



St Thomas Aquinas
Catholic Multi-Academy Trust

St. Mary's School

A Catholic Voluntary Academy



READING POLICY

REVISED NOVEMBER 2025

WE GROW WITH JESUS TO BE THE BEST WE CAN BE

Aims:

Children learn best when they enjoy what they are reading.

- Our aim is to provide our children with enjoyable and productive reading experiences and to enable them to be independent and fluent readers.
- To value and use books as a basis for learning, pleasure, talk and play.
- To develop in pupils an interest in and a love of books and literature that will not only support their learning across the curriculum but also enrich their lives.

The National Curriculum states that pupils should be taught to read fluently, understand extended prose and be encouraged to read for pleasure.

The 2014 Curriculum divides reading skills into two dimensions:

- Word reading/ decoding
- Comprehension

We recognise that both these elements are essential to success and we support the acquisition of both sets of skills through various methods. We recognise that these areas are clearly linked to the other aspects of English learning: speaking and listening, writing, grammar and vocabulary. We also understand that reading is a developmental process and part of life-long learning and we encourage and praise children at every stage.

Our aims and connected provision (some of which are outlined in more detail below)

- In the Foundation Stage children have daily discreet phonics lessons, using the Little Wandle programme. Children have opportunities to develop their communication, language and literacy skills on a daily basis in both adult led and child initiated activities.
- Pupils learn to read easily and fluently through daily phonics using the Little Wandle programme in Key Stage One, regular reading to adults in school, reading within class and an incentives to read at home.
- Daily phonics sessions for highlighted children throughout Key Stage Two are integral in developing children's knowledge of reading and closing the gaps in children's phonic knowledge using the Little Wandle phonics keep up programmes.
- Pupils are encouraged to read widely, through our use of diverse and updated supply of class texts, library visits and high quality attractive books in classrooms.
- Using the Renaissance Accelerated Read scheme: All pupils are encouraged to take books home to read from the school library, following a star reading test which assesses their reading level to match them to the correct book.
 - In Key Stage Two, whole class Reading sessions three times a week in the afternoons for twenty minutes focus on a variety of book genres and all aspects of reading, using the age appropriate reading statements as a guidance.
- Pupils are encouraged to read for pleasure using reading partners, quiet reading time, listening to an adult read at story time and opportunities to visit the library during lunchtime breaks.
- Pupils also need to read to find information in all lessons and comprehension is assessed in a formal way every term.
- Pupils are exposed to a range of texts from their literacy heritage during their school career.
- Key Stage Two pupils who are identified as struggling with reading or making slow progress are given extra support to be listened to daily with a teaching assistant or volunteer adult in school.
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Phonics sessions – FS and KS1

These are daily sessions which develop the children's understanding of the letters sounds in words in the English language. It is the basis for their development of decoding words which leads to reading. At St Marys we use the Little Wandle approach. It is a whole class phonics programme that supports the phonetic needs of all our learners. This is a systematic and consistent approach which is taught every day. Our phonics lessons have an emphasis on oral blending and segmenting with children taught new sounds, key phrases and terminology. These are then used to support reading and writing during guided reading, writing sessions and in the wider curriculum.

Curriculum Meetings and Phonics workshops are carried out each year to help give parents an understanding of how phonics is taught and how the children are learning to read. Children are assessed in their understanding at the end of each Phase taught which then is used to inform revision sessions and further teaching.

In FS and KS1 we also monitor children's word recognition and recall of their High Frequency words.

Whole Class Shared modelled Reading

At St. Mary's, we also have daily whole class shared reading sessions in Years 2 – 6 where all children in the class are reading the same text, regardless of their reading ability. Each child has a copy of the text and they follow each line being read with their fingers or a ruler while the teacher reads aloud to the class. Shared reading approaches are then used by the teacher to ensure that the children have understood what has been read and to improve their working memory and reading comprehension. Vocabulary and being able to summarise, using the phrase 'so basically' are key components to comprehension learning.

Whole School Home Reading

In FS and KS1, books are organised in colour bands for children to take and read at home. In EYFS and Year 1, pupils are grouped by their ability. They have a reading session in a small group with their teacher or teaching assistant at least three times a week, using the book matched their phonics level, this book will then go home on a Friday to read with parents. Teachers also listen to children read to verify they are reading the appropriate books for their phonetic ability.

