

Reading and Phonics

Curriculum Intent

Through reading in particular, pupils have a chance to develop culturally, emotionally, intellectually, socially and spiritually. Literature, especially, plays a key role in such development.

Reading also enables pupils both to acquire knowledge and to build on what they already know. All the skills of language are essential to participating fully as a member of society; pupils who do not learn to speak, read and write fluently and confidently are effectively disenfranchised.'

(National Curriculum, 2014)

'If you are going anywhere in life you have to read a lot of books.'
(Roald Dahl)

'There is more treasure in books than all the pirate's loot on Treasure Island.'
(Walt Disney)

As reading is a complex skill with many components, Green Ridge has adopted a comprehensive and consistent approach to the teaching of these skills throughout the academy. We believe that reading is a valuable and rewarding experience and that the importance of laying a firm foundation in this crucial area will allow children to access all areas of the curriculum successfully. We believe that success in reading opens doors to a world of knowledge. It is essential that teaching focuses on developing pupils' competence in both dimensions; different kinds of teaching are needed for each.

Skilled word reading involves both the speedy working out of the pronunciation of unfamiliar printed words (decoding) and the speedy recognition of familiar printed words. Underpinning both is the understanding that the letters on the page represent the sounds in spoken words. This is why phonics should be **emphasised** in the early teaching of reading to beginners (i.e. unskilled readers) when they start school.

Good comprehension draws from **linguistic knowledge** (in particular of vocabulary and grammar) and on knowledge of the world. Comprehension skills develop through pupils' experience of **high-quality discussion** with the teacher, as well as from reading and discussing a range of stories, poems and non-fiction. All pupils must be encouraged to read widely across both fiction and non-fiction to develop their knowledge of themselves and the world they live in, to establish an appreciation and love of reading, and to gain knowledge across the curriculum. Reading widely and often increases pupils' vocabulary because they encounter words they would rarely hear or use in everyday speech. Reading also feeds pupils' imagination and opens up a treasure house of wonder and joy for curious young minds.

It is essential that, by the end of their primary education, all pupils are able to read **fluently**, and with confidence, in any subject in their forthcoming secondary education.

Our aims

- To develop a love of books and reading;
- To develop reading strategies and skills: fluency, accuracy, understanding and response to different texts;
- To read and enjoy a variety of texts from a variety of sources: library, class book corners, ICT;
- To create a strong, embedded reading culture through a rich language environment within classrooms and the wider school environment;
- To deliver a structured and consistent whole school approach to reading;
- To recognise the value of parents / carers as essential components in supporting and developing children's reading skills and love of reading; and
- To rigorously monitor and assess children's progress in reading and identify those who require extra support and intervene at an early stage.

Strategies for the teaching of reading

At Green Ridge, formal reading is taught alongside letters and sounds (phonics) initially. This initiative promotes a strong and systematic emphasis on the teaching of synthetic phonics to aid the teaching and learning of reading. As part of this scheme the children will be taught to:

- Discriminate between the separate sounds in words;
- Learn the letters and letter combinations most commonly used to spell sounds;
- Read words by sounding out and blending their separate parts;
- Study written representations of a sound and how it looks; and
- Recognise on sight vocabulary identified as 'Tricky words'.

Developing fluency

For the most part reading fluency can be defined as the ability to read text easily, quickly and expressively without making much effort and with little difficulty comprehending the meaning of the text. When evaluating a child's overall reading fluency, there are two different types of fluency that are being looked at: oral reading fluency and silent reading fluency.

Oral reading fluency

Much as it sounds, oral reading fluency refers to how fluently a child can read out loud. This type of fluency is less about how well a child understands and remembers what he is reading and much more about how he [decodes the text](#). If your child is a fluent oral reader, he should be able to read a given section of text without stumbling or hesitating, use proper intonation and expression (known as [prosody](#)) and pronounce most of the words correctly.

Silent reading fluency

Silent reading fluency is a bit more complicated than oral reading fluency. While, again, a fluent silent reader should be able to read what is in front of him without hesitation, he should also be able to read it more than just word by word. The reader is expected to be able to read without mouthing or saying the words out loud, while visually taking in and comprehending more than one word at a time.

Many children who are thought to be [fluent readers](#) aren't as fluent as they seem when it comes to silent reading because, although they are reading the text at a good pace and mechanically without trouble, they aren't gaining comprehension of what they are reading. This is often demonstrated by the child who reads a book with ease but is unable to tell you what the story was about or answer questions about it.

Why is fluency important?

The simplest reason reading fluency is important is because without fluency, reading is not enjoyable. Fluent readers will pick up a book and read on their own, even when it's not assigned for class. More importantly, however, is that fluent reading lead to more success with writing, better vocabulary skills and a greater understanding of what is being read.

Reading across the school

Reading is taught through shared reading sessions and sessions and opportunities to practise and consolidate skills through independent reading. During these sessions, teachers/teaching assistants will use a wide range of strategies to try and enhance the teaching of reading. Some of these are outlined below:

- Modelling and discussing the features of written texts through shared reading of texts;
- Giving direction to develop key strategies in reading;
- Demonstration – e.g. how to use punctuation when reading, using a shared text;
- Explanation to clarify and discuss e.g. need for grammatical agreement when proof reading;
- Questioning – to probe pupil's understanding of text;
- Investigation of ideas – to understand, expand on or generalise about themes and structures in fiction and non-fiction;
- Discussion and argument – to justify preference; and
- Provision of a wide range of fiction and non-fiction genres, for the children to choose from.
- Vocabulary exploration.

Reading in Key Stage One

Children are taught within their class for reading skills sessions daily (separate to phonics sessions). Reading will be based around fiction, non-fiction and poetry.

