

# The Holy Spirit Catholic Primary School

## ENGLISH POLICY



**2023 - 2024**

**School Rules:** Ready - Respectful - Safe

**Inspirational Learning:** Love - Believe - Achieve - Thrive

**Curriculum Drivers:** Resilient - Aspirational - Independent - Spiritual – Enthusiastic

**Signed by:**

**Headteacher: Mrs Connolly,**

**Subject Lead: Ms Fleming,**

**Chair of Governors: Mrs Keig Review**

**This policy will be reviewed in September 2025**

**Signed by:**

**Headteacher**

**Subject Lead**

**Chair of Governors**



## ENGLISH POLICY

### Introduction

At The Holy Spirit Catholic Primary, we are constantly looking at how we can improve the inclusive provision for our children to ensure that our children meet their potential and achieve at school. To this end, the information contained within this policy will be regularly reviewed and updated as necessary.

Reading is a complex skill with many components. Successful approaches to the teaching of reading should encourage children to use a variety of strategies in their pursuit of meaning. It is important to lay firm foundations in this crucial area of the curriculum and establish a consistent whole school approach to the teaching of reading.

### Aims and objectives:

Our aims are based on the following core values and ethos in our mission statement, which is:

“Together in the Spirit of Love and forgiveness our family learns to grow in hope and joy”

Our aims are designed to ensure that the school meets the needs of all, taking into account gender, ethnicity, culture, religion, language, sexual orientation, age, ability, disability and social circumstances. It is important that in our school we meet the diverse needs of all pupils to ensure inclusion for all and that all pupils are prepared for full participation in our multi-ethnic society.

We therefore aim to ensure that:

- All children have access to a broad, balanced and differentiated reading curriculum and out of school reading activities.
- All children who may have special educational needs and/or additional needs are identified and provided for as early as possible and reading interventions suitably matched
- We reduce barriers to progress by embedding the principles in the National Curriculum Inclusion statement <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/national-curriculum>
- We develop an interest in and a love of books, encouraging children to become attentive listeners, independent and reflective readers
- We develop reading strategies and skills, accuracy, fluency, understanding and response to texts
- We develop the ability to use and manipulate a variety of texts, both fiction and non-fiction
- We develop children’s experiences through a variety of texts including the use of libraries, ICT and other available media

### Reading - Intent

The first stage in helping children to become confident readers and enjoy books is teaching them the key skills that they need. Our philosophy will be driven by the determination that every child in this school will learn to read regardless of their circumstances.

## Implementation

- We will use a systematic, consistent, well-structured, fast paced and multi-sensory approach to teaching reading.
- Teaching of phonics is primarily based on Synthetic Phonics, Little Wandle, Pathways to Read structures the foundations of the English planning across the school and wider resources are used to enhance the teaching of reading within the wider curriculum.
- Children will be given opportunities to practise their decoding skills to adults to apply what they have learnt.
- Staff will be highly trained in the principles of phonics, so that they can identify the learning needs of young children and recognise and overcome the barriers that hamper learning
- The curriculum will give children rich opportunities to talk and listen in a wide range of contexts. Strong cross-curricular links are made with reading across the wider curriculum, e.g. topic book baskets in every classroom using ELS resources
- There will be a strong and early focus on developing listening skills.
- Well-structured resources including those from Letters and Sounds and Bug Club will be used appropriately, to support the teaching programme.
- Phonics and other teaching strategies will be monitored to ensure consistency.
- The assessment of individual pupils' progress in reading and their phonic knowledge and skills will be frequent and detailed to identify quickly the pupils who are failing, or in danger of failing, to keep up with their peers. Formative assessment includes Reading and Comprehension Ages and NFER reading assessments.
- Children will be involved in the assessment of their progress and receive regular supportive feedback on their work.
- Every classroom will have an attractive and accessible reading area where resources are organised and available for children to regularly use. Every class will encourage and celebrate reading through personalised strategies, e.g. Bug Club moving level certificates, Summer Reading Challenge, book of the week, recommendations, picture books, novels, P2R, P2W etc.

## Impact

- The impact of our reading curriculum can be clearly seen across the school through children talking about their love of reading, the quality of texts (reading books, Pathways to Read and Write, online Bug Club and Oxford Reading Buddy) children have access to. Children learn reading incrementally and attain as highly as they can. Children are often engaged in activities to demonstrate a love of reading such as finding facts about the wider curriculum through non-fiction books, sharing their favourite texts with other year groups and engaging with authors, linking to their wider work. Our assessment system - a combination reading and comprehension ages, NFER tests, SATS, helps teachers to make informed judgements about the children's learning, the progress they have made over time and to identify the next steps in their learning.