In KS2, children complete Star Reading Assessments as part of our Accelerated Reader scheme to identify their word reading and comprehension skills. This is then used to give children a book ZPD/BL range that they can select from in the school Library to read at home. Once children have read their book they can log into Accelerated Reader to complete a comprehension quiz which will log the words they have read and collect points. Star Reading Assessments are revisited each half term to monitor children's progress and update their home reading ZPD/BL range. Teachers monitor the books children are taking home to ensure children are reading appropriate texts for their ability. Only when children have completed the phases and passed their phonics screening, will children be able to go onto the accelerated read scheme, otherwise they stay on the phonetic book band system.

All children have a home reading folder record book in which they have a reading record, book and their Years' word lists. Parents/carers and children are encouraged to write a comment, sign and date when they have listened to the child read. Home reading is monitored in school by Teachers daily to ensure engagement. All children have access to their own class libraries and reading areas. Children bring in their reading records daily to be checked.

Individual Reading

Individual Book-Banded books for 1 to 1 reading are kept outside the classrooms in KS1 and in the Accelerated Reader section of the Library for KS2. These are available for use with any of our pupils if the class teacher or the teaching assistant considers them to be suitable for the pupil in reading age and interest level.

As they are continually practising their reading skills, the children should be given the book band level of their current ability. Whereas in whole class shared modelled reading they will be reading a more challenging text. In shared modelled reading the children are learning new skills with their teacher, whereas they are practising those skills at home with their parents and so should have a familiar book.

Reading for Enjoyment

We encourage our children to read frequently and to enjoy a range of different genres. We have developed engaging reading areas to inspire our pupils and as a staff we share our love of reading with the children and model how beneficial reading can be, through the shared modelled reading and daily story times in each class. In order to promote a love of reading, we regularly invite authors into school to work with the children.

Other Helpers

We, as a school, encourage parents and volunteers to come into school and read with the children. This can be any kind of reading e.g. informal sharing of favourite books or a firm commitment to help with 1 to 1 reading on a regular basis.

Interventions

In each class, children are listened to on a 1 to 1 basis or in small groups. Should there be concerns over the progression of particular children's reading skills, interventions are put in place to address where the gaps lie. These interventions can be either working more closely on a 1:1 or small group level with a teacher or teaching assistant. We also use the Little Wandle assessments to see if children have other underlying gaps in their phonic and word recognition knowledge.

In KS2, we support children who have gaps in their phonics knowledge in Little Wandle keep up programmes.

In KS1, children receive small group or 1 to 1 intervention to help with their progression in phonics.

Monitoring

Shared modelled reading is monitored frequently by the English Subject Leader and SLT who will conduct learning visits at regular intervals. There are several reading interventions which take place each year and include close monitoring of progress. Children will be selected for extra phonics with CTs and TAs, and 1:1 reading time with volunteers from Loughborough Grammar School, and volunteers.

Assessment

From FS to Year 3 children are assessed of their phonics knowledge at the end of each Phase taught which then is used to inform revision sessions and further teaching. A whole class tracker is completed each half term and shared with the English Lead to monitor and assess their progress.

NFER Reading Tests for Year 2 to Year 6 and practise reading SAT's tests for year 2 and year 6 are administered each term give a reading age for pupils and assess their comprehension skills. Analysis will be used to finalise interventions as well as to measure

progress. Reading records are completed by Teachers and teaching assistants when they read with a group of children and these are used to support assessments using the STACMAT reading statements (TAF for Years 2 and 6). These are carried out by each class teacher every half term to inform Target Tracker assessments and to ensure progression in reading for all children.

Role of the parent

We encourage parents to be an active participant in their child's reading.

The school supports the parents by-

- A home school record (FS and KS1)
- Reading parent volunteers.
- Guidance from teachers/teaching assistants.
- Lending library for all children to take books home.

Celebrations

Each year we celebrate World Book Day in the first week of March. The build up to this runs over many weeks and promotes reading and talking about books throughout the school. We also celebrate Roald Dahl day in September. The Book Fair is held at St. Mary's each year, which promotes the importance of reading alongside raising funds for the purchase of books for individual classes and the school library.

Review

This policy will be reviewed according to the School Strategic Plan.

Signed: _____

Date: _____
November 2025