



# **Reading Policy**

**Adopted: Spring 2023  
Review: Spring 2026**

# Reading Policy - Meadgate Primary School

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## **Our Statement of Intent:**

The 2014 National Curriculum states that pupils should be taught to read fluently, understand extended prose and be encouraged to read for pleasure. Reading is singled out as of extreme importance since through it “pupils have a chance to develop culturally, emotionally, intellectually, socially and spiritually”. Reading allows pupils to “acquire knowledge” and to “build on what they already know” so our aim is to ensure young children crack the phonics code and start reading as soon as possible.

At Meadgate Primary School, staff recognise that reading development is closely linked to that of writing, for it is by reflecting upon and talking about the texts that they encounter that pupils come to understand how writers write and to develop an awareness of the relationship between author and reader. At our school, we strive to make this link clear by providing learning opportunities based on quality texts that engage the pupils, immersing them in a rich language environment. Our hope is that children leave our school at the end of year 6 having established a love of reading and with experience of as wide a range of texts as possible.

## **Aims:**

We aim to develop literate children who:

- love reading and are excited about books;
- have the opportunity to listen to stories that are beyond their own reading ability;
- are given the chance to participate in class reading sessions where literature is explored, discussed and linked to real life;
- understand the sound and spelling system, can crack the phonics code at an early age and use these skills to read accurately;
- read with confidence, fluency and understanding, using a range of independent strategies to self-monitor and correct;
- have an interest in a wide range of texts, reading for enjoyment and information;
- show interest in words and their meanings and develop a wide vocabulary;
- understand a range of text types and genres;
- can evaluate and justify their preferences;
- have developed their imaginations, inventiveness and critical awareness;
- Enjoy reading at school and home.

## **Objectives:**

In order to develop fluent, confident readers, teachers at Meadgate Primary School:

- follow a systematic approach to the teaching of phonics through our SSP, the Essential Letters and Sounds (ELS) programme;
- actively promote and foster a love of reading by reading to their own class;
- teach fluency and comprehension strategies through quality whole class direct teaching, guided group work and individual reading as appropriate;
- further develop children’s vocabulary by “magpie-ing” and defining tier two ‘literary’ words during English lessons and explicitly teaching tier three technical vocabulary for use in subjects across the curriculum;
- Make the link explicit between reading and writing.

## Teaching Approaches

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 acknowledge that these areas are clearly linked to the other aspects of English learning: speaking and listening, writing, spelling, grammar and vocabulary. We understand that reading is a developmental process and part of life-long learning and we encourage and praise children at every stage of it.

## Phonics:

### **Implementation - How do we achieve our aims?**

Children at Meadgate Primary School first learn to decode, segment and blend words through rigorous phonics teaching, following the ELS programme. From Reception through to the end of Year 1, there are two timetabled phonics sessions each day: one focused on reading; one focused on applying that day's phonics learning to spelling and writing. To embed knowledge, phonics is continued to be taught to support reading and spelling fluency in Year 2 up until the end of the autumn term. Phonics is taught with fidelity to the ELS programme in whole class lessons led by the teacher who explicitly models strategies and skills. Staff engage pupils through well-planned, pacy lessons following a consistent structure with opportunities for their pupils to work independently, with peers or, for the lowest 20%, in guided group same day interventions with the class teacher.

Providing children with books that are closely matched to their phonic abilities and knowledge of GPCs (Grapheme-Phoneme Correspondence) at this stage is a deliberate methodology which allows pupils to be successful when practising, celebrating their growing reading competency with adults in school and their parents at home. This ensures that the first reading experiences are positive and motivating. Children are always encouraged to apply their growing phonic knowledge in other curriculum areas too. Through this approach, the majority of pupils learn the skills needed to decode print easily and become fluent readers.

Diagnostic baseline assessments ensure that teachers know which children need extra help with phonics and what kind of support they need. We support children in catching up quickly by ensuring LSAs are well trained and particular pupils are targeted for specific interventions in addition to their phonics/English lesson. We use the three ELS interventions in addition to the same day guided group intervention led by the class teacher: oral blending, GPC recognition and blending for reading. Regular phonics assessments (half termly for YR and Y1, and mock phonics checks three times a year for Y1 and above) monitor pupils and keep track of progress. This ensures the highest possible number of children pass the Year 1 phonics screening check, with expectations that are aspirational yet achievable.

As a matter of priority, children who do not pass the phonics screen in June of Year 1 receive further intervention to ensure that they have learnt phonic decoding to the appropriate standard when they retake the phonics screen at the end of Year 2. Although we expect that the majority of children will have successfully completed the phonics programme by the end of autumn term Year 2, we recognise that some children may benefit from further instruction and support. We ensure that high quality phonics provision is in place for: children who did not pass the Year 1/2 phonics

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screening check; children who are new to the country and have no previous experience of English; children with SEND who struggle with decoding.