## Shared Reading

- This takes place during English lessons and often forms the basis of further literacy work. This includes Pathways novel and Picture Book or texts displayed on the Interactive White Board. During this time specific reading skills or features of differing genre will be taught. This is an opportunity to discuss the use of language, widen the children's vocabulary and develop their levels of comprehension. Higher order reading skills and reading comprehension are explicitly taught through planned lessons based on good quality literature.
- The Pathways novel is read aloud to the class, the class have multiple copies of the text, the text is discussed in a whole class listening comprehension short session. This is to promote reading for pleasure. Children can listen to the teacher read, CD's can be used and children can offer to read aloud to the class.



## Pathways to Write

We use 'Pathways to Write,' Pathways is a proven methodology built around units of work which develop vocabulary, **reading** and writing skills through the mastery approach. Pathways is a text based approach. Through using books as a writing tool, the children are exposed to high quality language from a variety of different authors and genres and are provided with many different writing opportunities. The units, for use with pupils from EYFS to Y6, provide clear detailed lesson plans and resources, linked to high-quality texts to ensure engaging and purposeful English lessons. Effective teaching strategies to challenge greater depth writers are included within each unit of work.

Following the 'Pathways to Write' methodology, our teaching of writing process follows three stages:

- **Gateway:** hooks, entuses and intrigues young writers whilst revisiting previously taught skills to assess against.
- **Pathway:** introduces three new writing skills, which pupils practise and apply through short and extended writing tasks.
- **Writeaway:** provides an opportunity for pupils to apply mastery skills in an extended context.

Through writing, the children are exposed to many different elements of vocabulary, punctuation and grammar. The full break down of the areas of SPaG taught in each year group is available at the following link: [Vocabulary, Grammar and Punctuation](#)

### Phonics (See Phonics Policy)

All children in FS, Year 1 and Year 2 will be taught phonic skills through Synthetic Phonics (Little Wandle). This will take place through dedicated phonics lessons, FS, Year 1 and Year 2 will complete daily phonics lessons and children will complete the school spelling programme in line with the National Curriculum. Children from KS2 identified as needing extra phonics will be planned for in class and can join Key Stage 1 – at the appropriate phase. For some children identified as needing extra phonics will be planned for accordingly in class. Children will be ability grouped for these lessons and these groups will operate across the whole school.

Phonics information meetings are also held to advise parents on the reading strategies used in school and how best they may help their child before the children start their Reception Year.

Phonics will be planned for and delivered on a daily basis (20 minute sessions) and a phonics book will be used to record evidence of learning. In addition to this, children in KS1 will learn spellings alongside the Phonics lessons.

Additional meetings are held to support parents prior to the Year 1 phonic screening in the Summer Term.

### Reading Age

Children are tested on the Salford Reading Age Assessment. They are tested for both decoding and comprehension skills. Teachers compare results against the child's chronological age. From these children are assigned reading books and put into Guided Reading groups. Children who are behind in reading are targeted to encourage them to catch up to ARE.



Reading is taught daily through phonics and guided reading. We also follow 'Pathways to Read' in KS2 which links perfectly to our writing curriculum.

Following the '*Pathways to Read*' methodology, we use the following teaching sequence:

- Whole class shared reading – 30 mins
  - Predict
  - Clarify vocabulary
  - Read and retrieve
  - Read and explain (inference and authorial choice)
  
- Grouped reading session – 30 mins
  - Predict/summarise
  - Strategy check/vocabulary
  - Key question (mastery focus)
  - Discuss understanding
  
- Follow on task – 30 mins
  - A task designed to further practise the mastery skills in the shared and grouped reading sessions. Focussed independent task - pre/post work linked to text – e.g. prediction/summary

(Groups swap in the final hour so some children are independent and others are working with the teacher)

### **Guided Reading – Little Wandle**

All children will have the opportunity to take part in a shared reading experience in a small group guided by an adult three times per week. The Reading practice sessions have been designed to focus on three key reading skills:

- decoding
- prosody – reading with meaning, stress and intonation
- comprehension – understanding the text.

All the Big Cat for Little Wandle books follow the Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised progression.

In Key Stage 2 children follow a 90 minute Guided Reading lesson per week. The lesson is divided into 3x 30 mins.

