

# Talbot Primary School



## Reading Policy

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**Next review: June 2027**

*Office use:*

|               |   |
|---------------|---|
| Statutory     | - |
| Web           | ✓ |
| Staff Notices | ✓ |

## **Reading Policy for Talbot Primary School**

### **Rationale**

At Talbot Primary School, we are passionate about reading and believe that every child is a reader. Through reading, children have an enhanced understanding of the world around them and are exposed to new ideas, cultures and times. Our role is to ensure that all children have access to high-quality teaching, resources and enriching environments and, as educators, we are enthusiastic role models for reading.

At Talbot, we see reading as a journey, where children build their knowledge year on year. Phonics is the bedrock of being a fluent, engaged and accurate reader; therefore, it is taught systematically throughout Early Years and Key Stage One. This highly structured approach ensures all children have the tools to read and decode words, enabling them to access and enjoy the wealth of books on offer. No child is left behind, with additional support provided where needed, including into Key Stage Two. Comprehension skills are taught discretely through reading practice sessions in Reception and Key Stage One and through Guided Reading sessions in Key Stage Two. This helps pupils to gain a deeper understanding of texts, and allows for the opportunity to discuss their views and preferences meaningfully.

We believe that reading is an action sport, whereby pupils are actively engaged with the text. Children are taught the skills required to access texts at a deeper level by using their background knowledge, visualisation and prediction skills, and resolving meaning breakdowns. These skills are planned for and are built upon and revisited throughout each year and across year groups, at an increasingly sophisticated level. Ultimately, reading enables children to bring learning to life and supports them in accessing a deeper level of subject specific knowledge and vocabulary, across a range of subjects. As such, texts are carefully chosen to ensure key vocabulary and concepts are taught and embedded across the curriculum. Formative assessment underpins the planning, teaching and learning cycles in reading, enabling teachers to immediately intervene in the learning process. Statutory reading assessments are completed in the relevant year groups. Other year groups use age standardised test materials on a termly basis. By the time children leave Talbot, they are confident, engaged and articulate readers, who understand that reading is an activity to be enjoyed. Children are equipped to continue their learning journey at high school and beyond.

### **Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to describe our practice in reading and phonics and the principles on which this is based.

### **Aims**

Talbot Primary School is an inclusive, friendly community school, striving for excellence and enjoyment. Children will leave our school as kind, confident and resilient citizens with a passion for learning. The teaching and learning of reading supports this ambition. The policy for reading helps to deliver the four areas outlined in our curriculum vision: be ready and able, get creative and get thinking, aim high, and invest in “you.” This policy focuses on the role of the Subject Leader, and it describes how the approach to reading is adapted to make it distinctive to Talbot Primary School.

### **Consultation**

The policy was written by the Reading Lead, in consultation with the Leadership team, the Reading Engagement and KS2 Reading Lead and Governing Board.

### **Roles and responsibilities**

The subject leaders, in conjunction with the Leadership team are responsible for:

1. Reading Curriculum development and coverage
2. Staff training and development
3. Assessing the impact of teaching and learning on pupil progress and standards, through ongoing monitoring and evaluation
4. Ensuring that the subject has a strong profile across school, and it is given the time and space necessary in the curriculum
5. Teachers are well trained and continually develop their own skills and subject knowledge, identifying their needs and notifying the Reading leader of any support needed
6. Support staff are well trained and integral to the delivery and assessment of reading and phonics across school, with the reading team delivering bespoke training and ongoing monitoring and evaluation
7. All stakeholders work together to ensure the implementation of the reading policy

### **Teaching and Learning**

#### **1. Phonics and Early Reading**

Phonics is a method of teaching children how to read and write. It helps children to hear, identify and use different sounds that distinguish one word from another in the English language. Phonics is the bedrock of reading and is taught through a systematic synthetic phonics programme called **Little Wandle Letters and Sounds revised**.

#### **Phonics Programme overview**

- In **Nursery**, children focus on developing Phase 1 of Letters and Sounds, focusing on 7 different aspects:
  - Aspect 1 – General sound discrimination – environmental
  - Aspect 2 – General sound discrimination – instrumental sounds
  - Aspect 3 – General sound discrimination – body percussion
  - Aspect 4 – Rhythm and rhyme
  - Aspect 5 – Alliteration
  - Aspect 6 – Voice sounds
  - Aspect 7 – Oral blending and segmenting

In the Summer term, small groups of N2 children, are introduced to the start of Phase 2 phonics where appropriate.