It is the expectation that there will be a specific taught element during the whole class reading session each day. Taught elements may include whole-class or group reading and sharing of a text with modelling of decoding and comprehension skills (e.g. visualisation, inference, retrieval, justification or author's use of language).

In addition to the whole class reading skills sessions the children may also work in smaller groups, undertaking the following activities to develop their reading skills (which is *not* handwriting or spelling related):

- Reading for pleasure and enjoyment of selected texts or genres (chosen by the class teacher, e.g. to link with theme)
- Paired reading
- Independent comprehension
- Individual reading for fluency
- Tasks relating to reading skills (e.g. drawing a picture of the setting in a story following the visualisation)
- Application of previously taught skills (e.g. skimming and scanning to find answers as modelled previously by a teacher)
- Practising the reading of common words and tricky words
- Pre-reading (ahead of input from class teacher)

Our intention is that all children are supported to access an age-related text, through support, scaffolding and differentiation.

Green Ridge makes use of the VIPERS approach to developing reading skills, which include:

- V – Vocabulary
- I – Infer
- P – Predict
- E – Explain
- R – Retrieve
- S – Sequence or summarise

These are considered the core skills of reading, but others (such as visualisation) will also be included as necessary. Teachers will ensure children have a balance of skills across the week and over each term so that they have opportunities to develop their complete reading skills.

Reading Books in Early Years and Key Stage One

Children will have access to a book-banded reading scheme which is differentiated by the reading stage each child is at. Each week, children will have the opportunity to take home two books at a time, and the books will be changed on a Tuesday and a Friday. Of the two books which children take home at a time, one book will always be directly related to the child's individual phonic stage according to their phonics group, whilst the other text will be age-appropriate but contain other words which are not always phonetically decodable and so expose the children to greater language.

Staff school will regularly assess whether a child should progress to the next reading book-band stage, and this will be dependent on the child's fluency as well as their comprehension of the text. For some children, they may require additional time securing a set of books to consolidate their phonic skills with the sounds they have previously learned.

Reading in Key Stage Two

The following elements contribute towards the reading diet in Key Stage Two:

- Within English lessons, children have exposure to a range of texts and genres as part of the Pie Corbett Talk for writing sequence of teaching.
- Reading will be taught discretely in 25-minute sessions daily.
- Children will be exposed to an age appropriate text as a whole class. This is where the teacher will be modelling how to read with expression and also enable the teacher to assess children's understanding of the different aspects of comprehension. Where possible, the text read will link to the current class theme for that half-term. To aid with ensuring that the text is of the appropriate pitch, the school refers to the Herts for Learning Recommended Narrative booklist (2014).
- As part of their theme learning, children will have access to a range of texts to develop reading (e.g. newspaper articles, reference materials).

Reading books in Key Stage 2

We follow a level/banded book system which continues from those books which a child started in Key Stage 1. The books go up to Level 20. When a child finishes the banded book system, they should have sufficient proficiency and independence to be able to select their own reading books and be a 'free reader'. However, class teachers do guide the children on the types of text they could read to develop their literature diet. Children may choose to read books from the school library or the class reading area also.

Library

Your school library encourages curiosity, innovation and problem-solving. It is integral to the cultural and social life of the school. The school library is a central point for all kinds of reading, cultural activities, access to information, knowledge building, deep thinking and lively discussion. Research shows the significant difference well-resourced libraries can make to student learning outcomes.

School libraries are places for learning and thinking. They play a key role in supporting and developing literacy and the enjoyment of reading. As Joy Cowley writes, 'A sanctuary, a mine of treasure, a house of maps to secret lives in secret worlds ... – the library became my other home.'

As part of developing a love of reading and giving opportunities for children to read for pleasure, each class will visit the school library once a week. Activities in the library may include:

- Opportunities for paired reading
- Reading a text as a class/hearing a story being read
- Individual or silent reading
- Sharing extracts of new books or unfamiliar texts to promote a broad and balanced reading diet
- Opportunities for children to select a book to take home within a range of genres and styles
- Theme-based research to support class work

It is expected that children will take a book out from the library, although some children may choose to keep a book for longer than a week as necessary.

It is the class teacher's job to ensure that children correctly scan in/out their library books, and that books are put back appropriately (either in the returns box or back on the shelves). At the end of each half-term, library reports will be run which show books still on loan and trends about reading.

Listening to children read

Every child in Early Years and during the Autumn Term of Year 1 will be heard reading at least once a week by a member of staff. (This maybe a teacher or TA.) This will usually occur during continuous provision time and will be recorded in their reading record with comment about their progress and/or next steps. It is expected that class teachers and TAs will keep a record of which children have been listened to (e.g. tick sheet in mark book). Once the children are in Key Stage One and Two the children will read to an adult during assembly times. Over the course of a three-week period we aim to listen to your child to read 1:1 with a member of staff which will be recorded in the reading record. To further promote reading skills, we have also enlisted a team of parent volunteers who will also be hearing children read. This is under the support of the class teacher to develop reading fluency and stamina but will not be recorded in the reading record. Within the whole class reading skills sessions the class teacher will use books or extracts of texts both from our reading books but also other sources. These reading sessions will not be recorded in the children's reading records but form part of our on-going assessment and planning procedures.

Some children may be heard reading more frequently and discuss the text in more detail, based on individual attainment and progress.

The Reading Environment

Every class will have access to a reading area that invites children to come and read a variety of fiction and non-fiction texts reflecting genres, cultures, gender and race.

- Every class will have a range of books available to pupils that reflect their current class topic, where possible;
- ICT in the classroom through notebooks and interactive TVs will be available for children to access digitally written materials to support their learning in a range of curriculum areas;
- A respect for books will be fostered and modelled by all staff. Every class will have a 'class book' – a quality novel / story that is read daily for the enjoyment of 'listening'.