### **Individual Reading**

All children will have at least one individual reading book either from the schools reading scheme or the school library (Reading for Pleasure book). Children in Foundation Stage will have their books changed by

an adult. Children in KS1 will have either a Little Wandle book and graded book from our reading scheme or two books from our scheme. In KS2 children will change their own book from the graded books in the KS2 corridor. The expectation is that children will change their book at least weekly depending on the size of the book. Children in KS1 who are learning to read are encouraged to read their book at home regularly to encourage fluency. Children have online reading programs – Oxford Reading Buddy, Active Learn Bug Club Collins Big Cat.

Key Stage 2- Children supported by teachers and TAs are encouraged to keep their own record of the books they read. They are expected to make a short comment upon a book once it has been finished, in their reading record and get their record book signed regularly by an adult.

There are opportunities planned for children to read aloud to a variety of audiences. These could be through Literacy Work, Guided Reading or performances to audiences including whole school and families.

### **Expectations of parents**

Parents are expected to listen to their child read and ask questions about the book to check comprehension, making comments in the reading record.

Whilst it is not expected that parents will hear their child read every day, frequent involvement in the process is still important. Discussions about the books read and understanding of issues covered help to improve reading skills. Parents are encouraged to sign the reading record as frequently as they read. Children are rewarded for reading at home through our whole school reading challenge which is adapted yearly.

Children are incentivised to read regularly. Children can be rewarded book marks, reading certificates for moving a book band and Dojo points for regular reading.

Dojo points are rewarded at the end of the term – this is part of the whole school reward system.

### **Library**

The School Library contains a variety of Free Reader books as well as Fiction and Non-Fiction books. All children are entitled to borrow school Library Books – they can borrow a book and change them regularly.

A visit to Halton Lea Library also takes place for the children once a year, to allow the children a chance to experience Libraries and encourage family members to continue the visits. Children are actively encouraged to take part in the Summer Library Reading Challenge to prevent summer slip/dip. Children who take part are rewarded in assembly with their certificate and have a special break time with treats. Reminders are sent out on the School Newsletter along with flyers. School also makes use of the Library Van for classroom reading areas and can order books from the Library Service in Winsford for a range of topics.

All classrooms have a reading area within their classroom to encourage and foster reading for pleasure.

### **The role of Teaching Assistants**

Teaching Assistants are expected to take an active role in supporting children with their reading as directed by the Class Teacher. This can include working with groups of children during the English lesson, leading guided reading groups or hearing individual children read.

### **The Role of Volunteers**

The school encourages people who have some time to come into school to hear readers. The volunteer will be allocated to a class teacher who will then select children who would benefit from the extra reading to an adult.

The class teacher is responsible for ensuring that the volunteer has the support needed to help them carry out the role effectively.

The teaching of reading is greatly helped if there is strong communication and support from parents.

### **Assessment**

Children are assessed in line with the school's Assessment Policy using a variety of strategies. Children are assessed against the Liverpool assessment grid and are ranked which puts them at WT, ARE, GD for their age related expectations. Children are tested on a regular basis for phonic knowledge and spelling capability.

Their reading ages are also checked to assess progress over time. The results from this are compared to the children's chronological age and analysed as red (1 month + below chronological age), yellow (1 month either side of their chronological age) or green (more than 1 month above their chronological age).

EYFS – Baseline & end of EYFS

Year 1 children are assessed against the Government's Standardised Phonics Assessment in the summer term.

Year 2 children are assessed using the Government's standardised Reading Test [SATs].

Year 6 children are assessed using the Government's standardised Reading Test [SATs].

NFER – tests are taken in December for all year groups 2 to 6 in National Curriculum.

NFER – tests are taken in June for y1, y3, y4 & y 5.

Writing is assessed termly and there are moderation opportunities for Y2 and Y6 organised by Halton LA.

Data from all assessments is shared with senior leaders in Pupil Progress meetings on a termly basis. Next steps decisions are considered and intervention strategies are put into place to address any underachievement.

### **SEN and Equal Opportunities**

Those children who, as a result of assessment or normal classroom activities, are identified as needing extra support will be monitored closely by the Class Teacher and the SENCO.

Specific interventions will be put in place to support those children. A differentiated, phonics based, structured reading programme IDL/Toe by Toe etc. will be implemented as part of an agreed Support Plan. Other intensive programmes may be used if the need arises. Parents will always be informed and involved.

