

# Reading Policy

## Meir Heath Academy



**Approved by:** Mrs M Southern / Mr J Spencer **Date:** September 2021

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**Next review due by:** September 2022

*I opened a book and in I strode.  
Now nobody can find me.  
I've left my chair, my house, my road,  
My town and my world behind me.  
I'm wearing the cloak, I've slipped on the ring,  
I've swallowed the magic potion.  
I've fought with a dragon, dined with a king  
And dived in a bottomless ocean.  
I opened a book and made some friends.  
I shared their tears and laughter  
And followed their road with its bumps and bends  
To the happily ever after.  
I finished my book and out I came.  
The cloak can no longer hide me.  
My chair and my house are just the same,  
But I have a book inside me.” — **Julia Donaldson***

## **Introduction**

At Meir Heath we recognise that reading is a complex skill with many components but it is also the key to accessing the school curriculum and the wider world and therefore we ensure that reading has a high priority on a daily basis.

This policy has been agreed with staff to develop and establish a consistent whole school approach to the teaching of reading.

## **Aims**

This policy aims to ensure that pupils learn to read easily, fluently and with good understanding.

- At the beginning of the learning process this is achieved through teaching children phonics and the recognition of familiar printed words, including common exception words, so that children can develop skills for reading words. Understanding texts is developed through high quality discussions with the teacher during sessions reading to the whole class or a group of children, shared reading sessions and guided reading sessions as well as reading a wide range of texts across the curriculum.
- We also encourage children to develop an interest in, and a love of, books, through encouraging children to become attentive listeners and independent and reflective readers. This is achieved through immersing children in a reading culture, providing a wide range of text types and content and ensuring children are given opportunities to read for pleasure, for learning and for information.

## **A Reading Culture**

The school seeks to develop a reading culture so that all pupils perceive reading as desirable and useful. Children are encouraged to read fiction, non-fiction and poetry but we recognise that, like adults, children may have a favourite genre and when reading for pleasure may not *always* wish to be challenged but to enjoy their book in their own way.

There are opportunities for pupils to experience print around them through classroom notices, labels and signs. These are discussed with the children and take a variety of forms such as single words, phrases and complete sentences. In Early Years, texts form part of the continuous provision for the teaching of reading and can be linked to any area of the curriculum.

Reading is promoted in each classroom through an identifiable reading/library area that allows children to choose texts that are appropriate to their age and ability and to share “recommended reads” and book reviews with their class mates. Each class teacher shares a class novel with the pupils; on occasion teachers, visitors or authors read to other classes too as a “guest” reader.

We seek to promote the enjoyment of reading through taking part in events such as World Book Day. We also link an annual theatre visit to a text and use the text as a basis for a whole school learning theme. National Book Week is used to share reading with children beyond the teacher’s own class, to encourage families to carry out a wide range of recommended home/family holiday reading activities and challenges, the opportunity to dress as a book character, to invite parents in at the end of the school day to “Drop Everything And Read” with their own children and someone else’s etc. The school holds an annual Book fair so that children can enjoy the thrill of choosing a new book with their parents.

All adults act as good role models for children and model both reading aloud and silent reading.

### **School programme for the teaching of reading:**

The following programme has been agreed to ensure progression in reading throughout the school and a cohesive approach to the teaching of reading.

#### **Phonics**

All infant children are taught phonic skills through a daily Letters and Sounds lesson. This takes place through differentiated phonics groups within each year group, and on occasion across year groups. Children are ability/skill grouped for these lessons though the groups remain flexible to allow a child to progress where possible or to have more reinforcement where necessary.

EY and KS1 teachers send home information to parents to inform them of the sounds the children are learning and to request support for the re-enforcement of sounds identified during assessments so that the learning process is a partnership. Phonic activities are set as homework so that children can reinforce taught sounds at home. Parents are supported in the correct pronunciation of phonics through reading/phonics workshops.

KS2 pupils who do not pass the retake of the Y1 phonics test in Y2, or are not secure at phase 5 at the end of KS1 are tracked through KS2 to ensure appropriate provision for their needs. The teaching of phonics in KS2 is delivered in a single phonics group that KS2 children only attend when their own assessed needs are being taught. We recognise that some children will not use phonics as their main strategy to support reading and so where a child demonstrates secure reading and comprehension skills they will no longer access the KS2 phonic intervention.

The phonics co-ordinator ensures that children are assessed half termly and that this information is used to support teacher planning and the children's grouping. The phonics co-ordinator will report progress and areas of development to the leadership team and governors termly.

Pupils in KS2 follow the programme of spelling in Curriculum 2014 as part of their daily Grammar, Punctuation and Spelling session.

### **Guided Reading**

Each week, all children take part in focused Guided Reading in a group of 4-8 pupils led by the class teacher. All children have timetabled Guided Reading sessions with the teacher each week; some children will benefit from additional sessions led by a TA or the teacher. Where a child is learning to read they will have two sessions per week (one within the Guided Read carousel and one in intervention time), where a child is reading to learn they will have a minimum of one session per week.

