

Reading Policy for St Nicholas Catholic Primary School

Introduction

At St Nicholas Catholic Primary School, we believe that reading is a fundamental part of every child's education. This Reading Policy outlines the purpose, aims, statutory requirements and practical approaches for delivering high-quality Reading education at St Nicholas. It is designed in accordance with the 2014 National Curriculum for English, Ofsted's Education Inspection Framework (EIF 2019), and statutory guidance including the Equality Act 2010, SEND Code of Practice 2015, and Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974.

We aim for every pupil to become a fluent, confident and enthusiastic reader who reads widely and often for both pleasure and information. Through reading, children develop academically, socially, morally and spiritually, while building the knowledge, vocabulary and cultural understanding they need for the next stage of their education and beyond. The policy ensures a positive, inclusive learning environment and is adaptable to the needs of all pupils, including those in mixed-age classes, supporting every child to develop the knowledge, skills, confidence and love of reading needed to become lifelong readers.

Reading is a main priority across the school. We provide a rich range of high-quality fiction, non-fiction and poetry and ensure that reading is taught explicitly, systematically and consistently from Reception to Year 6.

Aims

- Develop a positive attitude towards reading and a genuine love of books and literature.
- Develop the habit of reading widely and often, for pleasure and for information.
- Enable pupils to read easily, fluently, accurately and with good understanding.
- Teach secure phonics and decoding skills as the foundation for early reading.
- Develop vocabulary, language comprehension, inference, prediction, retrieval and other comprehension skills.
- Expose pupils to a rich and varied range of fiction, non-fiction and poetry.
- Develop pupils' knowledge of literature, the wider curriculum and the world around them.
- Enable pupils to discuss, evaluate and respond critically to what they read.
- Develop independence, stamina and confidence as readers.
- Ensure that all pupils, including those with SEND and those who need additional support, make strong progress in reading.

Statutory and Regulatory Framework

This policy is informed by and should be read alongside the following statutory and regulatory documents:

- National Curriculum in England: English programmes of study (2014), including the statutory programmes of study and attainment targets for English.
- Ofsted's Education Inspection Framework 2019 (EIF), particularly its expectations concerning the quality of education, curriculum, reading and pupils' development. The 2019 EIF is retained here because it is the framework specified in the school policy template; Ofsted introduced a renewed EIF for inspections from 10 November 2025.

- Equality Act 2010, including the requirement to avoid unlawful discrimination and to make reasonable adjustments where required.
- Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) Code of Practice: 0 to 25 years (2015), supporting an inclusive approach to identifying and meeting pupils' additional needs.
- Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974, alongside the school's wider health and safety procedures.

Curriculum Coverage

Our reading curriculum reflects the National Curriculum's two dimensions of reading: word reading and comprehension. These are taught alongside a strong emphasis on reading for pleasure, vocabulary development, discussion and the wider knowledge gained through reading.

- Phonics and early word reading.
- Fluency, accuracy, expression and reading stamina.
- Vocabulary and language development.
- Literal and inferential comprehension.
- Prediction, retrieval, summarising, sequencing and explanation.
- Understanding themes, characters, language, structure and authorial choices.
- Reading and discussing fiction, non-fiction and poetry.
- Reading across the curriculum to develop subject knowledge.
- Reading for pleasure, choice and independence.
- Oracy and discussion about texts.

Curriculum Implementation

Phonics and Early Reading

Read Write Inc. is taught from Reception as our systematic synthetic phonics programme. Children continue with Read Write Inc. until they are confident decoders and fluent readers, typically within Year 2. Pupils who require further support in Key Stage 2 receive additional daily Read Write Inc. intervention where appropriate.

Once pupils have developed secure decoding skills, teaching moves progressively towards structured whole-class reading and comprehension. The transition is carefully supported so that pupils continue to develop fluency while becoming increasingly independent and analytical readers.

Whole-Class Reading and Comprehension

Reading comprehension is explicitly taught through teacher modelling, guided discussion and carefully selected texts. Teachers model reading strategies and use questioning to develop understanding. Pupils encounter a broad range of fiction and non-fiction, alongside poetry, with texts selected from the school's Reading Spine and matched to year-group expectations.

Reading lessons develop pupils' ability to retrieve information, make inferences, explain vocabulary, predict, summarise, discuss themes and characters, and respond thoughtfully to what they read. Text complexity and challenge increase as pupils progress through the school.

Fluency

Fluency is explicitly taught from EYFS to Year 6. Pupils develop accuracy, automaticity, expression, intonation and stamina through repeated reading, teacher modelling, supported practice and opportunities to read aloud and independently.

