Our mission is to **RECOGNISE** the original gifts of our young people, preparing them for **SERVICE** in the common good for the transformation of society and we aim for academic **EXCELLENCE** for all, for the sake of the dignity of the individual.

Together, through our words and actions, our work and play

We point towards Christ each and every day.

READING POLICY

"When they had read it, they rejoiced because of its encouragement" Acts 15:31

This policy has been approved and adopted by the Governing Body in January 2026 and will be reviewed in January 2029.

Signed by Chair of Governors: _____

Signed by Headteacher: C Whalley

Date	Reason & Changes Made	By
11/12/25	Review Cycle	Catherine Whatley Headteacher Kieran Balcombe English Lead
16/1/26	Review Cycle	Catherine Whatley Headteacher Kieran Balcombe English Lead

Mastery Approach to Reading

In alignment with the National Curriculum for English, we adopt a whole-school mastery approach to reading. This ensures that all pupils, from Reception onwards, are systematically equipped with the essential skills to become fluent, confident, and thoughtful readers. Our programme is carefully structured to guide children through each stage of the reading journey, building deep understanding and long-term retention.

High-quality texts are at the heart of our curriculum. Teachers deliver clear, detailed lesson sequences that promote purposeful and engaging reading experiences. Through mastery teaching, reading objectives are taught progressively and revisited regularly, enabling children to consolidate and apply their knowledge across a range of contexts.

We use shared reading to target individual fluency and comprehension, including skills such as inference and deduction. Shared reading lessons, delivered in whole-class and small-group formats, further support mastery by modelling reading strategies and deepening understanding of language-rich texts.

Children are taught to read aloud with confidence, using intonation, expression, and awareness of audience. These skills are developed through regular opportunities for structured talk, paired and group discussions, and thoughtful questioning. This oral rehearsal strengthens comprehension and supports children in articulating their ideas clearly.

Our mastery approach ensures that every child builds a secure foundation in reading, with the ability to decode, interpret, and enjoy texts independently. By embedding high expectations and consistent practise, we empower pupils to become lifelong readers who are ready for the next stage of their education.

The Three Strands of our Reading Curriculum

The Reading Classroom

Why is this important?

We believe that creating a culture of reading is a vital tool in ensuring our children are given the best life chances. Cultivating passion in our readers will ensure that their love of reading will extend far beyond the classroom and allow them to build on their skills independently through a real curiosity and thirst for knowledge.

Research has found that reading for pleasure can result in:

- increased empathy
- improved relationships with others
- reductions in the symptoms of depression and dementia,
- and improved wellbeing.

In addition to the health benefits, reading for pleasure has social benefits and can improve our sense of connectedness to the wider community. By increasing our understanding of our own identity, reading improves empathy and gives us an insight into the world view of others. Research has suggested that books can be viewed as 'windows', letting us into the lives of others, 'mirrors', reflecting our own experiences or 'sliding doors', allowing us to feel transported into the world inside. Thus, the books within our school community are chosen to represent everyone in our community and to expand children's knowledge of experiences other than their own.

What does this look like?

We believe it is essential that reading, directed and freely chosen, is an everyday part of our children's lives. Many exciting and rewarding activities are arranged in school to promote the pleasure and knowledge that can be gained from books:

- **Class texts:** These are chosen to be inspirational. Children are enthused, challenged and stimulated by what we read and use the ideas and techniques that we have experienced when reading to inform their own written work. These texts are carefully selected to offer children a wide and diverse reading journey across their primary school experience and their inclusion is annually reviewed.
- **Book Week:** Encompassing World Book Day, our book weeks are themed and involve special class, key stage and whole school activities throughout the week. Recent activities have included book-based treasure hunts and mysteries to solve; themed teamed book quizzes; character presentations and parades; book recycling stalls; classroom book portals; themed writing competitions.
- **Library liaison**: We work closely with the School Library Service to enhance the stock of our library and class collections. For each class, topic book loans are changed termly to stimulate and resource subject-related reading and research. Working with Andover Library we actively support their Summer Reading Challenge.
- **Performance:** We ensure that performance of the written word (including child-authored text, performance poetry and playscripts, prayers and campaign speeches) is regularly timetabled within class and also forms an important part of our school life through assemblies; meetings; elections; debates; liturgies; masses and drama productions in both key stages.
- **Author visits:** We arrange periodic author visits to both key stages. Some authors are invited independently; for others, especially those who go on to lead workshops with our children, we work with the SLS and team up with local schools.
- **Guest readers.** Family and friends of our pupils are warmly invited to read with our pupils in both key stages.
- **School librarians**. Candidates for librarianship are selected from Year 5, based on the quality of their applications for these high-status positions. Librarians work with the English leader and the LSA with library responsibility to maintain library systems: sort stock; peer conference and survey about reading; order new titles; promote and review; host authors; organise our annual book recycling for both key stages.