## **Impact – How will we know we have achieved our aims?**

- Children feel successful as readers and will want to read because books are matched to their needs;
- Children can decode, segment and blend confidently and by the end of Autumn term of Year 2 are ready to move from learning to read to reading to learn;
- By implementing high-quality intervention effectively and promptly, the majority of children become fluent and confident readers by the end of KS1.

## **Fluency, Vocabulary and Comprehension**

### **Implementation – How do we achieve our aims?**

We view reading as an entitlement for all and that reading is key to academic success. Reading is at the core of our curriculum, thereby instilling in children that reading is a transferable skill that will benefit them in every subject. We ensure that children read for a range of purposes within and outside of reading lessons.

### **Reading for Practice, Meaning and Pleasure**

During all reading opportunities across the school, from YR to Y6, particular attention is paid towards reading fluency, vocabulary extension and comprehension strategies.

From Reception to Year 6, all children read aloud daily during phonics or paired, group or whole class reading and throughout other subjects too. Teachers use strategies such as echo reading where teachers or LSAs model fluency and intonation and children read back with the same expression, and choral reading where children read along expressively with an adult. Once children have learnt the most frequently occurring GPCs, teachers are able to assess fluency using fluency descriptors and these outcomes help staff to organise and plan fluency intervention lessons for children who need regular, extra practice. Children reading below Age-Related Expectations are identified early and have extra support with teachers, LSAs and reading volunteers.

Teachers actively model comprehension strategies and make use of talking partners to discuss and further develop children's inferential skills and knowledge of authorial intent. Vocabulary is developed, with teachers providing opportunities to explore definitions of new words and make links between these and known words. Teachers plan differentiated sessions covering the objectives for the year group using question stems linked to the different strands of reading comprehension where appropriate. Teachers allocate books to pupils based on their phonic knowledge, fluency and age.

The teaching of reading will look different across the school: in Reception there will be daily sessions of whole class teaching of reading within phonics lessons, opportunities to practise reading fluency through paired reading and a focus on reading 1-1 with an adult each week, whereas in Year 6 the class may be engaged in a whole class book study for three sessions a week, practising fluency, exploring vocabulary and learning higher order comprehension skills, then have one session of written comprehension.

At Meadgate, reading is taught in its own right, as well as a tool which permeates the entire curriculum. Children read outside the daily English lessons for research and for enjoyment such as OTTER (Our Time to Enjoy Reading), or paired reading. Pupils are encouraged to read widely and

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for pleasure through the use of the browsing non-fiction collection in the school library, class collections of fiction and Schools Library Service topic loans which are linked to current learning in each class. All classes have regular opportunities to listen to and enjoy texts that are beyond their own reading ability and there are regular opportunities for author study.

Y6 Ext	<b>Ebony Black Band 16</b>
<b>End of Year 6 expectation</b>	
Y6	<b>Burgundy Red Band 15</b>
Y5	<b>Midnight Blue Band 14</b>
Y5/6	<b>Silver</b> (For children with literacy difficulties RA 6-8)
Y4	<b>Dove Grey Band 13</b>
Y3	<b>Chestnut Brown Band 12</b>
Y2 T3 Ext	<b>Lime Band 11</b> (Not used at KS2)
Y2 T3 Ext Y3 T1	<b>White Band 10</b>
<b>End of Year 2 expectation</b>	
Y2 T3	<b>Gold Band 9 Phonic Phase 6</b>
Y2 T2/ Y2 T3	<b>Purple Band 8 Phonic Phase 6</b>
Y2 T1/ Y2 T2	<b>Turquoise Band 7</b> Phonic Phases 5 – 6
Y1 T3/ Y2 T1	<b>Orange Band 6</b> Phonic Phases 5 – 6
Y1 T1/ T2	<b>Green Band 5</b> Phonic Phase 5
YR T3/ Y1 T1	<b>Blue Band 4</b> Phonic Phases 4 – 5
YR T2	<b>Band 3 Yellow</b> Phonic Phases 3 – 4 ai ee igh oa oo ar or air ur ow oi ear ure er
YR T1	<b>Band 2 Red</b> Phonic Phase 3
YR T1	<b>Band 1 Pink</b> Phonic Phase 2
YR T1	<b>Band 0 Lilac</b> Phonic Phase 1

At first in Reception, children read and take home reading books that are non-worded so that they can practice and further develop storytelling skills learnt in school with support from their families. Once children have started Phase 2 GPCs, they bring home two books: an **a** book and a **b** book. The **a** book (the child's reading book) is phonetically decodable for children to read independently at home to adults. Each book is carefully chosen so that children can practice decoding using GPCs which have been taught, and practice reading HRS (Harder to Read and Spell) words learnt in school. The **b** book (the child's sharing book) is 90% decodable and is therefore for adults to share and discuss with children.