In Early Years, Guided Reading begins when the teacher feels the children have reached the appropriate level of maturity and phonic skills. Children in Early Years also benefit from a daily whole class and/or group "shared reading" session where the conventions of reading are taught, the text discussed and pupil responses encouraged. Each day, the teacher puts out two books and the children are encouraged to vote for their favourite book on a daily basis by placing a counter in a pot next to their chosen book.

All Guided Reading sessions are based upon objectives linked to Curriculum 2014 or the EY Curriculum and these are recorded on the school's guided reading planning/record sheet. The school uses a scheme of work from 'The Teacher Hub', a local based Staffordshire business ran by Claire Hubbard who is a teacher, consultant and moderator for KS1 and KS2. The range of books covered is recorded on flipchart planning and in the teachers' "Guided Reading" folder.

At Meir Heath Academy, the guided reading structure is as follows:- (based on Claire Hubbard's Teacher Hub scheme)

Monday - Whole Class Reading (children are introduced to the new text/extract, new vocabulary, specific reading skills and the modelling of fluency).

Tuesday - Friday - The children have a four day caoursel. For example, group one would have Guided Reading with a teacher on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday would be a follow up to the extract on Monday and Friday would be a free choice in the reading area. During Guided Reading, the adult will record children's significant responses to the text. The texts chosen for Guided Reading are intended to challenge the children and are above the level of their scheme or independent book.

In September 2016 the school purchased a greater range of reading comprehensions that have been matched to pupil ability levels.

## **Shared Reading**

Shared Reading can take place in any lesson. This sometimes includes big books but more frequently texts are displayed on the Interactive White Board. During this time all children are expected to read as much as they can along with everyone else. This is an opportunity to teach or re-inforce reading conventions, to discuss the use of language and widen the children's vocabulary beyond the English lesson and to show how reading supports all areas of the curriculum. Children of any ability can be selected to read part of the text alone – this supports teacher assessment and ensures children understand that reading has a real purpose beyond a reading lesson.

Each class also has their own novel which staff share at the end of the day. In KS1, they continue the EYFS structure and have a choice of two books each day. The children vote for their favourite book. In KS2, the novels are topic based and are recommended texts.

## **Individual Reading**

All children will have at least one Individual reading book from the school's reading scheme (Bug Club - this is an online reading scheme but we also provide physical books for any parents or family members who request them). If children complete their scheme reader, they may also bring a book of their own choice from home with the agreement of their teacher or they are directed to the Meir Heath reading challenges which have been created for each term, the virtual reading library on the Meir Heath Academy website or a new allocated book on Bug Club online (the children can use their 1:1 iPads to read on too).

## **INFANTS**

**In Early Years**, children are heard to read individually at least once a week by school staff – this will be led by the teacher and/or the TA using the child's phonically decodable scheme books (in addition to their guided reading sessions). Children will also benefit from being heard to read by a range of volunteers.

Where children are not making expected progress or are not heard to read at home they are given additional daily reading opportunities through volunteers and Y6 reading buddies.

Children's books are changed twice a week by the teacher or TA unless further practice of the book is felt appropriate. Two physical books are sent home each time and two books allocated on Bug Club online, for parents to support reading at home, each of these is recorded in the child's school Reading Record and the parents complete the child's reading diary which is used as a liaison between parents and teachers. The reading diary is electronic as of 2021 and provided by 'GoRead'. Parents are expected to listen to their child read and ask questions about the book to check comprehension, making comments in the reading diary.

Each half term, for each child, teachers compare the level of their Guided Reading texts and scheme texts to ensure that both texts are at an appropriate level to secure challenge and progress. This is recorded in the teacher's guided reading folder.

The teacher monitors each child's progress through guided reading sessions and independent reading and sets targets based upon this. The targets are shared with parents and children through parent consultation meetings (recorded on the parent consultation information sheet).

Key Words/common exception words are also recorded and sent home systematically from Term 2 for additional practice.

## **Key Stage 1**

Pupils in KS1 mainly read from reading scheme books (Bug Club online or physical books) linked to their ability level. In recent years, the school has built upon the EY phonically decodable reading scheme for Y1 and Y2 and this is now supported by Bug Club online too. The children have a volunteer who changes their physical books on a weekly basis. Their electronic reading diaries are checked weekly to ensure that they are being heard to read at home. For pupils who are not heard to read at home or for pupils who are not making expected progress, teachers check their diary at the beginning of the guided read lesson. If there are no parent signatures, teachers will contact family members to discuss. Children will be expected to catch up on reading in their own time (lunch or break).

All children are heard to read individually by a member of staff, for the lower ability readers this is on a weekly basis, whilst for the more able pupils this is 2/3 times each half term. Lower ability readers are also heard to read by a range of volunteers and some children have a KS2 reading buddy.

In addition, the children take part in a guided reading at least once per week, or twice a week for those who are still at the beginning of their reading development.

Each half term, for each child, teachers compare the level of their guided reading texts and scheme texts to ensure that both texts are at an appropriate level to secure challenge and progress. This is recorded in the teacher's guided read file.