- **Reading ambassadors:** Candidates for this role are selected from Year 6, based on the quality of their applications as well as their passion for reading. These children support younger children throughout the year in their reading lessons as well as in additional roles, for example, in book week.
- **Literacy-rich environment.** As well as our library, each classroom has its own book collection and an area for sharing books. Here, a range of different genres of age-appropriate texts are cared for and organised. The space is accessible for children and comfortable for them to use, with display materials which are well maintained, inviting, age appropriate and include children's work.
- **Talk Through Stories.** Adopted in Reception and Year 1, Talk Through Stories is designed to close the language gap between children from different backgrounds by systematically teaching vocabulary and comprehension. By combining repeated exposure to high-quality stories with explicit teaching of words and meanings, it ensures children are better prepared to understand and enjoy the books they will later read independently.

<u>Shared Reading</u>

Why is this important?

Teachers model reading strategies during shared reading sessions, whilst children have the opportunity to develop reading strategies and to discuss texts in detail. Independent reading provides time for both assessment and 1-1 teaching. Daily discrete phonics lessons in EYFS and KS1 enable children to decode efficiently. This is continued into Year 2 and KS2 where necessary. A range of reading schemes are used to support early readers as well as book banded 'real books' used for guided reading. Learning Support Assistants support reading activities to ensure that children have more frequent opportunities to read with adults as well as our reading volunteers, who hear many children weekly.

What does this look like?

Shared reading is designed to help children become independent, confident readers who can understand and enjoy texts without relying on constant teacher support. The term *shared* reflects the collaborative nature of the experience, as the whole class engages with the same text and both children and adults take turns to read aloud. Texts are carefully chosen to match the reading level of the class, ensuring pupils can read with 90–94% accuracy and understanding. Where necessary, pre-teaching or additional adult support is provided to scaffold this accuracy.

Shared reading is structured across the week with four sessions: two short 15-minute lessons focused on fluency and delivery, and two comprehension lessons tailored to the skills needed at each stage of the curriculum. In fluency sessions, children practise reading aloud with accuracy, pace, and expression, often re-reading sections to build confidence and fluency. Comprehension sessions focus on specific skills such as clarify, retrieval, sequencing/summarising, inference, prediction, structure and organisation and language choice, with strategies including questioning, discussion, text marking, and note-taking. Books are carefully chosen to match reading levels, phonics knowledge, and curriculum focus, ensuring both accessibility and challenge. Planning ensures progression across sessions, with clear objectives linked to curriculum outcomes, while reading journals are used to record responses, track progress, and encourage reflection on both fluency and comprehension. This balanced structure supports children in developing technical reading skills alongside deeper understanding and enjoyment of texts.

Teachers select a diverse range of rich, whole texts across the year, both fiction and non-fiction, which are monitored to ensure balance, challenge, and breadth. These texts often act as stimuli for wider cross-curricular learning and must provide opportunities to apply current reading targets while offering enjoyment and interest. The teacher acts as the expert guide, highlighting key features of the text and modelling strategies. Over time, pupils themselves become the experts, making predictions, drawing inferences, and shaping their own ideas. Rich discussion is central to shared reading, with teachers using whole texts, extracts, and targeted questioning to develop comprehension skills.

Within shared reading sessions, the structured strategy of ruler reading is embedded to strengthen fluency and confident delivery. By tracking each line of text with a ruler, children are encouraged to maintain their place, reduce errors and hesitations, and read with accuracy, pace, and expression. This scaffold ensures progression is accessible and inclusive for all pupils, regardless of ability. Teachers first model ruler reading, demonstrating how to track text and read with intonation and expression. Pupils then take turns reading aloud, using a ruler to guide their eyes and maintain focus. Paired and small-group reading provides further opportunities for collaborative practice, while whole-class application ensures ruler reading is consistently embedded across the school.

This combined approach develops fluent readers who can decode and deliver text confidently, improves oral performance skills through intonation and expression, and prepares children for the demands of KS2 and beyond. By embedding shared reading and ruler reading within a mastery framework, the school ensures that reading skills are taught explicitly, revisited regularly, and applied across contexts, while also nurturing a culture of reading for pleasure.