### **EAL**

Children who have English as an additional language, e.g. who speak Polish, will have support from the class teacher, to help develop their early mastery of English. Dual language books and resources can be used.

## Displays

There are opportunities for pupils to experience print around them through classroom notices, labels and signs. These should be discussed with the children and should take a variety of forms such as single words, joined up font, phrases and complete sentences. All classes have a vocabulary focus, strategies such as pre-teaching support children's reading journey.

All classrooms have books which are well organised and easily accessible within an attractive reading area.

All adults must be good role models for children in modelling both reading aloud and silent reading.

## Reading Ages

Reading ages given are approximate and are intended as a guide to help teachers and parents select appropriate books.

(EYFS & KS1)

Colour	Stage Oxford Reading Tree	Approx. Reading Age
Lilac	1	Nursery
Pink	1+	Reception
Red	2	4 – 5 years old
Yellow	3 (*EYFS Expectation)	
Blue	4	Year 1
Green	5	5 - 6 years old
Orange	6	
Turquoise	7 (*Y1 Expectation)	Year 2
Purple	8	6-7 years old
Gold	9 (*Y2 Expectation)	
White	10	(White and Lime are the bridging bands between KS1 & KS2).
Lime	11	

(KS2)

Colour	Stage	Level
Brown A	9 & 10	Year 3 Approx age 7 - 8
Brown B	11	
Grey A	12	
Grey A	13	
Grey B	14	
Grey B	14	Year 4 Approx age 8 - 9
Blue A	15	
Blue B	16	
Blue B	16	Year 5 Approx age 9 - 10
Red A	17	
Red B	18	
Red + A	19	Year 6 Approx age 10 - 11
Red + B	20	

Key Stage 2 books are arranged in 12 stages – stage 9-20

On the back of some books it states **Brown Y3**, **Grey Y4**, **Blue Y5** and **Red Y6**.

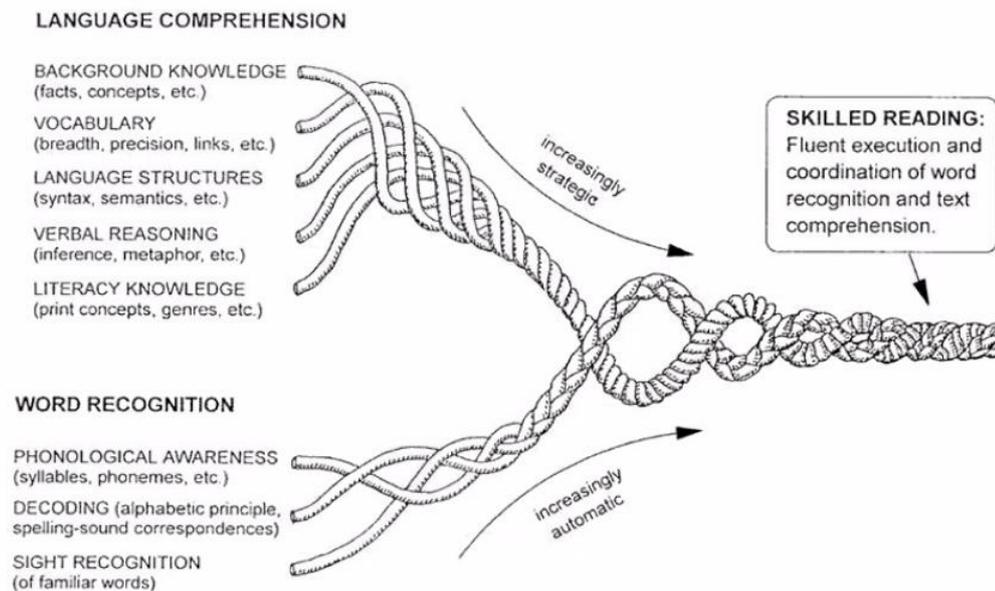
You need to match their reading age to a Stage. For example, some able Y3 readers will be able to move up the stages if they have good reading and comprehension skills. Look very carefully at **comprehension** skills – not just decoding. All books in our scheme have comprehension questions in the front and back cover. Ensure children refer to these when reading.

We currently have a blended scheme of Oxford, Collins Big Cat & Pearson Bug Club. Oxford and Pearson Bug Club are also available as online resources. It is also very important that children read for pleasure, reading a quality real book at an appropriate level. Please discuss real books with children if they choose an additional book from the library or bring a book in from home.