The teacher monitors each child's progress, mainly through guided reading, and sets targets based upon this. Targets for reading are set for each child and discussed and developed in the guided reading session each week. The targets are shared with parents and children through parent consultation meetings and recorded on the parent consultation information sheet)

Key Words/common exception words are also recorded and sent home for additional practice if needed.

KS1 also take home their own choice books from the class library to share with parents.

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### **Lower Key Stage 2**

In Y3 and 4, most children begin to read brown level (Y3) or grey level (Y4) on the Bug Club scheme readers (online or physical books). They are supported in their independent reading book choices and encouraged to choose books from within particular texts appropriate to their skills. When a book has been used for guided reading, it is made available to particular groups so that they can complete the book for pleasure.

Targets for reading are set for each child and discussed and developed in the guided reading session each week.

Children are encouraged to keep their own record of the independent books they read and to record whether their choice was fiction, non-fiction or poetry. Children complete this on GoRead using their own username and password. A member of staff checks this record weekly to ensure breadth and challenge in the children's reading choices.

Children are expected to make a short comment for a range of books once they have been finished, though this is not expected on every occasion – this can be part of guided reading carousel activity (free choice activity). Parents are expected to listen to their children read and discuss the text as homework, making comments in the electronic reading diary, these reading diaries are checked and signed by the class teacher on a weekly basis.

Opportunities for children to change their scheme reader books are given on a weekly basis. They have the opportunity to change their free choice daily.

### **Upper Key Stage 2**

In UKS2, the children will have a weekly scheme reader book from the Bug Club scheme (online or physical books). This is changed once a week by a volunteer if using physical books. Children are responsible for regularly changing their free choice reading books; this free choice book can be from home or school.

Each pupil is expected to keep a record of the books read and to comment upon some books, when completed, in their reading diaries. They use the electronic GoRead reading diary to log this information.

Reading diaries will be checked on a weekly basis by a member of staff. Targets for reading are set for each child and discussed and developed in the guided reading session each week. Whilst it is not expected that parents will *hear* their child read, daily 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 diary three times a week. If this is evident, the children will receive a class Dojo.

## **Reading Aloud**

There are opportunities planned for children to read aloud to a variety of audiences.

These could be through English work, guided reading, class assemblies or performances to audiences including the whole school and parents.

## **Library**

Each class has their own class library/reading area, which should be tidy, well organised and easily accessible. The school co-ordinates the non-fiction and poetry books so that each class can have a “refreshed” set of books each half term that match either the class topic or pupil requests/interests. Fiction books will be refreshed half termly through each class swapping books with their peer class. All children are entitled to take home class library books (their independent reading book) and make a note in their reading diary of when the book is taken and returned.

## **The Role of Teaching Assistant**

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 an English lesson, leading guided reading groups and hearing individual children read. Teaching Assistants can also run intervention reading programmes such as “Rapid”. All TAs trained to deliver “Boosting Reading Potential”.

## **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 and the class teacher will then select children who would benefit from the extra reading to an adult. The volunteer will be in charge of changing scheme reader books (Bug Club scheme) on a weekly basis. Volunteers will highlight the books children have read and returned, as well as highlighting any comments to the class teacher.

The class teacher is responsible for ensuring that the volunteer has the support needed to help them carry out the role effectively, particularly ensuring their understanding of the role of “phonics first” and the correct pronunciation of phonemes, when working with KS1.

## **Working In Partnership with Parents**

The teaching of reading is greatly helped if there is a strong communication and support from parents. The school GoRead Reading Diary is a way in which communication is easily achieved.

Reading information meetings are also held to advise parents on the reading strategies used in school and how best they may help their child at home.

## **Assessment and Record Keeping**

Children are assessed in line with the school’s assessment policy using a variety of means.

Reading is assessed by the teachers as part of guided reading (Afl) and through the use of SATs in Y2 and Y6, the Y1 phonics assessment, and Rising Stars Optional Tests (Y3, 4 and 5). Teacher assessments are moderated by the reading leader and have found to be accurate. If there are any misjudgements, the reading lead will discuss with the relevant class teacher.

The school uses a single commercial assessment as an additional tool for the assessment of reading (with a diagnostic aspect) to validate the teacher assessment and to ensure that the school can report progress to parents effectively and with meaning as the school no longer uses levels (since 2014). The assessment information is used to inform parents, to group children effectively for guided reading or to allocate scheme books and identify appropriate books for independent reading and to ensure that all groups of pupils are making progress or identify which pupils require intervention.



The data is shared with all staff and governors so that all staff have an overview of progress across the school and any areas of development are quickly identified by SLT.

### **SEN and Equal Opportunities**

Those children who as a result of test 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. Support for reading will form part of an IEP for children who are at the additional support level or have an EHC plan. Other intensive programmes may be used if the need arises.

Our policy is monitored to ensure that all pupils have equality of access to a range of reading opportunities and experiences so that all pupils achieve their best.