In **KS1**, lessons are focused around the following skills:

Clarify vocabulary	Children use vocabulary provided by the teacher to understand books and discuss word meanings, linking new words to those they already know. They recognise repeating patterns of language, such as rhymes and predictable phrases, and identify key expressions in fairy stories and traditional tales, like “once upon a time.” With support, they pick out words that describe feelings or settings and notice phrases that signal sequence, such as “first,” “next,” or “suddenly.” As their skills grow, they copy words that show emotions, helping them understand how language conveys meaning.
Retrieval	Children use what they already know, or background information from the teacher, to help them understand books. They learn to identify main characters or subjects, talk about themes, and become familiar with key stories and traditional tales. As their skills grow, they begin to spot main events, answer simple retrieval questions, and ask their own questions about the text. These approaches build confidence in recalling details and discussing their favourite books or parts of stories, while showing their developing comprehension skills.
Sequencing/Summarising	Children are taught to sequence simple stories or events and to use this sequencing as a way of re-enacting and retelling what they have read. As they become more confident, they learn to identify the main events or key points in texts, recognising the most important parts of a narrative or non-fiction passage. Building on this, pupils begin to

	sequence a wider range of stories and events, using the order of ideas to support their retelling and re-enactment. This approach helps them to develop a secure understanding of structure, recall key details, and communicate their comprehension clearly and confidently.
Inference	Children are encouraged to think about why events happen in a story and why characters change, beginning to share their views and use evidence from the text to explain their ideas. With teacher support, they make simple deductions, such as noticing clues that show how a character is feeling. Pupils learn to infer what characters might be thinking or feeling, discuss reasons for events, and draw conclusions using evidence. They also explore how an author's choice of words creates mood, recognising how language can make a story funny, scary, or exciting, and in doing so develop a deeper understanding of how words shape meaning.
Prediction	Children are encouraged to make predictions as they read, using clues in the text to anticipate what might happen next. They discuss the blurb and title of a book to predict its content and direction, and as their confidence grows, they begin to suggest possible events, endings, and how characters might behave based on what they say, do, or how they appear. With increasing independence, pupils use their knowledge of fiction and non-fiction texts, including layout and structure, to predict how a text will develop. They are guided to make predictions from the setting described in the opening and to refine their ideas as the story unfolds. This helps them engage actively with texts, think critically about language and structure, and develop the habit of anticipating meaning as part of their comprehension skills.
Structure and Organisation	Children learn to distinguish between fiction and non-fiction texts, recognising their different purposes such as telling stories, recounting events, giving information, or providing instructions. They begin to understand how information texts are organised and use this knowledge when reading, while also learning terms that describe conventions of print like book, cover, page, word, and line. Pupils discuss titles of books and poems, compare layouts, and consider why texts are set out in particular ways. They practise using titles, contents pages, and illustrations to predict what a book might be about, and identify features that help locate information. Children also explore how punctuation and the alphabet support organisation, while recognising openings and closings of stories, labels, and titles, and discussing how the author helps them to understand and enjoy the text.
Language Choice	Children learn to recognise repeating patterns of language, such as rhymes and predictable phrases, and to identify key expressions in fairy stories and traditional tales, including openings like "once upon a time" or refrains such as "fee fi fo fum." They begin to notice how language creates mood or builds tension, commenting on words that

	make a text funny, scary, or exciting. Pupils are encouraged to explore the author's choice of words and how these affect the reader, while also picking out phrases that signal sequence or action, such as "first," "next," or "suddenly," to understand how language shapes the flow of a story.

In KS2, these skills are developed further:

Clarify vocabulary	Children understanding words in context means noticing how their meaning shifts within a passage. Dictionaries help clarify unfamiliar terms, while discussing vivid words and phrases deepens comprehension and sparks imagination. Together, these strategies build vocabulary and enrich reading.
Retrieval	Children learn the skills of asking and answering questions in texts, retrieving and recording information from non-fiction, and using features such as contents pages, indexes, headings, and illustrations to locate details. They practise skimming and scanning to extract both simple and complex information, make notes, and present findings clearly. Over time, they develop independence in planning what to research, using quotations to support ideas, and applying these information retrieval skills across the curriculum.
Sequencing/Summarising	Children learn the skills of identifying main ideas within a text or paragraph and summarising them. They practise skimming and scanning to locate key ideas, and develop strategies such as text marking and note taking to record and organise important information effectively.
Inference	Children learn the skills of discussing characters' actions, relationships, and dialogue, using evidence from the text to justify their views. They use clues from action, description, and language to infer motives, feelings, and perspectives, and empathise with different points of view. They identify themes and conventions across a wide range of books, recognise how characters change or challenge stereotypes, and explore how dialogue conveys plot, mood, humour, and relationships. Children also distinguish between fact and opinion, make deductions about author perspective, and analyse expressive language to build a fuller picture of characters and stories.
Prediction	Children learn the skills of making predictions from details stated and implied, considering settings, descriptive language, and small details to anticipate events and character behaviour. They practise looking for evidence of change in characters as a result of events, and adjust their predictions as stories unfold. By referring to the text to support opinions, children develop confidence in predicting across increasingly complex narratives, including those with flashbacks, multiple viewpoints, or parallel threads.