- In **Reception and Year One**, children follow the Little Wandle Letters and Sounds revised phonics programme. This is a carefully structured DfE accredited systematic synthetic phonics programme, designed for all children to succeed. Children have daily phonics sessions and have access to Little Wandle reading practice books, which are organised according to phases, to ensure that the texts that they read are at the right level of challenge and contain only the sounds and words that they have been taught. (**See appendix 1** for an overview of the phonics programme in Reception and Year One). During the Autumn term, children in Reception revisit Phase 1 phonics alongside the Phase 2 teaching sequence as outlined on the Little Wandle Letters and Sounds revised programme. Children in Year One consolidate Phase 3 and 4 phonics in support of their transition from the Early Years Foundation Stage into Key Stage One. This follows the agreed teaching sequence as outlined on the Little Wandle Letters and Sounds revised programme.
- In **Year Two**, children consolidate their phonics in the Autumn term, using the Little Wandle Letters and Sounds programme, as outlined on the updated Year Two programme of study,

before moving onto a bespoke phonics and spelling programme, covering the Year Two English Programme of study. Once children have reached the expected level in phonics, they read other Phase 5+ reading practice books in Guided Reading sessions to consolidate knowledge and skills, broaden understanding and develop fluency and comprehension. Children also have access to a library-style selection of reading books, that they can choose from independently, to read at home. We encourage children to read a range of texts, both fiction and non-fiction, including poetry, plays and graphic novels.

- In **Lower Key Stage Two**, once children are confident, fluent readers and have achieved the expected standard in reading, they can follow their interests and choose their own books from the library-style selection of reading scheme books. Children are supported in this by teachers to ensure they choose the appropriate level and range of texts. A classic collection of texts is also available for children to access in Year Five, exposing them to a broader range of texts and helping to bridge the gap between the reading scheme and free reading in the Key Stage Two library.
- Any child who needs additional practise has regular keep-up support, led by a fully-trained adult. Sessions are broken into smaller steps, with more repetition, to embed their learning. Any child in Year Two or Three who is not fluent when reading an age-appropriate text or has not passed the Phonics Screening Check, receives small group or individual support, according to their need. This is vital to close the gap. We use the Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised assessments to identify the gaps in their phonics knowledge and teach to these using the recommended keep-up resources. If any child in Year Three to Six has gaps in their phonics knowledge when reading, phonics 'catch-up' lessons are delivered, in order to address specific gaps via small group or individual support sessions. Parents are actively engaged and supported to help children at home with phonics and reading fluency.

### **Phonics delivery**

- Phonics lessons are delivered daily in Reception and Key Stage One, with planning structured to ensure that children have the opportunity to review, learn, practise and apply their learning. Year groups work closely to ensure that there is consistency and progression in planning, practice and provision, both within and across each phase.
- Opportunities for children to apply their phonics knowledge and skills, both when reading and writing, are planned for and reinforced through areas of provision in Early Years. This practice applies to the Year One continuous provision during the Autumn and Spring terms. In Nursery, this includes opportunities for children to develop their phonemic awareness, listening to and creating different sounds through adult-led carpet sessions and within the areas of provision.
- In addition to phonics lessons, Reception and Year One children engage in reading practice sessions each week, reading the same book 3 times to embed vocabulary and develop fluency and comprehension:  
Session 1- Focusing on phonics and decoding  
Session 2- Focusing on developing prosody (fluency)  
Session 3- Focusing on building understanding and comprehension skills
- Children also take home a 'reading together' book from the library to share with their adults at home.
- Pupils in Year Two undertake the same reading practice sessions during the Autumn and Spring terms, before accessing Guided Reading in conjunction with Key Stage Two.

### **Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)**

- All children have access to high quality phonics teaching in Reception, Year One and Year Two. Children with additional **SEND** may have the structure or resources adapted to meet their individual needs.

- Small group or individual catch-up sessions are also planned for, to meet the individual needs of children and ensure progress.

