scan text quickly to find key words and phrases and for synonyms and related words</i>  <i>I skim read text to get the gist of a passage.</i>	I understand sarcasm in text I understand a wider range of idioms.	I make inferences such as inferring characters' feelings, thoughts and motives from their actions and justify these with evidence.	I read, recite and perform poems and plays showing understanding through intonation, tone and volume so that prompt an emotional response from the audience.
<i>I reread text carefully to understand it fully.</i>	<i>I monitor my reading for sense and can talk in detail about my understanding including giving the gist.</i>	<i>I make comparisons within and across books commenting on similarities and differences.</i>	I can justify varied perceptions people may have about different characters, themes, events or actions.
I read effectively in my head with pace and stamina	I summarise succinctly the key point of a paragraph	Y6 Response to texts including reading across the curriculum	I discuss preferences confidently about different texts and genres and can explain my preferences.
Y6 Grammar for reading	I summarise the main ideas drawn from more than one paragraph, <i>identifying key details that support the main ideas.</i>	I read and discuss an increasingly wide range of fiction, poetry, plays, non-fiction building on my own and others' ideas, using this to influence my further reading and that of others.	I can discuss similarities and differences between authors and can comment on how an author's heritage or the time in which they lived may influence the themes within their writing.
<i>I read longer complex sentences using commas, brackets, semi colons, colons and dashes accurately to help me and others to understand.</i>	I can visualise a text based on using the full range of word classes and the figurative language	I give reasoned justifications for my views based on precise evidence from the text including quotations.	



## **Writing**

### **Aims**

The goal when teaching writing is to enable pupils to communicate ideas and information through the written word.

Writing is a process that is made up of a number of components, including transcription (spelling, typing and handwriting), text generation (ideas, words and sentence construction), and executive functions (such as attention, planning, monitoring, and reviewing). For children to become skilled writers, they need to be taught, through modelling and scaffolding, strategies that will enable them to plan, draft, revise, edit and publish.

At Stokes Wood, we follow the Talk for Writing approach (Pie Corbett). This approach is based on the following teaching and learning sequence:

- Baseline assessment – a ‘cold task’ which is marked by the teacher to identify gaps in understanding
- Planning – the teacher produces a model text to support the children’s learning
- Stage 1 – imitation – through several activities the children learn the model text
- Stage 2 – innovation – children use the model text to write their own version alongside the teacher modelling
- Stage 3 – Independent application – children write independently using what they have learned (hot task)
- Assessment – the cold and hot tasks are compared, and progress is assessed

A stimulus and purpose for writing is given at the beginning of each unit. Cross-curricular links are made wherever possible.

### **Handwriting**

#### **EYFS and KS1**

Handwriting is taught through the ALS phonics programme and discretely. It is addressed in all writing that children undertake.

Priority is given to correct pencil grip right from nursery and in Year 1 precursive handwriting is taught using the ready to write lead in to letter formation.

Pupils who are ready begin to join their writing as early as Year 1 but generally in Year 2.

#### **KS2**

In year 3, whole class cursive handwriting sessions are taught twice a week using the spellings for that week.

In year 4, whole class cursive handwriting sessions are taught once a week using the spellings for that week.

In year 5 and 6, cursive handwriting is taught to children on a one-to-one basis, or in a very small group. These sessions are intended for children who have specific difficulties with letter formation and fluency in joined writing.

The desired end point for KS2 is that every child has a fluent, cursive handwriting style that will free up working memory space so children can deal with the many other processes involved in producing a piece of writing.

## **Spelling**

### **EYFS and KS1**

Spelling is taught through the ALS phonics programme.

### **KS2**

KS2 follows the No Nonsense spelling programme. Children have a formal spelling test each week. They also have a weekly dictation sentence.

The desired end point for KS2 is that every child has a fast and accurate spelling ability that will help them to be fluent writers.

**Oracy** (please see separate policy)

