



Excalibur Primary School

Reading

Intent, Impact and Implementation

Reading Intent

At Excalibur Primary School, we believe that reading is an essential life skill; it is integral to a child's understanding and appreciation of the world around them; a platform that allows our children to see beyond what they know, share in cultural experiences and develop the vocabulary they need to effectively express themselves. We are committed to enabling our children to become lifelong readers.

We recognise the importance of taking a consistent whole school approach to the teaching of reading in order to close any gaps and to target the highest possible number of children attaining the expected standard or higher. At the heart of our strategy is our drive to foster a love of reading, enriching children's learning through carefully designed teaching activities that utilise imaginative stories and thought provoking texts.

Our curriculum is delivered through synthetic phonics, a linked approach to shared and guided reading, home reading, reading across the curriculum, regular opportunities for independent reading and hearing quality texts read aloud every day. All of these are essential components as they offer the range of opportunities needed to develop fluent, enthusiastic and critical readers.

We have high expectations of all children regardless of background. A "can do" ethos permeates all our teaching. We encourage children to challenge themselves and be resilient, resourceful learners.

Early Reading and Phonics

Intent

Synthetic phonics is the first formal method for the teaching of reading that we use as it provides the foundations required to become a fluent reader. We understand that once children are able to decode fluently, the teaching of comprehension is quicker and more effective as they are able to focus all of their attention to understanding what they read. Daily, fast paced, highly interactive and challenging lessons ensure effective learning and progress.

Implementation

At Excalibur Primary School, we use a synthetic phonics programme called 'Read Write Inc' produced by Ruth Miskin. Children are taught the graphemes and their corresponding phonemes in the order set out in the scheme, in small groups based upon their phonics needs. This begins with the simplest sounds first and progresses systematically through to the most complex combinations of letters. In each session, there is a review of prior learning through the quick recognition of previously learned graphemes/ phonemes and the skills of blending and segmenting are modelled by the practitioner, recapped collaboratively and practised individually in the contexts of reading and writing words, captions and, where



appropriate, sentences. Our phonics teaching is linked to books through whole class reading using big books, shared and guided reading and, where necessary, one to one reading sessions in which the children read phonically decodable texts. This ensures that the children understand the purpose of their phonics learning as they are able to apply their learning in a meaningful manner.

All children in Reception, KS1 and, where necessary, KS2 have daily phonics sessions in small ability groups. The teachers draw upon observations and continuous assessment to ensure children are stretched and challenged and to identify children who may need additional support. Timely intervention is planned for those children who are working below expected levels as soon as their needs are identified.

We recognise that systematic, high quality phonics teaching is essential, but additional skills and opportunities are needed for children to achieve the goal of being a well-rounded reader, namely comprehension. In conjunction with the Read, Write, Inc phonics programme, reading in Foundation stage and Key Stage 1 is developed during guided reading, using high quality texts and focused skill teaching. Strong links are made between reading and writing. Children read and enjoy high quality fiction and non-fiction texts, which, where possible, are linked to their topics across the curriculum. All children read aloud daily during phonics or guided reading; in addition to this, they read at least once more a week with teachers, teaching assistants and reading volunteers; the focus being on the lowest 20%.

Reading books in EYFS and Year 1 are:

- matched to phonic knowledge and do not require use of alternative strategies e.g. whole-word recognition and/or cues from context, grammar, or pictures.
- are closely matched to the programme used;
- are fully decodable at child's current level and do not simply practise phoneme(s) most recently taught
- are not mixed with non-decodable books for independent reading practice
- include a controlled, small number of 'tricky words' the decoding of which has been specifically taught
- are continued in progressive sequence until a child can confidently decode words involving most common grapheme representations of all phonemes.

Children working on the RWI programme take home a 'book bag book' matched directly to their current phonics level; they are also encouraged to choose an additional book to share with their family at home.

Impact

Children's progress in phonics is continually reviewed through periodic phonic assessments and evidence from their reading and writing. Through these, teachers identify the graphemes that need to be addressed which then informs groupings. In June, the national



Phonics Screening Check is undertaken to confirm that the children have learned to decode to an age appropriate standard and determines what level of provision they will require the following year. In Key Stage One, regular assessment of the children's decoding and comprehension is undertaken through Benchmarking.

Our 2018/2019 data showed 90% of our Reception children achieving EXP or above in reading. In the same year, 83% of our Year 1 children achieved the necessary level in the Phonics Screening check.

