



# SHOBNALL PRIMARY & NURSERY SCHOOL

## APPROACH TO THE TEACHING OF READING



*“Once you learn to read, you will be forever free.”*

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## INTRODUCTION

This document outlines the teaching, organisation and management of phonics and reading taught and learnt at Shobnall Primary & Nursery School.

The document has been drawn up as a result of staff discussion and its implementation is the responsibility of all teaching staff. The responsibility for monitoring and review rests with the reading subject leader.

The main purposes of this document are:

- To establish an entitlement for all pupils.
- To establish expectations for teachers of this subject.
- To promote continuity and coherence across the school.

## VISION

*“At Shobnall Primary & Nursery School, our ethos and purpose is to enable children to read words accurately and understand texts.”*

## PRINCIPLES

We believe children should have excellent phonic knowledge and skills.	Our children will have fluency and accuracy in reading across a wide range of contexts throughout the curriculum.
We promote knowledge of an extensive and rich vocabulary.	We encourage our children to have an excellent comprehension of texts.
We motivate our children to read for both study and for pleasure.	We encourage pupils to have an extensive knowledge through having read a rich and varied range of texts.

## THEORY UNDERPINNING OUR PRACTICE AND PRINCIPLES

Over the last two decades, there has been a deepening recognition of the fundamental importance of improving reading standards on a child's future academic achievement, wellbeing and success in life. The reading and writing of Standard English, alongside proficient language development, is the key to unlocking the rest of the academic curriculum. Pupils who struggle to read struggle in all subjects and the wonders of a knowledge-rich curriculum passes them by unread. Fluency of reading is also a key indicator for future success in further education, higher education and employment (The Reading Framework, July 2021).

The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)'s Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) said as recently as 2021 that 'PISA data consistently shows that engagement in reading is strongly correlated with reading performance and is a mediator of gender or socio-economic status'. The OECD emphasised: 'Reading practices can play an important role in reducing the gap between the reading proficiency scores of students from different socio-economic backgrounds'. But children cannot be 'highly engaged' if reading words is a struggle. It is vital, therefore, that phonics is a priority in teaching reading.

Reading has been described as the product of decoding and comprehension, a model first proposed by Gough and Tunmer in 1986, who called it the Simple View of Reading (figure 1) consisting of two axes and four quadrants: a horizontal axis for word reading (decoding) processes and a vertical axis for language comprehension processes. The national curriculum programmes of study for reading reflect the model, presented as two dimensions: 'word reading' and 'comprehension'.

### LANGUAGE COMPREHENSION

Comprehension does not refer to reading itself but, rather, to the way in which we make sense of words, sentences and the wider language we hear or read.

Language develops through interaction with others. Inevitably, by the time they start school, some children understand more and know more words than others, because of the quantity and quality of the interactions they have already had with adults and others. Children who begin school with a poor understanding of language will need considerable support to develop their spoken language.

### DECODING (WORD READING)

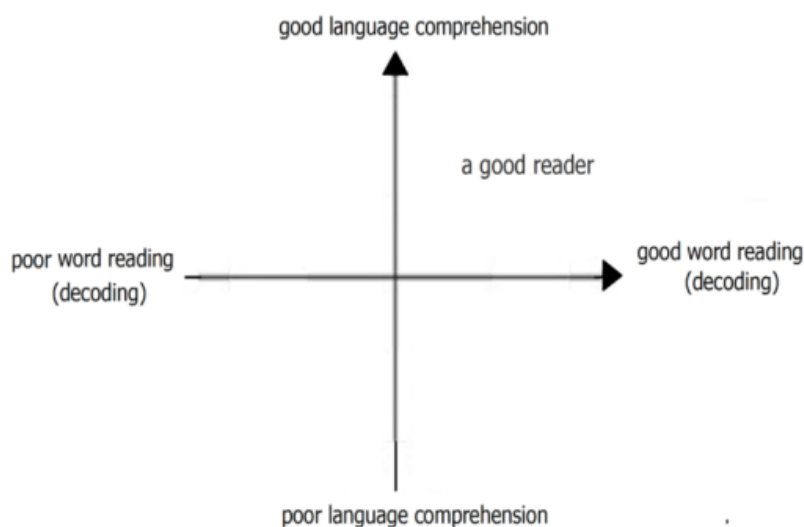
Decoding refers to:

- reading unfamiliar words (words that have not been decoded before) by saying the sounds corresponding to the letters in the words and then blending the sounds together, either aloud or silently
- reading familiar words accurately and silently 'at a glance' so, that is, no longer saying the sounds consciously.