### **Phonics Assessment**

- Ongoing formative, assessment for learning is integral to the teaching of phonics and is used within lessons to assess progress within and across phonics lessons. Pupils falling behind are then supported with additional support within class or in small groups or individually.
- Regular summative assessments take place each half term and are built into the teaching and learning cycle to assess progress in grapheme and word recognition and blending skills. Assessments are used to ascertain progress and to inform teaching and learning. This is shared with the Reading Lead and Senior Leadership Team during termly pupil progress meetings.

## **2. Reading comprehension, vocabulary and fluency**

### **Approaches and strategies**

- Repeated reads: Children in Reception and Year One have specifically chosen class readers, which are repeated over the week, to develop the understanding of story structure and language, and to broaden vocabulary.
- Reading comprehension, vocabulary and fluency is at the heart of reading. This is primarily taught through reading practice sessions in Reception and Year One, and through Guided Reading lessons in Year Two to Year Six. Children are explicitly taught key skills to enable them to access the text in a structured, impactful way.
- Guided Reading units are planned over two-week blocks, during which two linked texts are studied. This aligns with the two-week English planning cycle, enabling purposeful links to be made and supporting the consolidation of learning. As a result, learning is more meaningful and builds on pupils' prior knowledge.
- The teaching of fluency, vocabulary and comprehension skills remain at the heart of the lessons.

### **Guided Reading two-week cycle in Lower Key Stage Two**

**Week 1:** The teacher will introduce an extract or text, and explicitly teach vocabulary to support children's understanding of text-specific vocabulary. The teacher will model carefully chosen reading skills to the whole class to support children's reading comprehension. This is based on the 'Read Aloud Think Aloud' strategies:

1. **Using background knowledge:** This includes book to self, book to world and book to book
2. **Key vocabulary:** Identifying, explaining and using unusual/ topic-specific vocabulary
3. **Asking questions and predicting:** Engaging children in asking, 'I wonder...' questions about the text and using clues to predict events
4. **Inference:** Children are taught strategies to infer meaning from the text
5. **Meaning breakdown:** Pupils are taught strategies to resolve breakdowns in understanding

Fluency (prosody) is a key element to comprehension. Children are taught the different elements required for fluent reading: phrasing, expression, accuracy and rate, and this is modelled to the class or group. Paired reading is used to support and develop fluency within Guided Reading sessions.

**Week 2:** Children independently apply these skills on different, linked texts, enabling teachers to focus on supporting and assessing key groups and addressing gaps in knowledge, skills or understanding.

## **Reciprocal Reading in Upper Key Stage Two**

In Year Five and Six, children apply Reciprocal Reading principles within their Guided Reading sessions. This approach allows them to practise a range of key comprehension skills within a single lesson, including:

1. **Activating prior knowledge**
2. **Predicting:** Using textual features, such as titles, headings and opening sentences to anticipate upcoming content.
3. **Clarifying:** Identifying areas of uncertainty, including unfamiliar vocabulary and complex ideas, to secure understanding.
4. **Questioning:** Generating and responding to questions about the text in order to check understanding and deepen comprehension.
5. **Summarising:** Identifying and articulating the main ideas and key details of a text in their own words.

These strategies are explicitly modelled by the class teacher in the first instance. This ensures that pupils are supported to rehearse and apply these skills independently with increasing confidence, building on prior learning and skills over time.

## **Planning**

The Subject Leader, with support from the reading team, is responsible for ensuring that the National Curriculum objectives for reading are planned for and taught thoroughly and systematically over seven years, ensuring vertical progression of the core knowledge and skills. Teachers ensure that objectives have been organised and adapted to match the needs and context of pupils at Talbot Primary School. They work collaboratively, supporting the robustness of learning and consistency across parallel classes. Leaders ensure standards remain high through monitoring, assessment review and pupil interviews. (See **Appendix 2** for an overview of the reading skills progression).

## **Assessment**

Class teachers are responsible for the direct assessment of reading. The bedrock of sound assessment is formative techniques, which reveal pupils understanding and allow teachers to respond to needs immediately. Formative assessments also facilitate timely adaptations to the planning and teaching of reading. Year groups assess pupils against the body of knowledge and skills they are expected to have learnt, in alignment with the National Curriculum, each term. The data is collected and analysed using Sonar. Performance in lessons is the main way pupils are assessed. Fluency (prosody) is assessed on a termly basis from Year Two to Year Six against age-related texts. Any child who is not yet achieving an appropriate level of fluency is supported either through whole-class teaching, in a small group or individually with a familiar adult.

