



Joy Lane Primary School

Reading Policy

2023-2024

Rationale

At Joy Lane, we believe that reading fluently is the key that unlocks the door to all learning, ultimately providing children with the tools for successful lives in the wider world. If pupils are not able to read fluently at an age-appropriate level, this will impact their ability to access the rest of the curriculum and they will rapidly fall behind. Therefore, we prioritise reading and we ensure that we maximise opportunities for children to read and access phonics keep-up/catch-up sessions. We readily engage with the most current research and developments and continuously use this knowledge to inform and develop our reading culture and practice.

The will to read influences the skill and vice versa (OECD, 2010)

Research carried out by Teresa Cremin at the [Open University](#) underpins our balanced approach to reading for pleasure and reading instruction, and we know that without embedding a strong foundation of reading for pleasure, we cannot effectively instil the knowledge and skills required for reading comprehension. We aspire for our children to become lifelong readers who choose to pick up a book and read because they enjoy it!

As a result, our curriculum has been designed with reading for pleasure at its core. By providing a range of text types and genres in our reading nooks and library areas, choosing a varied and inspiring core of reading material for Guided Reading and read aloud texts, and regularly engaging in informal book talk, our children are able to talk about reading with confidence. Our English curriculum is hooked onto rich and exciting texts, which act as models to inspire our children's growing skillset in writing.

Learning to Read

To be a successful reader, there are four key areas that children need to master:

- 1) **Phonics** – which gives children the ability to decode words.
- 2) **Vocabulary** – which helps understanding.
- 3) **Fluency** – acts as a bridge between phonics and comprehension.
- 4) **Comprehension** – the understanding of what has been read.

Phonics

We know that to be a successful reader and writer, phonics is at the heart of reading development and learning. At Joy Lane, we teach early reading and phonics through Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised, which is a systematic and synthetic phonics programme. Children are introduced to Phonics in Nursery through rhyming and word games. We then teach phonics in Reception and 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. Alongside our phonics programme, we ensure that we expose our youngest children to new and challenging vocabulary because we know that language development is essential for their speaking and listening development.

We continually monitor and track our pupils' progress in phonics and reading fluency and comprehension so that children 'keep up'.

The pedagogical approach we have embedded through the Little Wandle scheme is based upon regular routines, removing unnecessary distractions to ensure the cognitive load remains low for children. The approach advocates for repeated practice, allowing children to move their learning into their long-term memory and orthographic store – practice makes permanent. We know that the pacy, repetitive nature of the programme enables the children to become confident in their blending and segmenting in a group setting, learning alongside one another and in turn creating confident readers when tackling unknown decodable words in books.

Phonics is prioritised for those children in Year 2 and Year 3 who did not pass the Phonics Screener, as well as others in Key Stage 2 who cannot read at age-related expectations. The Little Wandle Rapid Catch Up programme ensures that these children are provided with regular, targeted support so they can access the curriculum and enjoy reading as soon as possible.

For further information on how to support your child at home with Phonics please click [here](#).

Guided Reading

Our Guided Reading journey starts with Little Wandle in Reception and Year 1. It is important children are given regular opportunities to apply the phonics they have learned by reading fully decodable books. At Joy Lane we use ‘Collins Big Cat for Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised’ fully decodable books to match the programme’s progression.

Each reading practice session is designed to focus on one of the three key reading skills:

- Decoding
- Prosody – reading with meaning, stress and intonation
- Comprehension – understanding the text

Our Guided Reading sessions have a clear structure beginning with ‘Revisit and Review’, where children are supported in bringing the GCPs they have learned to the forefront of their memory, revise tricky words that appear in the book and are taught the meaning of any unfamiliar vocabulary. ‘Practise and apply’ is the main part of the reading sessions and focuses on the key skill being taught: decoding, fluency or comprehension. When children are reading independently, the trained adult ‘taps in’ to listen to each child. The sessions are finished with a ‘Review’ opportunity where misconceptions are addressed and key learning is recapped.