This document uses the terms 'decoding' and 'word reading' interchangeably, as in Gough and Tunmer's original description of the Simple View of Reading.

In contrast to spoken language, written language is a cultural invention. Most children do not develop the ability to read without direct teaching. For children who begin school with a poor understanding of language, being able to decode words is essential for equality, because their understanding of language, their vocabulary and their knowledge of the world will expand rapidly when they can read for themselves. Children need both good language comprehension and good word reading to become good readers.

Figure 1:

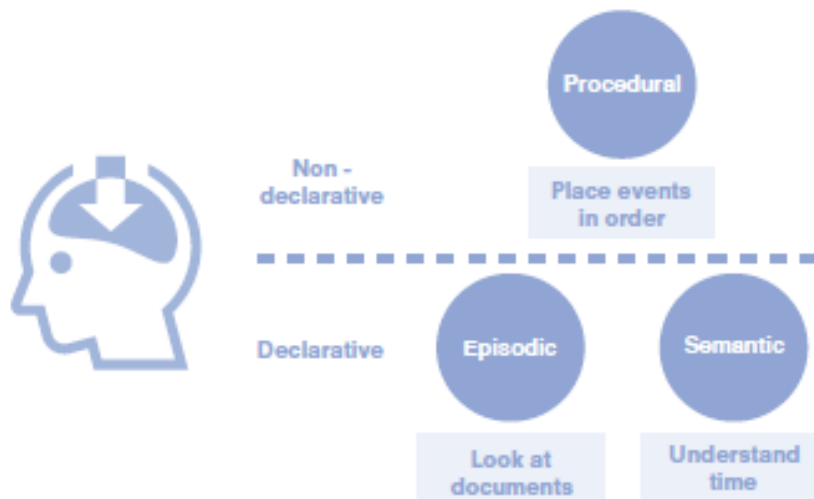


As a school we scrutinised the best research available and we have determined that our **definition of learning** is a **change to the long-term memory**. This means that the way we implement our curriculum maps involves repetitive teaching of the key concepts or the 'big' ideas. Each unit has built in practise, retrieval and reinforcement of the key concepts to ensure knowledge sticks in the long-term memory. For learning to stick in the **long-term memory** we teach learning in meaningful contexts and in a connected way.

Long-term memory involves three main areas:

1. Procedural memory where procedures such as placing events in order and other skills are stored. Procedures, once fluent, become automatic and are referred to as non-declarative.
2. Semantic memory where facts and their meaning is stored.
3. Episodic memory where the activities to learn the processes and facts are remembered and act as memory cues.

Both semantic and episodic memory involve conscious thought and are therefore referred to as declarative.



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We have used the research around **cognitive load** and how children learn most effectively, to determine our approach to implementing the curriculum. Research has shown that If you teach children too many new concepts at once their short-term memory becomes overloaded and none of the knowledge will stick and move into the long term. We take an approach of **spacing** out new knowledge combined with interleaving and plenty of retrieval practise to ensure learning sticks. With **repetition, interleaving and retrieval**, research we use suggests that the more often children have to remember knowledge the more likely it just to be cemented into the long-term memory.

## INTENT

### PHONICS (READING AND SPELLINGS)

At Shobnall Primary & Nursery School, we believe that all our children can become fluent readers and writers. This is why we teach reading through *Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised*, which is a systematic and synthetic phonics programme. We start teaching phonics

in Nursery/Reception and follow the [Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised progression](#), which ensures children build on their growing knowledge of the alphabetic code, mastering phonics to read and spell as they move through school.