Reading for Pleasure and Enrichment

A love of reading is central to our curriculum. Pupils have access to class libraries, the school's Lending Library and a wide range of age-appropriate and challenging texts. Reading is promoted through Book Club, Reading Cafés, author and poet visits, World Book Day, National Poetry Week, competitions, theatre visits, book awards and other enrichment opportunities.

In Key Stage 2, class libraries include texts identified within appropriate Lexile ranges to support independent choice and challenge. Pupils are encouraged to read daily at home and to develop broad reading interests.

Home-School Reading

In Key Stage 1, children take home books that reflect their developing phonics knowledge, alongside opportunities to enjoy familiar stories. The focus is on developing fluency, expression and confidence. In Key Stage 2, pupils read widely at home and are supported to select appropriate texts for their reading development and enjoyment. Parents and carers are encouraged to share books, discuss reading and celebrate reading as a positive part of family life.

Assessment

Assessment is used to identify strengths, gaps and next steps so that teaching and intervention can be responsive to pupils' needs.

- Daily formative assessment and assessment for learning within reading lessons.
- Read Write Inc. assessment approximately every six weeks.
- Testbase reading assessments termly in Years 2–6.
- Salford Reading Test assessment termly to monitor reading age and progress.
- National Phonics Screening Check preparation and follow-up support.
- Key Stage 2 practice and assessment activities to support readiness for statutory assessment.
- Targeted intervention for pupils who are not yet meeting expected standards, with particular attention to the lowest 20% of readers.

Roles and Responsibilities

Role	Responsibilities
Headteacher and Senior Leadership Team	Provide strategic leadership, ensure appropriate resources and staffing, and monitor the quality and impact of reading provision.
Reading Subject Leaders	Lead curriculum development; support staff; monitor planning, teaching, books and assessment; identify priorities; coordinate enrichment and contribute to whole-school improvement.
Class Teachers	Plan and teach high-quality reading lessons; assess pupils regularly; adapt teaching; promote reading for pleasure; maintain strong home-school links.
Teaching Assistants	Support reading through targeted intervention, guided practice and scaffolding, while promoting pupil independence.
Pupils	Engage positively with reading, read regularly, discuss texts and take

	increasing responsibility for their own reading choices and progress.
Parents and Carers	Support regular reading at home, discuss books and encourage a positive attitude towards reading.

Inclusion

We have high expectations for all pupils and aim to remove barriers to reading through appropriate scaffolding, explicit modelling and carefully planned support. Pupils work towards the same ambitious curriculum objectives wherever appropriate, with adaptations and personalised targets used to support access and progress.

- Pre-teaching and revisiting vocabulary.
- Explicit modelling, think-alouds and worked examples.
- Visual prompts, sentence starters and structured talk.
- Flexible grouping, adult support and targeted questioning.
- Repetition and revisiting of key knowledge and skills.
- Varied opportunities for pupils to demonstrate understanding.
- Diagnostic assessment and targeted intervention for pupils with SEND, EAL or other identified barriers.

A clear assess-plan-do-review approach where additional support is required. We work in partnership with the SENCO and families to ensure that pupils with additional needs receive appropriate support while developing independence and confidence as readers.

Professional Development

Staff development is informed by monitoring, assessment and identified curriculum priorities. Training and professional dialogue support staff in phonics, fluency, comprehension, vocabulary, questioning, adaptive teaching and reading for pleasure. Staff are expected to apply agreed whole-school approaches consistently.

Ofsted and Quality of Education Expectations

The school's reading provision reflects the principles set out in the National Curriculum and the expectations associated with high-quality reading education. The 2019 EIF emphasised the importance of rigorous reading provision, including early reading materials closely matched to pupils' phonics knowledge and opportunities for pupils to read widely, often, fluently and with comprehension. The school recognises that Ofsted's current EIF changed from November 2025. This policy nevertheless retains the 2019 EIF reference because it is part of the requested policy framework. The school will continue to respond to current Ofsted requirements and guidance as these develop.

Monitoring and Review

Reading is monitored through learning walks, book scrutiny, planning checks, assessment reviews, pupil voice and professional dialogue. Monitoring is used to evaluate consistency, curriculum coverage, progress and the impact of teaching and intervention.

The Reading Subject Leaders coordinate the monitoring cycle and report findings to senior leaders. Priorities identified through monitoring inform professional development and curriculum improvement.

This policy will be reviewed annually, or sooner if statutory guidance, national expectations or school priorities change.

Policy Review

Policy	Reading Policy
Academic Year	2026–2027
Subject Leaders	Francesca Hayden and Siobhan Doherty
Review Date	July 2027