

# READING AT ST JAMES

**“Pupils who do not learn to speak, read and write fluently and confidently are effectively disenfranchised.”** (DfE, National Curriculum)

**“The whole world opened up to me when I learned to read.”** (Mary McCleod Bethune)

## VISION

At St James, we recognise that reading is a master skill. Our vision is to develop not only pupil's confidence and skill as readers but also their enjoyment, leading, we hope to a lifelong love of language and literature. We aim for our pupils to leave us competent readers having read widely across fiction, non-fiction and poetry; enabling them to achieve well academically, flourish personally and to develop their knowledge of themselves and the world in which they live.

## INTENT

Reading and literature are at the heart of the curriculum at St James. We recognise that reading for purpose and for pleasure is of fundamental importance, impacting every subject in our curriculum and each pupil's own wellbeing. With this in mind our curriculum and reading spine has been designed to promote, teach and celebrate reading and to develop pupils' sense of curiosity, empathy and adventure.

In order to be competent readers, St James pupils must:

- decode accurately and with automaticity
- monitor their own comprehension and self-select from a toolkit of strategies when the meaning is not immediately clear
- use key skills such as retrieval and inference to understand a writer's message and methods
- read independently and for pleasure



# KEY PRINCIPLES FOR READING

## We believe:

Reading is the master skill of school.

The ability to read well allows pupils to access written text in all areas of the curriculum, as well as outside school.

A weak reader will be disadvantaged in all subjects throughout his/her school career and beyond.

Every pupil should leave primary school as a competent reader.

Reading for purpose and reading for pleasure are both of key importance for pupils' wellbeing, development and futures.

## WHAT DO WE WANT OUR ENGLISH TEACHING TO ACHIEVE?

We follow the National Curriculum for English and therefore aim to ensure that all pupils:

- read easily, fluently and with good understanding
- develop the habit of reading widely and often, for both pleasure and information
- acquire a wide vocabulary, an understanding of grammar and knowledge of linguistic conventions for reading
- appreciate our rich and varied literary heritage

## RESEARCH SUPPORTING THE KEY PRINCIPLES

'Closing the Reading Gap' – Quigley  
'Building an Outstanding Reading School' – Clements (2017)  
Scarborough's Reading Rope  
Conceptual Model for Teaching Reading Comprehension - [Herts For Learning](#) (2016)

## It is important to recognise:

The act of reading is complex, requiring the simultaneous combination of multiple skills and the application of background knowledge, similar to driving a car.

Pupils' access to books aged 0-5 years, as well as their home environment, impact their vocabulary and reading development.

A lack of fluency significantly impairs comprehension.

The ability to decode does not equate to comprehension.

Vocabulary and background knowledge are key to reading success. Direct instruction is required for both, especially for disadvantaged pupils. Neither are just picked up by 'osmosis'.

Pupils' will to read must be nurtured alongside their skills.

Literacy-rich classrooms with clearly explained incentives for reading (both intrinsic and extrinsic) have a significant impact of pupils' motivation.

## IN ORDER TO HAVE A SUCCESSFUL READING CULTURE, OUR SCHOOLS WILL:

- Train teachers to be expert in how pupils 'learn to read' and go on to 'read to learn'
- Develop a coherent and cumulative 'reading rich' curriculum, including a reading spine and reading progression plan
- Recognise that the assessment of reading needs to be multi-faceted and develop methods of assessment accordingly
- Quickly support pupils who are struggling with reading, firstly identifying their specific difficulties and then promptly administering the most effective intervention. Schools will be pro-active and persistent with these interventions, so that every child leaves the VAT a competent reader.
- Invest in the reading environment, including a wide variety of reading materials and a school library
- Celebrate and promote reading throughout the school year, as well as on special occasions like World Book Day
- Ensure that parents have the information and resources they need to support reading at home

## IN ORDER TO DEVELOP CONFIDENT READERS, OUR SCHOOLS WILL:

- Understand how children learn to read/barriers to reading and apply this knowledge to lesson delivery and individual interventions
- Continue to develop own subject knowledge, including of quality texts to recommend to their year group
- Teach, model and scaffold pupils' reading so that they become strategic and knowledgeable readers, both in English lessons and in other areas of the curriculum
- Use a range of formative and summative assessment, including hearing pupils read, group/class discussion and written evidence
- Create and maintain classrooms which facilitate and value reading
- Nurture pupils' motivation to read with purpose and pleasure, including individual book recommendations and rewards

## HOW WILL WE SUPPORT STRUGGLING READERS?

**Timely:** Class teachers will flag concerns about pupils as soon as they arise

**Accurate:** Each struggling reader will be assessed using reading age appropriate methods, e.g. phonics testing, fluency/speed test, miscue analysis, vocabulary test, etc. in order to accurately identify each pupil's particular reading barrier(s)

**Knowledgeable:** Schools will have good knowledge of different types of reading support and will keep accurate records of which are most effective with their cohorts over time

**Individualised:** Support will be carefully matched to each individual's needs and delivered, as much as possible, by a subject specialist

**Monitored:** Pupils' entry and exit points from interventions will be measured accurately

**Persistent:** Specialist, targeted support for reading will be ongoing until the pupil is a competent reader

**Our reading approach takes into account the importance that curiosity plays in learner engagement (Stenger 2014). Text selection and lesson design is key to this and our reading spine encourages children to ask and answer questions about the world around them.**

- High-quality fiction, non fiction and poetry texts provide children with the opportunity to demonstrate and ask (and answer) questions.

*For example:*

*Is it too late to save the rainforest? – Let's save the rainforest – Year 3*

*What is it like in London? – A walk in London – Year 1*

- Questions in whole class reading prompts pupils to compare similarities and differences between texts



**Reading provides the opportunity for the children at St James to go on many adventures throughout their time at school. Our reading spine is structured to enable pupils to make links between texts and the wider curriculum; allowing them to access places and worlds which they may never experience in person.**

- Fiction texts are specifically chosen to give children a range of experiences through the power of literature- pupils are encouraged to make connections between what they read and their learning in class.

*For example: Incredible India – Year 2*

*Mountains of the World – Year 5*



- Pupils read about a range of inspirational people with the hope that they are inspired by their adventures.

*For example: Amelia Earhart – Year 1*

*Emmeline Pankhurst – Year 4*

**Our Reading Spine has been carefully designed to enable all pupils to see themselves in the literature they read. Our texts have been selected to widen the pupils' knowledge and understanding of the world and people beyond the school, developing and practicing empathy and theory of mind, that is, understanding how other people feel and think (Maria Nikolajeva, 2013)**

- Careful consideration has been given to ensure representation in our reading spine- this includes texts with characters of an ethnic minority as well as those with disabilities or neuro diversities.

*For example: The Dog that saved Christmas – Year 4*

- Texts are specifically chosen to encourage children to develop a sense of empathy and promote thinking and action in the local community.

*For example: Michael Recycle – Reception*



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