As a result, all our children are able to tackle any unfamiliar words as they read. We also model the application of the alphabetic code through phonics in shared reading and writing, both inside and outside of the phonics lesson and across the curriculum. We have a strong focus on language development for our children because we know that speaking and listening are crucial skills for reading and writing in all subjects.

## COMPREHENSION

We value reading as a crucial life skill. By the time children leave us, they read confidently for meaning and regularly enjoy reading for pleasure. Our readers are equipped with the tools to tackle unfamiliar vocabulary. We encourage our children to see themselves as readers for both pleasure and purpose.

Because we believe teaching every child to read is so important, we have a Reading Leader, who drives the early reading programme in our school. This person is highly skilled at teaching phonics and reading, and they monitor and support our reading team, so everyone teaches with fidelity to the *Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised* programme.

## IMPLEMENTATION

### FOUNDATIONS FOR PHONICS IN NURSERY

We provide a balance of child-led and adult-led experiences for all children that meet the curriculum expectations for 'Communication and Language' and 'Literacy'. These include:

- sharing high-quality stories and poems
- learning a range of nursery rhymes and action rhymes
- activities that develop focused listening and attention, including oral blending
- attention to high-quality language.

We ensure Nursery children are well prepared to begin learning grapheme-phoneme correspondences (GPCs) and blending in Reception.

### DAILY PHONICS LESSONS IN RECEPTION AND YEAR 1

We teach phonics for 30 minutes a day. In Reception, we build from 10-minute lessons, with additional daily oral blending games, to the full-length lesson as quickly as possible. Each Friday, we review the week's teaching to help children become fluent readers.

Children make a strong start in Reception: teaching begins in Week 2 of the Autumn term.

We follow the [Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised expectations of progress](#):

- Children in Reception are taught to read and spell words using Phase 2 and 3 GPCs, and words with adjacent consonants (Phase 4) with fluency and accuracy.
- Children in Year 1 review Phase 3 and 4 and are taught to read and spell words using Phase 5 GPCs with fluency and accuracy.

### TEACHING READING: READING PRACTICE SESSIONS

In Reception and Year 1, we teach children to read through reading practice sessions three times a week. These:

- are taught by a fully trained adult to small groups of approximately six children

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- use books matched to the children's secure phonic knowledge using the *Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised* assessments and book matching grids on pages 11–20 of '[Application of phonics to reading](#)'
- are monitored by the class teacher, who rotates and works with each group on a regular basis.

Each reading practice session has a clear focus, so that the demands of the session do not overload the children's working memory. The reading practice sessions have been designed to focus on three key reading skills:

- decoding
- prosody: teaching children to read with understanding and expression
- comprehension: teaching children to understand the text.

In Reception these sessions start in Week 4. Children who are not yet decoding have daily additional blending practice in small groups, so that they quickly learn to blend and can begin to read books.

In Year 2 to Year 6, we teach regular whole-class reading practice sessions, focused on the VIPERS key reading skills: Vocabulary, Inference, Predict, Explain, Retrieve and Sequence (KS1)/Summarise (KS2) from the long term plan.

### HOME READING

All pupils have a reading diary, which will be checked on a daily basis by a member of staff: it is expected that pupils will read a minimum of three times per week, which should be recorded in reading diaries. Whilst it is not expected that parents will hear their child read, we encourage parents to engage with their children to motivate and enthuse them further by having discussions about the books read and understanding of issues covered help to improve reading skills. Parents are to record reading in the diaries, however as the children progress through the school, they are encouraged to write their own comments and keep a list of the books/authors that they have read.

In Reception and Year 1, the decodable reading practice book is taken home to ensure success is shared with family members.

- Reading for pleasure books also go home for parents to share and read to children.
- We use the [Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised parents' resources](#) to engage our families and share information about phonics, the benefits of sharing books, how children learn to blend and other aspects of our provision, both online and through workshops.