All children have access to the Collins Big Cat book used in Guided Reading, as a physical copy and an eBook; this allows the children to then practise further at home, increasing confidence and fluency in their reading. Information about accessing eBooks can be found [here](#).

From Year 2 children are taught reading comprehension skills in a whole-class setting for Guided Reading.

Comprehension is an outcome, not a skill to practise (The Reading Framework July 2023)

In line with The Reading Framework (July 2023) guidance, our Guided Reading approach supports our children to ‘construct a mental model’ to develop their comprehension. Teacher

modelling and fluency practice feature highly in our Guided Reading sequence, alongside quality discussion and targeted questioning.

- 1: Teacher reading and thinking aloud to create a 'mental model'
- 2: 'Readers' Theatre' – children reading aloud to develop fluency and prosody
- 3: 'Quick Questions' based on the text to develop comprehension and vocabulary
- 4: 'Big Question' to explore open questions that prompt deeper thinking, reading talk and develop inference skills

Our reading framework matches the National Curriculum requirements to ensure both coverage and progression of skills in comprehension development.

Reading Books

The children in our school are highly enthusiastic about reading. Pupils learning phonics have access to a range of fully decodable books in line with their stage of learning alongside access to a wide range of sharing texts to enjoy with their adults. Children in both Year R and 1, as well as those accessing Rapid Catch Up groups across the school, have access to the Collins Big Cat book used in Guided Reading, which they can share with parents and carers at home to build on their fluency (either as a physical copy or an online [eBook](#)).

We use Renaissance Star Reading assessments for Years 2 – Year 6, which provides us with highly detailed information about our children's reading ability and stage of development. This includes their Lexile level, which is a measure of their reading ability. This measure aligns with our Lexile colour-coded library book stock, which ensures children are accessing a wide range of texts suited to their level.

In addition to these books, children have the opportunity to select books from our well-stocked reading nooks and library areas. This book does not have to match their Lexile range or Phonics stage and is purely for them to read and share at school or home. Of course, if children have their own books at home that they would prefer to read for pleasure then we encourage this too. We love learning about what our children like to read for pleasure in our informal reading discussions with them.

We believe that our children become fluent and confident readers when they are supported by both the school and at home. It is a whole school expectation that parents and carers hear their children read a little every evening or read aloud to their child, as well as talking about the books they are reading in a more informal way.

Assessment

Formative reading assessment takes place as part of our daily classroom practice in Guided Reading lessons and 1:1 reading. Three times a year, pupils from Years 2 to Year 6 access Renaissance Star Reading assessments, an online tool used to closely analyse gaps in reading fluency and comprehension. These gaps are then used to inform our planning and identify intervention groups to keep our children on track in their reading development.

Our 'Lowest 20% Trackers' identify those not meeting age-related expectations and band them into three categories to prioritise and target support appropriately: *Urgent Intervention*,

Intervention, On Watch. These working documents continually track the provision in place for these children and are updated in line with our three-yearly assessment snapshots and discussed twice yearly in Lowest 20% meetings with the Senior Leadership Team.

At Joy Lane, we are passionate about understanding the whole reader. Whether it is through discussions with adults in Book Banter sessions, participation in daily Guided Reading sessions or 1:1 reading, we actively encourage our staff to explore their children's reading identities.

Reading for Pleasure and 'Book Banter'

Our pedagogical approach to reading for pleasure is informed by the reading for pleasure research conducted by the Open University. The key findings from the study revealed that there are 4 main pedagogical approaches to establish a culture of reading for pleasure: *reading aloud, informal book talk and recommendations, and independent reading time within a highly social reading environment.* This research underpins our Book Banter sessions and overall approach to reading. Every Friday, we host our Book Banter sessions, which take place from Reception to Year 6. Not only do these sessions promote reading for pleasure by engaging our children in informal book talk about their practices and preferences, but they also maximise our children's exposure to a range of different texts. Watch [this video](#) for more information about informal book talk.

We know that without embedding a strong foundation of reading for pleasure where children want to read and are inspired by rich texts, we cannot effectively develop the knowledge and skills required for reading fluency and comprehension. We ultimately aspire for our children to become lifelong readers.