



Reading Policy

2026

Rationale

This policy describes our practice in the teaching of reading; it is defined by current national guidance on best practice, in-service training, staff discussion and professional judgement.

Our approach to teaching of English is multi-faceted, incorporating oracy, drama, real contexts and high-quality literature. Our priority is to create fluent readers and writers with all the skills and knowledge they need to be confidently literate in life.

We want all children to leave Spire Junior School with a life-long reading habit and a love of books because reading will improve their vocabulary, inspire them creatively and improve their ability to write well.

Skills needed for reading are taught within real contexts wherever possible and teachers plan creative and relevant links to their class topics as a stimulus.

Intentions

Our priority is both the teaching of reading skills and the enjoyment of literature, enabling children to become lifelong, confident readers. As children begin to read the focus is on decoding, primarily through phonics in addition to other strategies, e.g. whole word recognition, rhyme and context. However, as children build fluency, comprehension skills become our main area of focus and questioning looks at skills such as re-telling, inference and prediction. We believe that high-quality literature is key to motivating children to read and instilling in children a love of literature and children throughout the school are read to at least four times a week.

Teaching and Learning

We use the Little Wandle Rapid Catch-up Programme to deliver daily phonics lessons enabling children to decode, use prosody and develop their comprehension skills effectively (refer to Phonics Policy). This is available for all children who require additional support with their reading throughout school.

Reading instruction is structured around high-quality texts aligned with the termly enquiry question. During shared reading sessions, educators explicitly model comprehension strategies, providing a framework for pupils to cultivate independent reading skills and engage in analytical text discussions. Pupils record their work in designated pink reading books, with learning intentions explicitly mapped to the national KS2 reading domains.

In all classes children have the opportunity to read 1:1 with an adult regularly; with there being a particular focus on inference and questioning to promote an in-depth understanding

of the text. Questions progress from literal to inferential as the children move through the school.

To ensure rapid progress, pupils accessing in the *Little Wandle Rapid Catch-up Programme* are provided with targeted, phonically regulated reading books specifically selected to match their instructional needs. Furthermore, all pupils throughout school enjoy regular access to the school library, which hosts an extensive collection of age-appropriate texts designed to foster a love of reading. Class teachers and support staff actively monitor and encourage pupils to exchange their books independently upon completion.

Each child has a book bag and a home school reading record that teachers and parents can use to share information about a child's reading. Parents are encouraged to read with their child a minimum of three times a week, although we do encourage daily reading. Books are only to be changed after the text has been read thoroughly and time has been given for reflection (i.e. not more than once a week).

The school policy actively promotes the pedagogical value of adults reading aloud to children, both at home and across the curriculum. This strategy is deliberately deployed to enhance pupils' grasp of story language, cultivate reading for pleasure, and inspire high-quality written composition.

This culture of shared reading is further enriched through the school's partnership with the **School Readers Programme**. Each class is allocated one or two trained volunteers who conduct weekly, one-to-one reading sessions with pupils. These structured interventions allow children to read aloud to an attentive listener, share and celebrate their text selections, and develop vital oral comprehension and discussion skills in a supportive, low-stakes environment.

The school provides a diverse range of enriching activities designed to foster a lifelong love for reading and enhance literacy skills. These initiatives aim to immerse pupils in literature and celebrate reading across the wider school community.

Key Initiatives and Events:

- **Class Novel:** All class teachers read a selected class text aloud to their class, ensuring a consistent, shared literary experience for all pupils. These texts are chosen from a reading spine in school which ensures representation for a wide range of cultures, ethnicities, family types, disabilities and other protected characteristics.
- **World Book Day and Literary Events:** The school hosts immersive literary experiences, including storytelling sessions, interactive author quizzes, book discussions, and live author interviews. Pupils are also invited to dress as literary characters to share and celebrate their favourite books.
- **School library:** We are very fortunate to have a fully-stocked school library which hosts a range of classic, modern, fiction and non-fiction texts, as well as play scripts. We have 'Recommended Reads' baskets, author baskets and genre baskets to support our children in finding a book which best suits them!

- **Annual Book Swaps:** Twice per academic year, the school hosts community book swap events. Parents, carers, and siblings are actively encouraged to attend, share recommendations, and exchange books to promote sustainability and wider family literacy
- **Community Library Engagement:** Regular visits to the local library are integrated into the curriculum to encourage pupils to register for library memberships and utilize community literacy resources.
- **Therapy Dog Reading Programme:** Pupils are offered unique opportunities to practice and build reading confidence by reading aloud to "Candy," the designated school reading dog.
- **Visual Progress Tracking:** Reading achievements are displayed prominently outside all classrooms to visibly celebrate progress and foster a positive reading culture.
- **Home Reading Incentives:** To encourage consistent reading habits outside of school hours, pupils who read at home three or more times per week are entered into a weekly whole-school raffle. Rewards include a book of their choice and a hot chocolate voucher.