### ENSURING CONSISTENCY AND PACE OF PROGRESS

Every teacher in our school has been trained to teach reading, so we have the same expectations of progress. We all use the same language, routines and resources to teach children to read so that we lower children's cognitive load.

Weekly content grids map each element of new learning to each day, week and term for the duration of the programme. Lesson templates, Prompt cards and How to videos ensure teachers all have a consistent approach and structure for each lesson.

The Reading Leader and SLT use the Audit and Prompt cards to regularly monitor and observe teaching; they use the summative data to identify children who need additional support and gaps in learning.

## ENSURING READING FOR PLEASURE

*'Reading for pleasure is the single most important indicator of a child's success.'* (OECD 2002)  
*'The will influences the skill and vice versa.'* (OECD 2010)

We value reading for pleasure highly and work hard as a school to grow our Reading for Pleasure pedagogy.

We read to children every day. We choose these books carefully as we want children to experience a wide range of books, including books that reflect the children and our local community as well as books that open windows into other worlds and cultures.

Every classroom has an inviting book corner that encourages a love for reading. We curate these books and talk about them to entice children to read a wide range of books.

In Nursery/Reception, children have access to the reading corner every day in their free flow time and the books are continually refreshed.

In KS2, each class has opportunities to visit the KS2 library each week. Children across the school have regular opportunities to engage with a wide range of Reading for Pleasure events (book fairs, author visits and workshops, national events etc).

## IMPACT

### ASSESSMENT

Assessment is used to monitor progress and to identify any child needing additional support as soon as they need it.

Assessment for learning is used:

- daily within class to identify children needing Keep-up support
- weekly in the Review lesson to assess gaps, address these immediately and secure fluency of GPCs, words and spellings.

Summative assessment is used:

- every six weeks to assess progress, to identify gaps in learning that need to be addressed, to identify any children needing additional support and to plan the Keep-up support that they need.
- by SLT and scrutinised through the *Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised* assessment tracker, to narrow attainment gaps between different groups of children and so that any additional support for teachers can be put into place.

### STATUTORY ASSESSMENT

Children in Year 1 sit the Phonics Screening Check. Any child not passing the check re-sits it in Year 2.

### ONGOING ASSESSMENT FOR CATCH-UP

Children in Year 2 to 6 are assessed through their teacher's ongoing formative assessment as well as through the half-termly *Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised* summative assessments.

We use lesson observations to see if the pedagogical style matches our depth expectations.



Pupils attainment and progress in reading is measured against the objectives set in the national curriculum and recorded by teachers using Classroom Monitor to inform parents and future teaching and learning activities.

### EFFECTIVE TEACHING AND LEARNING IN READING

Effective teaching ensures that pupils retain knowledge they have learned in the long term. This is supported by opportunities to revisit and practise with prior knowledge. Pupils are more likely to retain knowledge when they have engaged analytically with the content they study. Teachers can support learning through clear exposition, which takes into account what pupils already know and understand.

Using the EEF's guidance reports on improving literacy in KS1 and KS2, we ensure our lessons:

- **Develop pupils' language capability to support their reading** – purposeful speaking and listening activities support the development of pupils' language capability and provides a foundation for thinking and communication. This could include: reading books aloud and discussing them; activities that extend pupils' expressive and receptive vocabulary; collaborative learning activities where pupils can share their thoughts processes; structured questioning to develop reading comprehension; and teachers modelling inference-making by thinking aloud.
- **Using a balanced, engaging approach to develop reading, which integrates both decoding and comprehension skills** – both decoding (the ability to translate written words into the sounds of spoken language) and comprehension (the ability to understand the meaning of the language being read) skills are necessary for confident and competent reading, but neither is sufficient on its own.
- **Use of a systematic, synthetic phonics programme** - Systematic phonics approaches explicitly teach pupils a comprehensive set of letter-sound relationships for reading and sound-letter relationships for spelling.
- **Support pupils to develop fluent reading capabilities** – Fluent readers can read quickly, accurately, and with appropriate stress and intonation. Fluent reading supports comprehension because pupils' cognitive resources are freed from focusing on word recognition and can be redirected towards comprehending the text. This can be developed through: guided oral reading instruction, repeated reading and ensuring that current capabilities are considered and addressed accordingly.
- **Teach reading comprehension strategies through modelling and supported practice** – reading comprehension can be improved by teaching specific strategies that pupils can apply both to monitor and overcome barriers to comprehension. These include: prediction; questioning; clarifying; summarising; inference; and activating prior knowledge. The potential impact of these strategies is very high, but pupils are required to take greater responsibility for their own learning.