Children choose an **a** book with known GPCs and a **b** book for sharing at home until they reach Turquoise level books. By this point the children have learnt the most frequently-occurring GPCs in the English language and will be able to read many words with automaticity. There are two extension bands – White and Lime band for Greater Depth readers at KS1.

As children move through the book band colours, they experience a wide range of vocabulary and different types of fiction, non-fiction and poetry texts. Children's progression through the reading stages is celebrated and rewarded.

At KS2, books are banded in year group colours to ensure there is progression in difficulty, vocabulary, content and length. Silver book band is for UKS2 pupils with literacy difficulties who require high interest books but with a lower reading age.

We have recommended book lists for each year group, the children have opportunities for author studies and our classrooms have engaging book corners and book collections which interest pupils and encourage children to make new choices. Throughout their time at Meadgate, children are offered high-quality books that reflect the diversity of our modern world. We celebrate diversity through recognising our children's skills and knowledge and by the study of material that represents our pupils and their families. As The Reading Framework (2021) states: "All children need to imagine themselves as the main protagonist in a story..." Texts used represent all cultures in a positive light, represent children who are neuro diverse or have disabilities and show both



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genders in a range of roles. The interests of both boys and girls are taken into account in the selection of materials to support the development of reading skills. This benefits the whole school community: “Children also need to learn about the lives of those whose experiences and perspectives differ from their own. Choosing stories and non-fiction that explore such differences begins to break down a sense of otherness that often leads to division and prejudice.” (The Reading Framework, 2021). At KS2, pupils have a termly challenge to read, or have read to them, books from their year group recommended book list which helps them experience a breadth of authors and genres. At the end of each term, book prizes are awarded to those children who have achieved particularly well.

## **Essential Story Time – Reading Aloud for Pleasure**

Reading aloud to children is one of the most powerful and pleasurable ways to develop a love of reading. It enriches children’s language, develops their comprehension and provides a model for their own writing. Teachers at Meadgate engage children with dramatic techniques and voices whilst sowing a light sprinkling of question seeds to encourage the children to listen for clues and think about what they are hearing. We love story time!

## **Book Clubs and Book Ambassadors**

Currently we run two book clubs: ‘Bookflix’ for KS1 pupils and ‘A Novel Collection’ for UKS2 pupils. Children study a book and have opportunities for ‘Book Talk’, developing the confidence to offer ideas and then reshape them in the light of other contributions. It helps children to trust their own ideas and interpretations, to talk effectively about a book, deepening their understanding, shifting their ideas, thinking together as a group and moving comprehension forwards. There are opportunities for drama too – making trailers to promote books the group have enjoyed to share with other pupils or acting out a particular scene from the book.

Meadgate also participate in a scheme called Keep on Reading with our Year 3 class which aims to keep parents reading to their children beyond the early years. The co-ordinator of the project, retired head teacher Les Kemp, comes in to school each half term to introduce and celebrate a book which every child takes a copy of to share with someone from home.

Reading Ambassadors promote books and reading for enjoyment around the school. They might help organise book-themed weeks or Key Stage book quizzes; keep up-to-date with new books that have just been published or new authors; help run the book fair; deliver a story time for a younger class; contribute creatively or imaginatively to displays about books too.

## **Inclusion and Equal Opportunities**

The ability to read is fundamental to children’s development as independent learners. We believe that all children are entitled to high quality teaching and learning and we embrace the philosophy of inclusion. All children at Meadgate Primary have the opportunity to develop reading skills at an appropriate level through the provision of carefully planned, targeted work in their English lessons and within the wider curriculum, or through meeting the provision through their EHCP.

The Reading Framework (DfE 2021) highlights that some children may need extra support in reading from when they first start school. Here at Meadgate Primary School, diagnostic, ongoing and summative assessments identify such children as soon as they begin to fall behind their peers. Initially teachers investigate possible reasons, such as whether a child might have a hearing or visual impairment or speech, language and communication needs (SLCN). To enable children to keep up, they are given extra practice which is consistent with the school’s phonics programme, ELS, and aims to secure the important phonic knowledge the children have not grasped. These

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children continue to follow a phonics programme for reading until they possess the skills to move on.

Class teachers can refer pupils to the SENCO if there are additional concerns. The SENCO uses assessment data, discussions with the teacher, the child and their parents and a Literacy Difficulties Screen to get a better understanding of the pupil's strengths and barriers to learning. Highlighted strengths can then be built on and the challenges addressed. The challenges highlighted might include difficulties around:

- working memory
- phonological awareness
- speed of processing language
- word retrieval
- coordination

Some of these barriers will often be addressed through high quality classroom teaching, but some children will need specific interventions, such as precision teaching, and to be added to the SEND register and access the Assess, Plan, Do, Review cycle. The needs of children on the SEND register are planned for as necessary and detailed on their Individual Provision Maps or One Plans and a variety of teaching methods are used to support the learning styles of different children.