## **Whole school teaching and learning approaches:**

Delivery and impact of learning in reading is fundamentally supported by the three whole-school, teaching and learning approaches, which underpin Talbot's unique teaching and learning philosophy. These are:

- Teaching through Metacognition, so pupils better understand the learning process
- Fostering a Growth Mindset approach to learning to develop learning characteristics
- Using Talk Matters strategies to ensure every child talks in every lesson, thereby building and developing their mastery of subject-specific language

### **3. A broad and diverse Reading Curriculum**

Children have access to a diverse range of high-quality texts across their time at Talbot Primary School. These develop in complexity and sophistication over time and are mapped out across year groups and phases. This includes books that:

- Form the basis of the English and Guided Reading lessons
- Support repeated reading in Reception and Year One
- Act as companion texts that support a specific genre or author focus
- Support the wider curriculum by stimulating learning, developing vocabulary and promoting engagement across the Connected Curriculum
- Provide opportunities for children to listen to high-quality texts through class readers

(See **Appendix 3** for an overview of the Reading curriculum progression (Reading Spine). This is regularly reviewed and updated to ensure relevance and diversity).

### **4. Reading for pleasure and engagement opportunities**

Reading for pleasure is an integral part of our approach to reading. Instilling a love of reading and building in opportunities to read for enjoyment, and to celebrate reading, is vital to engaging pupils and fostering a lifelong love of reading. Resources and opportunities to support this include, but are not limited to:

- Lunchtime Reading clubs in Key Stage Two and Year Two
- Weekly access to KS1 and KS2 libraries with Junior librarians supporting children in KS2
- Reading corners in every classroom that are standardised to reflect current authors or genres taught
- Assemblies based on stories and reading for pleasure
- High quality curriculum books to support and enrich the curriculum
- Reading volunteers
- Parental engagement opportunities including secret readers, relax and read sessions in Early Years and reading breakfasts in Key Stage One and Key Stage Two
- Class readers are used to enable children to listen to high-quality texts that extend beyond their independent reading ability, and engage in a shared experience
- Annual themed World Book Day activities
- Annual Scholastic book fair
- Workshops, author visits and trips to local libraries/ theatres
- Recommended reading lists are updated annually in line with the agreed school format and are shared with parents and carers to support reading-at home. These lists include a range of inclusive texts across a variety of text type and genres.

### **Special Educational Needs and Disabilities**

All pupils are expected to make good progress in reading. Teachers are aware of the differing needs of individuals in their class. Children who have identified special needs are planned for carefully by the class teacher, in conjunction with the SENDCO, with individual programmes, including Little Wandle phonics catch up programmes/Active Literacy Kit delivered by a trained member of staff. There is a shared expectation that children with additional needs are provided with the appropriate support to access challenging learning, enabling progress from their starting points. Pupils identified with SEND are assessed in reading using Stages not Ages, the Early Years Developmental Journal and the Little Wandle sounds assessments to support their early reading attainment.

### **Equal opportunities**

Talbot Primary School is an advocate of equal opportunities. Our values are set out in the Equal Opportunities Policy.

### **Monitoring and review**

The Subject Leader and the reading team are responsible for implementing and monitoring this policy. This includes monitoring planning, books and teaching and learning. Their work will be subject to annual review by the Head Teacher, as part of the on-going Performance Management arrangements. The subject is also reviewed annually, by a named Governor; their findings are shared in subsequent Local Governing Board meetings.

- Regular monitoring of all aspects of reading and phonics informs the subject leader and, in turn, the School Improvement Plan.
- The subject leader is responsible for supporting colleagues in the teaching of reading, for being informed about current developments in the subject and for providing a strategic lead and direction for the subject in the school.

### **Other documents and appendices**

In addition to the reading policy, the following documents support the teaching of phonics and reading skills across school.

The policy will be reviewed by the reading leader, reading team, leadership team and governors at agreed intervals (see cover sheet). Alterations will be shared with all stakeholders.

Appendix 1 Phonics: [Little Wandle progression](#)

Appendix 2 [Reading skills progression](#)

Appendix 3 [Whole school reading spine – see link](#)