Structure and Organisation	Children learn the skills of identifying features of different non-fiction text types and using contents and index pages to locate information. They begin to understand how paragraphs group ideas and explore the structural devices authors use to organise texts. Children discuss vocabulary choices that convey mood, attitude, and meaning, and are taught technical terms such as metaphor, simile, analogy, imagery, style, and effect. They also describe and compare the styles of writers and poets, providing evidence, and comment on how language choices shape meaning across a range of non-fiction texts.
Language Choice	Children learn the skills of analysing how key words and phrases build mood, tension, and atmosphere, and comment on the overall effect of a text. In poetry, they explore word choices, rhyme, alliteration, similes, and expressive language to understand how sound and imagery create meaning. They identify an author's or poet's purpose, viewpoint, and style, comparing how different writers convey ideas and how style is shaped by audience. Children interpret poems to uncover shades of meaning, discuss themes and conventions, and recognise how narrators can shift or be manipulated. They also justify personal preferences for authors, poets, or text types, using evidence to support their views.

Home-School Reading

Why is this important?

Developing strong links between home and school reading is vital in ensuring children become lifelong readers. The school will support parental engagement with their child's reading by ensuring that appropriate texts are sent home regularly for both independent reading and books to be read aloud. Communication between parent, teacher/LSA and child takes place via the reading journal.

What does this look like?

School home reading involves children taking home books that are carefully matched to their phonics learning and reading level, ensuring they can practise sounds taught in class while also enjoying a variety of texts to foster a love of reading. Re-reading the same book helps build accuracy, fluency, and comprehension, while home–school communication is supported through reading records. Teachers regularly assess decoding, fluency, and understanding, and when children show confidence and consistency, they move up to the next level. This approach combines phonics practice, enjoyment of stories, strong communication, and ongoing assessment to support steady progress in reading.

The library is thoughtfully designed, well-stocked and organised, with an appointed staff librarian and a pupil librarian team, and all classes are able to visit, with KS2 pupils doing so independently.

Children in EYFS/Year R take home a record book from school where parents are encouraged to read the book with their child and then record what book they have read and how they have got on. This facilitates teacher-parent communication.

In KS1 children take home a levelled book according to their current attainment and matched to their phonics learning. In addition to this, children have the opportunity to choose a book from the class library. Each child has a home-school reading journal that teachers and parents can use to share information about reading attitude, preference, confidence and progress. Parents are encouraged to read with their child daily, for a minimum of 15 minutes.

Reading messages form a key part of the start of year welcome workshop for each year group, as well as letters sent home and progress discussions and reports from the class teachers.

The expectation of regular home reading is maintained in KS2, although children themselves may take over the practice of recording reading in their home-school reading journal. In KS2, children choose books to take home and read at the class teacher's discretion. These books are chosen from the school library or class collections and correspond to the child's ZPD as tested within the Accelerated Reader programme. (See Appendix 1.2 Accelerated Reader at SJB). From Year 3, children are taught library skills to make informed book selections. In Year 3 we have a selection of banded books to support appropriate text choices. Those children who still require a more structured approach to reading have access to banded books from a range of reading schemes. These help the children to continue to grow in confidence as readers, being texts with an interest level which matches their age group. Progress in decoding and comprehension is measured against the key performance indicators.

Throughout KS2, we still actively encourage all readers to share a book at home with their adults. We believe that this not only helps to develop inference skills, but also supports a lifelong love of reading. We recognise the value of adults (both in school and at home) reading aloud to children, to improve their grasp of story language, enthuse them with a love of books and inspire them as writers.

Assessment

Reading is assessed through a combination of structured programmes and ongoing teacher observation. In KS1, children's progress is tracked using a benchmarking toolkit, which helps match them to appropriate reading levels and monitor accuracy, fluency, and comprehension. In KS2, the Accelerated Reader programme supports independent reading by guiding children to books suited to their age and ability; after finishing each book, they complete quizzes that check understanding and allow them to move up levels as they progress. Alongside these systems, teachers use daily summative assessment framework, observing, questioning, and giving feedback during lessons and formative assessment to track and ensure children are consistently supported and challenged in their reading development