Please encourage all children to read for 20 mins every night. Ensure children read a varied diet – fiction and non-fiction. Overall in the reading scheme there is a wide variety of texts, but certain stages may have an imbalance. We will continue to address this when purchasing resources.

## Reading (fluency)

### THE MANY STRANDS THAT ARE WOVEN INTO SKILLED READING



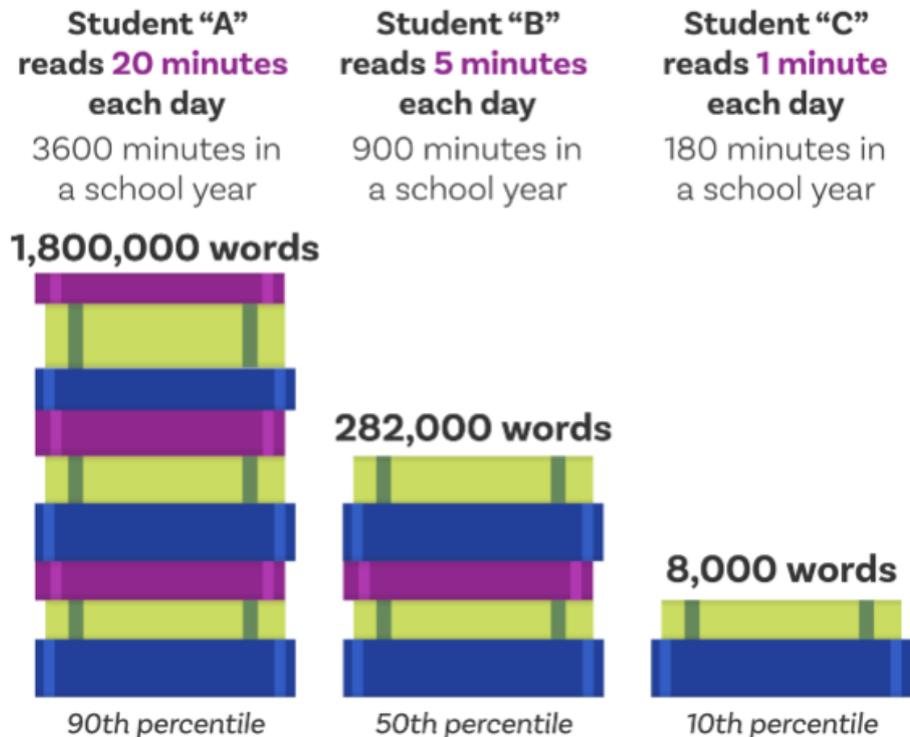
### Messages on newsletters and social media:-



Pledge To Read With a Child



# Why Can't I Skip My 20 Minutes of Reading Tonight?



There are lists available for quality real texts – we could do our own top 100 KS1 / KS 2 books - survey the children, parents, grandparents, staff and governors etc.

Other ideas:- Monthly reading competition on the newsletter, Reading reward scheme, Reading champions (children who completed the Summer Reading Challenge).

## Review

This policy operates in conjunction with the other Policies.

This policy was written in consultation with the staff and will be revisited each year. A full review will take place every three years.

The policy was agreed by the Governing Body.

## Concerns and Complaints

Please refer to our [Compliments, Comments & Concerns Policy](#)

## Reviewing the Policy

Signed by:

Head teacher \_\_\_\_\_

Governors \_\_\_\_\_

SENDCO \_\_\_\_\_

**Reviewed**– Autumn Term 2024

**Next review** – Autumn Term 2025

## READING HOME AND SCHOOL AGREEMENT

At The Holy Spirit Catholic Primary School, we want to do everything we can to ensure that your child is able to read. We want all of our children to leave us as confident and fluent readers so that they have the necessary skills for later life.

Of course, in order for your child to achieve their full potential in reading, it will require us working in partnership.

As a school, we will:

- Ensure your child has a reading book that is suitable to their ability and a reading diary to record in.
- Hear your child read either individually or in a small group regularly.
- Challenge and support your child in reading lessons.

As a parent/carer, you will:

- Listen to your child read at home 3-5times per week.
- Ensure they have their book and reading diary in school on a daily basis.
- Contribute to the replacement of any books that are lost or damaged when given to your child (that is currently £5 per book).

By signing this, we agree (school and parents/guardians) that we will work together to improve the reading of the child named below:

Name of child: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian: \_\_\_\_\_

Teacher: \_\_\_\_\_