The teaching of reading:

The school employs a structured approach to reading instruction, combining continuous progress monitoring with diverse reading strategies to ensure all pupils achieve high literacy outcomes.

Assessment and Monitoring:

- **Continuous Progress Tracking:** Teachers and teaching assistants actively monitor and evaluate individual pupils' reading progression using a balanced combination of 1:1, guided group, and shared reading assessments.

Classroom Practices:

- **Daily Whole-Class Reading:** Every class participates in daily structured whole-class reading sessions. This ensures equitable, shared access to complex, high-level texts and fosters sophisticated collaborative discussion.
- **Exposure to Quality Literature:** Educators read a selected class book aloud regularly, exposing pupils to rich vocabulary and diverse literary styles above their independent reading levels.

Independent and Independent Study:

- **Reading Stamina and Autonomy:** Timetabled opportunities for independent reading are built into the school day to build cognitive stamina, self-regulation, and a personal appreciation for books.
- **Literary Culture and Recommendations:** Staff and pupils actively participate in a collaborative reading community by sharing text choices and exchanging peer-to-peer book recommendations.

Developing a love of reading:

The school embeds reading across all areas of study and leverages school-wide initiatives to create a vibrant, visible reading culture.

Cross-Curricular Reading:

- **Diverse Text Integration:** Reading opportunities are systematically integrated across the wider curriculum using a variety of formats, including topic-specific books, contemporary news articles, digital blogs, and class magazines.

Whole-School Literacy Promotion:

- **Visible Staff Recommendations:** Staff book recommendations are updated regularly and shared across the school community via high-visibility posters to inspire pupil text selection.
- **Literary Events and Celebrations:** The school hosts an annual Scholastic Book Fair, and participates fully in World Book Day initiatives.

Key Skills

Curriculum Aims and Pupil Objectives

The school's Reading curriculum is designed to equip pupils with the core communication skills required for academic success and lifelong learning. Through structured instruction, the school ensures that all pupils: [

- **Acquire Independent Literacy:** Develop the capacity to read and write fluently, independently, and with sustained engagement and enthusiasm across various genres.
- **Utilise Expressive Language:** Apply spoken and written language as a tool to evaluate personal experiences, articulate complex ideas, and construct imaginative narrative worlds.
- **Adapt Communication Styles:** Master the ability to intentionally modify tone, register, and register conventions in speech and writing to align with diverse scenarios, distinct purposes, and specific audiences.
- **Engage in Critical Textual Analysis:** Read a comprehensive repertoire of fiction, non-fiction, and poetry, demonstrating the ability to interpret, analyse, and respond to multiple layers of meaning.

Content domain reference	
2a	give / explain the meaning of words in context
2b	retrieve and record information / identify key details from fiction and non-fiction
2c	summarise main ideas from more than one paragraph
2d	make inferences from the text / explain and justify inferences with evidence from the text
2e	predict what might happen from details stated and implied
2f	identify / explain how information / narrative content is related and contributes to meaning as a whole
2g	identify / explain how meaning is enhanced through choice of words and phrases
2h	make comparisons within the text

Source: English reading test framework 2016 National curriculum tests Key stage 2 For test developers STA/15/7341/e ISBN: 978-1-78315-826-3

Reading Fluency

In Key Stage 2, reading fluency instruction is systematically embedded to bridge the gap between word recognition and comprehensive text formulation. Classrooms use evidence-based strategies—including teacher-led prosody modelling, guided oral reading, and regular choral or echo reading—to develop pupils' automaticity, pacing, and expression. By explicitly teaching pupils how to interpret punctuation and vary their intonation, the school ensures that reading becomes natural, thereby freeing up cognitive capacity for deeper textual analysis, inference, and critical comprehension.

Speaking and Listening

The school recognises that spoken language is a fundamental precursor to academic success, underpinning the successful development of reading and writing skills across the entire curriculum. In alignment with the statutory requirements of the [National Curriculum](#), which mandates that all pupils are enabled to participate in, adopt, and sustain a range of dramatic roles while responding appropriately to others, the school embeds structured talk into daily pedagogy. To equip pupils with the necessary communication skills for later life, educators integrate diverse oracy opportunities across all subjects. These include the systematic use of Kagan cooperative structures, talk partners, oral storytelling, formal debating, and role-play within lessons, alongside wider school initiatives such as class assemblies, School Council representation, and large-scale school productions.

