

Hallcroft Infant & Nursery School



Reading Policy May 2025

Introduction

At Hallcroft Infant and Nursery School, we believe that reading is a vital skill that will support children's learning throughout their schooling and future lives. The reason we developed our curriculum with such a strong emphasis on reading is reflected in the Michael Morpurgo quote:

"Reading is the one ability that, once set in motion, has the ability to feed itself, grow exponentially and provide a basis from which possibilities are limitless."

As a school, we ensure that our children are taught to read with fluency, accuracy and understanding through a variety of discreet and cross-curricular learning opportunities. Above all, we want children in our school to become enthusiastic, independent and reflective readers. Therefore, all staff promote and value reading as both an enjoyable activity and as a life skill.

This policy is a statement of the aims, principles and strategies for the teaching and learning of Reading at Hallcroft Infant and Nursery School. The policy should be read in conjunction with the 2021 Early Years Foundation Stage framework and the 2014 National Curriculum.

Aims

We aim to deliver a high quality reading curriculum that will give our pupils' the opportunity to:

- Develop a deep love and understanding of English literature and language.
- Use the reading skills that they have acquired effectively in a range of contexts.

Intention:

To fulfil our aims the children will:

- Gain the phonics knowledge and language comprehension necessary to read which will give them the foundations for future learning.
- Have developed a wide range of vocabulary which they use to understand texts and that they can use when speaking formally and informally.
- Become avid readers who can read fluently and widely and are able to express preferences and opinions about the texts that they have read.
- Read for pleasure and have had access to a wide range of texts, genres and authors.
- Have had early experiences of reading which will have been delivered in engaging ways to develop positive attitudes towards and a love of reading.

Implementation

At Hallcroft Infant and Nursery School we have developed a reading curriculum which develops the pupils' fluency, confidence and enjoyment in reading. The curriculum is designed to be rigorous and sequential which will ensure that all children make progress regardless of barriers and that any gaps in learning are addressed quickly and effectively.

The key elements of the reading curriculum include;

Phonics:

At Hallcroft, we teach phonics using a systematic and detailed phonics programme - Anima Phonics. All staff follow phonics planning to ensure that there is consistency and progression across year group classes. Children who are at risk of falling behind, including the lowest attaining 20% of children, receive extra practice to consolidate and master the content of Anima Phonics.

Reading Books:

In Nursery children are introduced to 'Our Ten Favourite Books'. These become familiar and known texts to the children which enables them to develop known story language, to feel confident and secure with books which is particularly important for our pupils who have not had these early reading experiences. From reception onwards reading books are available in each class.

These books are fully decodable and organised into phonic weeks so that the children read books that match the phonic sounds that they know.

These books include;

- Anima Phonic books
- Oxford Owl - Little Blending Book
- Phonics Bug
- Alphablocks
- Big Cat Phonics

The children will change their book once per week as they need to re-read their phonics book to develop fluency and understanding of the text.

All children will also take home a 'class book' which is to be read by the adult and shared with the child. These books are quality picture books which are to develop the children's love of reading. We plan in the future, when finances allow, to include "our ten favourite books" in these selections which will support children's confidence with reading experiences as these will be known stories.

Book Bands

Once the children have secured their phonic knowledge and completed the Anima phonics scheme they will then move onto books that have been organised into book bands. The children can choose from a selection of books within their book band. This is to encourage the children to make independent choices based upon their own interests and to develop an enjoyment of reading. The book bands also increase in difficulty so that the children develop stamina as they read longer and more complex texts.

Story Time

Each class experience regular 'story times'. Staff read with enthusiasm, sharing quality texts which develop vocabulary, understanding of language and support the making of 'sticky links' in subject knowledge. Children benefit from adults modelling intonation, expression and enjoyment of books.

Quality Class Texts:

Every half term, each class has 2 high quality texts (fiction and non-fiction) which are selected from age-appropriate recommended texts. The texts are linked to that half term's curriculum so that effective links can be made to the children's learning in the other areas of the curriculum. All the English work is planned and delivered through the context of the texts.

Whole Class Reading (KS1):

Reading is taught through a high quality text. The teacher models reading skills to the children, which are then practised and applied. The sessions focus on developing reading fluency, inference and knowledge of vocabulary. Children who are less confident with decoding benefit from these sessions as they enable them to access and enjoy texts which are beyond their reading levels.

Cross Curricular Texts:

Quality fiction and non-fiction texts that link to the term's curriculum are on display in every classroom. These support vocabulary skills, knowledge development and reading across the curriculum, as well as increasing cultural capital. These are identified by subject leaders for individual subjects.

School Events:

Each half-term every class holds a 'books and biscuits' event where parents are invited into school to share a book with their child and celebrate reading for pleasure. The school also celebrates National Poetry Day and World Book Day.

Reading Awards:

The school promotes reading at home through a reading award scheme. The children are expected to read a minimum of 4 times per week with an adult. The number of reads that the child reads are totted up each week and the children receive a prize when they reach each award; ranging from being front of the dinner line to hot chocolate in the staffroom.

Phonics Assessment:

The children are assessed using both formative and summative assessments at regular intervals which allow the teachers to target the children most at need. The children are assessed on the core skills of grapheme recognition, letter formation, word blending, oral segmenting and sentence-level reading. Practise phonics screens are completed half termly and results are shared with the Phonics Subject Leader. Towards the end of Year 1 all children will take part in the national phonics screening test. They will achieve either a pass or fail. If a child fails the screening test they will retake it in Year 2.

Reading Environment

All classrooms have inviting reading areas which children choose to use regularly. Books related to all curriculum subjects are on display and in early years books are part of continuous provision in all areas. All classrooms have phonics displays and phoneme mats are always available. All classes have a word aware display which promotes vocabulary development.

Resources/How to help at home

A variety of resources are used to support the teaching of reading and phonics both at home and at school. The school website - pupils can access games and activities related to reading/phonics via the school website. Parents are encouraged to support their child to read regularly and we reward this with our reading rewards.

Equal Opportunities

All children regardless of gender, age, creed, ethnicity, (or any protected characteristic) aptitude or ability have equal access to the range of activities and experiences offered in English.

Special Needs

All children will have access to all areas of reading and phonics. Children with SEND will be given adapted tasks, according to their individual needs and abilities.

Responsibilities and Review

All teaching staff have responsibility for implementing all aspects of this policy. The English Subject Leader has the role of monitoring reading and phonics through lesson drop ins, book scrutiny, planning scrutiny, discussions with pupils and teachers and environment walks.

English Policy updated by - Rachel Fisher

May 2025