### SUPPORTING PUPILS IN READING, INCLUDING PUPILS WITH SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND/OR DISABILITIES (SEND)

We recognise that in all classes children have a wide range of ability in reading, and we seek to provide suitable learning opportunities for all children by matching the challenge of the task to the ability of the child.

Any child who needs additional practice in phonics has daily Keep-up support, taught by a fully trained adult. Keep-up lessons match the structure of class teaching, and use the same procedures, resources and mantras, but in smaller steps with more repetition, so that every child secures their learning.

## SHOBNALL PRIMARY & NURSERY SCHOOL APPROACH TO THE TEACHING OF READING

We timetable daily phonics lessons for any child, who is not fully fluent at reading or has not passed the Phonics Screening Check. These children urgently need to catch up, so the gap between themselves and their peers does not widen. We use the *Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised* assessments to identify the gaps in their phonic knowledge and teach to these using the Keep-up resources – at pace. These short, sharp lessons last 10 minutes and take place at least three times a week.

Ensuring that all pupils encounter the same content is particularly important. This suggests that significantly reducing content or complexity for some pupils might in fact limit their access to content or limit their ability to learn. It is likely that pupils will benefit most from support that combines extra attention to securing the most generative knowledge, while ensuring that all pupils are able to learn in a rich context and through meaningful examples. This can be achieved by:

- setting tasks which are open-ended and can have a variety of responses;
- setting tasks of increasing difficulty, some children not completing all tasks;
- setting pre-reading tasks, considering any unknown vocabulary;
- grouping children by ability in the room, and setting different tasks for each ability group;
- providing resources of different complexity, depending on the ability of the child;
- using teaching assistants to support children individually or in groups.

### PROMOTING KEY SKILLS IN READING

Through our teaching of reading comprehension, we provide opportunities for pupils to develop the key reading skills. VIPERS is an acronym to aid the recall of 6 reading domains as part of the UK's reading curriculum:

- **Vocabulary** – to give/explain the meaning of words in context.
- **Inference** – making inference from the text/ explain and justify using evidence from the text.
- **Predict** – predicting what might happen from the details stated and implied.
- **Explain** – identify/explain how information/narrative content is related and contributes to the meaning as a whole; identify/explain how meaning is enhanced through choice of words and phrases and make comparisons within the text.
- **Retrieve** – retrieve and record key information/key details from fiction and non-fiction.
- **Sequence (KS1)** – sequence the key events in a story.
- **Summarise (KS2)** - summarise main ideas from more than one paragraph.

### EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE

It is crucial for children to develop a life-long love of reading. Reading consists of two dimensions: language comprehension and word reading. Language comprehension (necessary for both reading and writing) starts from birth. It only develops when adults talk with children about the world around them and the books (stories and non-fiction) they read with them, and enjoy rhymes, poems and songs together. Skilled word reading, taught later, involves both the speedy working out of the pronunciation of unfamiliar printed words (decoding) and the speedy recognition of familiar printed words.

### KEY STAGE 1 & 2

The programmes of study for reading at key stages 1 and 2 consist of 2 dimensions:

- word reading
- comprehension (both listening and reading)

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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.

### PLANNING AND RESOURCES

We use the National Curriculum scheme of work as the basis for our planning in reading. We ensure that there are opportunities for children of all abilities to develop their skills and knowledge, and we plan progression into the scheme of work, so that the children are increasingly challenged as they move through the school.

