



Reading at Spire Junior School

Curriculum Statement



Intent of the Reading Curriculum

The central aim of our school curriculum is to develop the whole child and shape their minds for positive learning experiences about the world around them. We strongly believe in encouraging curiosity, exploration and developing a strong sense of self-identity.

In Reading, our curriculum aims to develop fluent, confident and articulate readers, who feel they can confidently approach a range of texts pitched at their chronological age. We build upon the children's understanding of phonics which they have been taught throughout their education in order to blend sounds as well as recognise tricky or irregular words.

We teach the children how to respond to questions about a text based on the reading domains prescribed in the National Curriculum. This means the children learn how to retrieve, infer, summarise, predict, interpret language, understand word meaning and draw comparisons within and across a range of texts. By providing regular practise and instruction of this, we strive for our children to be able to confidently respond to both verbal and written questions about what they read.

We intend to support all children to develop a deep-rooted love of words, text, books and language, encouraging all of our children to explore both fiction and non-fiction writing on a range of genres and themes. To support this, time and money are regularly invested in our school resources, including to keep the library well-stocked and up to date with the latest children's authors and interests.

Further to this, our intent is to diversify this love of reading across all of our subjects, not just within dedicated English Reading and Writing lessons. Following on from previous and ongoing staff training, work is being completed across school to develop disciplinary literacy across our curriculum, including through Science, History and Geography. This again exposes our children to language, vocabulary and text structures which will help them become successful readers and interpreters in a range of subjects as they move through life.

Implementation of the Reading Curriculum

Our curriculum at Spire is carefully planned and organised so as to promote a deep understanding of the projects and concepts that we cover through quality first teaching.



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We do this by equipping our pupils with the skills and qualities they need to thrive both within the curriculum and within the wider-world.

When implementing our Reading curriculum, all children have access to quality-first teaching as standard. This is supported by additional interventions where appropriate to develop any gaps in knowledge, including: gaps in phonetic understanding, delays in reading fluency or to support reading comprehension strategies. Interventions are in before, during and after school to support reading by both teachers and teaching assistants. Volunteers are also invited into school to help ensure that all children have the opportunity to read aloud to an adult each week.

Reading is taught explicitly at least four times a week in each class. This is organised so that the children will access one fiction (or two shorter fiction) books in terms 1, 3 and 5. In the alternate terms, classes are then exposed to a range of non-fiction reading and poetry. High-level texts have been chosen based on extensive research and professional recommendations, to ensure that the children are exposed to a range of challenging texts. This includes texts from different cultures, eras, social perspectives and texts which promote deeper-level thinking. Recent external feedback stated 'the work given to pupils was demanding and matched the aims of the curriculum'.

Throughout all of these genres, the reading domains are taught and built upon to develop the children's ability to respond to questions about a text. This is to best prepare them for both summative assessments throughout their education, as well as their wider life skills. In line with statutory assessments, a greater focus is placed on those skills which are more frequently assessed, including retrieval, inference and understanding of word meaning.

Impact of the Reading Curriculum

We are confident our curriculum is successful in the teaching and learning of reading through a variety of monitoring and feedback activities which have taken place through school.

Summative data in school includes:

- Termly NFER assessments
- Past SATs papers for Year 6



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- Benchmarking assessments each term for Years 3 and 4, as well as for readers in upper school who have not yet reached their age-appropriate reading band.
- Salford reading tests each term for all pupils, which gives a reading age.

All of this data is collected and collaborated by class teachers to highlight the children who need additional support to make the appropriate progress. These target children and the lowest-ability readers in each class (including any children with Special Educational Needs) are shared with all teaching staff in the year group and with SLT. This allows support to be implemented and monitored effectively. Our Insight Data Tracker shows that children are making progress in reading across school.

Recently, a reading learning walk and mock deep-dive inspection has been conducted across school with the English lead, Maths lead and School improvement partner. Feedback from this stated 'Subject Co-ordination is effective. The coordinator has set out clear intent and implementation statements for the subject they lead and are currently developing effective monitoring strategies to assess impact'. Learning in reading was described as 'sequential with identified end-points for each term which assessed the long term memory in pupils'.

When asked about their reading lessons, children spoke positively about the texts they had read as a class, as well as the texts they had chosen themselves from the library and were reading independently. Children from Years 3 to 6 shared that they liked the characters, storylines and settings from their novels and could retell elements of the stories they had shared.

Leaders had the opportunity to explore the teaching of reading throughout school including a book scrutiny which highlighted good practise through school as well as next steps to take to develop further. This includes specifically targeting reading domains when teaching non-fiction writing.

Feedback towards the English co-ordinator during performance management reviews with the headteacher have been positive in regards to the reading curriculum and development.

Through monitoring, it has been found that reading is being made accessible to all children through a variety of class inclusion as well as additional phonics support where appropriate. The money which has been spent to develop the phonics resources in school is being proved to be effective through improvements in phonics assessments.



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Children who read regularly at home (at least three times a week) are entered into a school raffle, with the chance to win a book and a hot chocolate from our school vending machine. There has been an increased number of children entering the raffle each week this academic year, and this is widely encouraged and supported through school and by our families. Staff monitor and track who needs additional time to read to an adult in school.

Reading is a life skill which is shared outside of our reading curriculum. We have been successful in sharing our work and thoughts with authors through social media such as Twitter and received responses from celebrities and authors alike. We were also very privileged to be invited to the Sheffield Book Fair, where 13 children had the opportunity to visit Waterstones and meet a range of children's authors.

Furthermore, our 2021 book fair was a successful event for the school, with the money spent by our families earned over £300 in rewards for us to spend on our library. This in turn will further increase our reading offers and opportunities in school.