We aim to make reasonable adjustments for children with literacy difficulties so the world of books is open to them. The ELS eBook library has a 'read aloud' facility so early readers can check their reading accuracy of GPCs which have just been taught. For older readers, we have a Silver band for pupils who have literacy difficulties. These books, published by Barrington Stokes, are high interest, low ability, meaning the content is appropriate to the age of the reader but the text is edited to suit a lower reading age. The font, layout and spacing stop the page from being overcrowded and the off-white paper reduces visual stress. Many children with reading difficulties also find that reading rulers or coloured filters reduce visual stress too and enable them to track the words more accurately.

We have a significant number of EAL pupils that attend Meadgate Primary School. These children are supported via the academy trust's EAL lead teacher. This teacher runs intervention sessions that support these pupils' English development which focus on separating vocabulary into clear categories and topics. By communicating well with class teachers, these skills are gradually transferred into work in the classroom.

In this way, no child will be excluded from participating in reading activities.

## **Assessment**

Assessment is an integral part of the teaching and learning process and is used to:

- provide the children with clear and regular feedback;
- assist the children and teachers in planning their next steps;
- Evaluate the effectiveness of teaching.

We use Jonathan Bond's Assessment Kit statements, skills and objectives to plan reading lessons and track progress. Once children are reading at Orange band and therefore have learnt all common GPCs and are reading with greater fluency, Pearson written reading assessments are used to assess reading comprehension skills. Teachers in Years 3, 4 and 5 use termly NFER reading tests and past Reading SATs papers are used in Year 2 and 6 to ensure children are on track and making progress.

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Meadgate's colour band tracker indicates termly progress and, along with phonics data, is submitted to the English subject leader each term. As stated already, pupils who need support are swiftly identified and participate in booster/intervention sessions which are designed to close the gap between themselves and their peers – our aim is for pupils to 'keep up not catch up'. The progress of these pupils is discussed with the SLT and SENCo during Pupil Performance and SEND meetings.

## **Impact – How will we know we have achieved our aims?**

- By engaging and listening to high-quality texts, children display enthusiasm for reading and choose to read for pleasure, entering a wide range of worlds that reading opens up;
- Children are knowledgeable about books – they can talk about favourite authors and genres and can make recommendations to each other;
- Children read well in other subject areas and, as a result, their skills are enhanced and their understanding of their world is increased;
- A high number of children achieve the expected standard or higher, and through targeted intervention, those who find reading challenging are supported to catch up and make progress.

## **Parents (Including Homework)**

At Meadgate Primary School we actively encourage the involvement of families and the wider community to help support the teaching of reading and welcome visitors to hear readers, come to our reading café in Reception and enter into family challenges in book week.

Reading forms part of the essential homework: all children are expected to read at home at least three times a week. Communication in younger children's reading logs allow parents to communicate about texts that children are enjoying at home as well as their reading books from school; older children use their reading record book as a journal to note down their thoughts, feelings and preferences as they read. Reading targets (taken from Jonathan Bond's Planning Kit) are discussed at parent consultations and are inside the children's reading logs so that parents can see the skills that their child is working on and further support the acquisition of these at home.

Parents and carers are involved with supporting their children through topic based homework.

## **Role of the Subject Leader**

The responsibilities are:

- To ensure a full range of relevant and effective resources are available to enhance and support learning, working closely with the YR and KS1 lead, and that book stock is engaging, and inclusive;
- To ensure progression of the key knowledge and skills identified within each term and that these are integral to the programme of study and secure at the end of each age phase;
- To monitor planning and oversee the teaching of reading;
- To monitor books and ensure that key knowledge is evidenced in outcomes, alongside and supported, by SLT;
- To work with the SENCo and SLT to ensure that the reading curriculum has a positive effect on all pupils, including those who are disadvantaged or have low attainment;
- To ensure that the reading curriculum takes account of the school's context to enhance the reading curriculum;



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- To ensure that approaches are informed by and in line with current identified good practice and pedagogy and that training is delivered well;
- To lead further improvement in and development of the subject as informed by effective subject overview.

## **Monitoring and Review**

The English subject leader, in consultation with the SLT, monitors and evaluates the effectiveness of the teaching and learning of reading. In discussion with the governors, areas for development and resource needs are identified. Reading standards are reviewed through:

- YR/KS1/ external moderation;
- Regular phonics assessments;
- Y1 phonics screen results;
- SATs results;
- Colour band reading tracker and reading test data from YR-Y6
- external advisors visits, observations and reports;
- internal learning walks and observations;
- staff and pupil perception surveys;
- Feedback from parents.