Assessment

The school supports immediate, personalised feedback as a primary vehicle for pupil progression. Consequently, pedagogy emphasises real-time, live marking conducted by educators during lessons. This 'pen-in-hand' approach facilitates meaningful verbal dialogue directly at the pupil's desk, yielding a significantly higher cognitive impact than retrospective,

lengthy written commentary. Teachers and Classroom assistants are expected to cultivate responsive classroom environments that actively prioritise this formative dialogue. To balance this approach, formal written feedback remains a requirement following the completion of extended pieces of writing to assess long-term learning outcomes.

Reading	
Formative assessment	Summative assessment
• Upon entry in Year 3, all children complete reading and spelling NFER tests to assess their starting points. Furthermore, they will be completing fluency assessments, using the Little Wandle Fluency Programme, starting from September 2026. Age related books are provided to support children until they can make appropriate independent choices. Teachers will continue to carry out targeted running records to identify specific needs for children who require additional reading support.	• Children in Year 6 take end of Key Stage national tests that examine a range of reading comprehension skills. • Pupils' fluency in all year groups will assessed termly using the Little Wandle Fluency Programme. • NFER Reading tests are carried out across the whole school. Children are tested at the end of each term. Tests are diagnostic, providing children with a reading age which takes into account their actual age at the time of testing and a standardised score with '95' being our goal for every child, i.e. their reading is at an age appropriate level. Pupils giving cause for concern are tracked and suitable intervention programmes are provided. • Full data is stored on the schools tracking system

Marking and feedback

Continuous formative assessment conducted by class teachers serves as the primary data source to dynamically adjust and inform subsequent curriculum and short-term lesson planning. In alignment with the school's overarching Marking and Feedback Policy, the primary mode of communication is verbal feedback delivered in real time. To ensure high visibility and tracking consistency across all cohorts, pupils are required to actively engage with, reflect upon, and respond to this guidance by executing all corrections and reflections using a pink ink pen.

Inclusion, Access, and Scaffolded Learning

At Spire Junior School, we acknowledge our statutory responsibility to provide a broad, balanced, and ambitious curriculum for all pupils, irrespective of gender, ethnicity, or ability. To ensure equity of access and outcome, we embed three core inclusion principles across our teaching practices:

- Setting suitable learning challenges tailored to individual developmental stages.
- Responding dynamically to pupils' diverse and evolving learning needs.
- Overcoming potential barriers to learning for specific individuals and distinct cohorts of pupils.

We maintain exceptionally high expectations for all children, ensuring that everyone—including those with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)—fully participates in the complete range of Reading curriculum activities. To achieve this commitment, all lesson delivery is systematically scaffolded to break down complex tasks and foster independent success. Furthermore, the school uses the Widgit visual and communication learning programme, embedding standardised symbols and visual frameworks across learning environments to support language acquisition, comprehension, and structural communication. Ongoing teacher assessment continuously determines the depth, pacing, and tailored interventions applied throughout each unit of work, ensuring a rich, rewarding, and accessible reading experience for every child

Resources

The school provides targeted, evidence-based reading interventions to secure foundational literacy skills, ensuring every child transitions into a fluent, confident reader. To achieve this, we use synthetic phonics resources and structured catch-up frameworks from Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised, providing high-quality, fidelity-led materials to rapidly close attainment gaps. This systematic approach is further enhanced through the integration of the Widgit visual and communication learning programme. By pairing decodable text with standardised visual symbols and communication aids, we provide multi-sensory scaffolding that strengthens word recognition, vocabulary acquisition, and text comprehension. These combined resources ensure that reading acquisition is highly structured, fully accessible, and tailored to meet the diverse learning needs of all pupils.

Roles and Responsibilities

The delivery of high-quality literacy instruction is a shared responsibility across the entire school community, with distinct leadership frameworks ensuring accountability, continuity, and progression.

- **Classroom Practitioners:** The high-quality teaching of Reading remains the core responsibility of all classroom teachers, who ensure the daily implementation of this policy within their respective learning environments.
- **Senior Leadership:** The Headteacher and Reading Lead hold ultimate accountability for monitoring policy implementation, initiating updates in alignment with statutory

changes, and ensuring the overall standard of English teaching and learning throughout the school.

- **The Reading Coordinator:** The Reading Coordinator is responsible for operational oversight of the subject. This includes the strategic procurement of instructional resources, monitoring curriculum planning and assessment data, and auditing practice to guarantee rigorous academic progression and learning continuity across all cohorts.

Review

This policy and the associated Reading curriculum will be reviewed by the co-ordinator and Headteacher annually and updated if required.

The needs of staff regarding the teaching of English, either expressed by the teachers directly or identified by the co-ordinator will inform the school development plan.