Reception and Year 1 follow Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised planning provided for the phonics and practice reading sessions.

From Year 2 – Year 6, the class teacher writes the lesson plans for each reading lesson (short-term plans), often in the form of a flipchart or presentation. These plans list the specific learning objectives and expected outcomes for each lesson. The class teacher keeps these individual plans, although he or she and the subject leader often discuss them on an informal basis. Plans are stored on the staff shared drive for monitoring purposes and ease of access for the teachers and reading subject leader.

There are sufficient resources for teaching all reading units in the school. They are located in each classroom. The library contains a good supply of books and iPads are available to support children's individual research.

### CROSS-CURRICULAR OPPORTUNITIES

Staff are encouraged to develop cross-curricular links with reading and other subjects to provide a relevant and meaningful curriculum for pupils.

Reading contributes significantly to our teaching across the curriculum. Children are exposed to a range of texts linking to other areas of our curriculum, including history and geography.

Children are exposed to new vocabulary in all other subjects, including technical language.

**Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development (SMSC)**

In our teaching of reading, we also contribute to the development of the children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding by looking at the establishment of multicultural Britain and the moral implications of the actions of historical figures. Children are therefore provided with many opportunities to discuss moral questions.

## ASSESSMENT

Assessment is used to monitor progress and to identify any child needing additional support as soon as they need it.

Assessment for learning is used:

- daily within class to identify children needing Keep-up support
- weekly in the Review lesson to assess gaps, address these immediately and secure fluency of GPCs, words and spellings.

Summative assessment is used:

- every six weeks to assess progress, to identify gaps in learning that need to be addressed, to identify any children needing additional support and to plan the Keep-up support that they need.
- by SLT and scrutinised through the *Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised* assessment tracker, to narrow attainment gaps between different groups of children and so that any additional support for teachers can be put into place.

## STATUTORY ASSESSMENT

Children in Year 1 sit the Phonics Screening Check. Any child not passing the check re-sits it in Year 2.

## ONGOING ASSESSMENT FOR CATCH-UP

Children in Year 2 to 6 are assessed through their teacher's ongoing formative assessment as well as through the half-termly *Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised* summative assessments.

Pupils attainment and progress in reading is recorded by teachers using Classroom Monitor to inform parents and future teaching and learning activities.

## HEALTH AND SAFETY

We enable all pupils to have access to the full range of activities involved in learning reading. Where children are to participate in activities outside the classroom, teachers should be aware of health and safety issues. Risk assessments are undertaken prior to activities, to ensure that they are safe and appropriate for all pupils. Further information can be found in the Health and Safety and Wellbeing Policy and Educational Visits Policy.

## SAFEGUARDING AND CHILD PROTECTION

We seek to safeguard children and young people by:

- valuing them, listening to them and respecting them;
- adopting child protection guidelines through procedures and a code of conduct for staff and volunteers;
- recruiting staff and volunteers safely, ensuring all necessary checks are made;
- sharing information about child protection and good practice with children, parents, staff and volunteers;
- sharing information about concerns, with agencies who need to know, and involving parents and children appropriately;

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- providing effective management for staff and volunteers through supervision, support and training.

See Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy for further information.

### **MONITORING AND REVIEW**

It is the responsibility of the subject leader:

- supports colleagues in their teaching, by keeping informed about current developments in reading and by providing a strategic lead and direction for this subject;
- to develop, implement and review an action plan for reading;
- to monitor reading throughout the school;
- to encourage staff to provide effective learning opportunities for all pupils;
- to develop valid activities, appropriate for children at different stages of development, which enable pupils to progress in the subject.

Monitoring of the standards of children's work and of the quality of teaching in reading is the responsibility of the reading subject leader. The work of the subject leader also involves supporting colleagues in their teaching, being informed about current developments in the subject, and providing a strategic lead and direction for the subject in the school.

This policy will be reviewed at least every three years.