Whole Class and Guided Reading

Intent

Throughout Key Stages One and Two, our whole class and guided reading sessions balance the teaching of reading between word reading, wider decoding skills, grammar for reading, wider comprehension strategies and response to text in order to develop fluent readers who understand what they are reading. Comprehension is taught from an early age to prevent comprehension difficulties arising as the language demand of the texts they encounter increases. We believe that it is important that children read for meaning because not only does a lack of comprehension create a barrier to educational attainment but also because children who understand meaning are more likely to be motivated readers.

Implementation

In Key stage 1 and 2, whole class and guided reading are taught routinely and effectively through the scheme "Pathways to Read". Within this, a key skill focus is modelled by the teacher in whole class reading which is then practised by the children in a series of subsequent guided reading sessions. In whole class shared reading, a rich, challenging text is used by the teacher to explicitly model the key skill. Children are then given the opportunity to apply the skill in pairs, discussing their application of the strategy. In group guided reading, the teacher works with each ability group in turn, reiterating the taught focus, listening to each child independently read a text at instructional level and assisting them in applying the focus. The key skills focussed on in these sessions cover the objectives set out in the National Curriculum as well as the strategies that evidence based educational research has found make a good reader. Progression is ensured through the strategic planning of reading across the school and through the pitch of texts used for whole class and guided reading.

In addition to the Pathways to Read programme, a carefully selected quality text which, where possible, is linked to the topic being studied, drives the teaching in English sessions. Through this, children are immersed in high quality literature which extends their vocabulary, breadth of reading and cultural capital.



At Excalibur Primary School, we recognise the importance of developing a rich and extensive bank of vocabulary; therefore, we discreetly teach vocabulary directly linked to the text during every phonics and guided reading session. This is reinforced daily during sessions, ensuring new vocabulary is embedded.

Impact

Progression statements are used for assessing children's reading. Reading judgements are secured through the triangulation of test data, evidence from the child and the curriculum. Our test data comes from NFER, SATs papers and Accelerated Reader – both from AR test outcomes and the termly Star Reader tests. Evidence from the child is through their RWI benchmark book level and teacher observation. Finally, evidence from the curriculum is gathered from the children's English books and guided reading notes. Through termly pupil progress meetings, children who are falling behind or experiencing difficulties with reading are quickly identified and intervention programmes are initiated according to needs.

Reading for Pleasure and Home Reading

Intent

It is important that children are motivated to read for pleasure both at school and at home. When children's reading miles increase, so does their fluency and stamina which in turn increases their enjoyment of reading. At Excalibur Primary School, we believe that reading for pleasure is beneficial, not only for not only reading outcomes, but for wider learning enjoyment and mental wellbeing. As a consequence, we work hard to foster a love of independent reading and build communities of engaged readers. We understand the significance of parents and carers in supporting their children to develop both word reading and comprehension skills so we endeavour to build a home-school partnership which enables parents and carers to have the confidence to support their children with reading at home.

Implementation

Our recently renovated library allows children to immerse themselves in the wonderful world of books. It is stocked with an attractive range of fiction and non-fiction to support every ability and reading choice and encompass the latest reading trends and classic texts that should be part of every child's primary school experience, building the children's cultural capital. We have taken measures to ensure that the books our children can choose to read independently are diverse.

Our classrooms reflect our drive to promote reading in our school, offering a wide selection of reading material and are designed to engage children in genre and theme in order to help them make more informed and adventurous choices when choosing their own books. Our children are actively encouraged to draw comparisons between the books and authors they have read, both in class and independently.



The frequent reading aloud of good quality picture books, short stories, chapter books, poetry and non-fiction is part of our whole school routine and there is dedicated curriculum time for this. All classes are exposed to a daily class read, for pleasure, to excite and engage the children, and to expose them to new and varied vocabulary. All books shared with children are age appropriate and matched to the level of the class/individual.

Accelerated reader is embedded in our school practice. Dedicated time is given programme during which our children are able to make choices about the books they read at a level appropriate to them, thus promoting the love of reading as the children are able to select books that interest them. Short quizzes are available for the children to take to ensure understanding.

In addition to this, we celebrate reading together throughout the year through:

- Links with the local library
- National Poetry Day
- World Book Day
- Author visits

Reading at home is strongly promoted through:

- Parent reading evenings
- Communication through Seesaw
- Book Fair
- Promotion of events such as library reading challenge
- Quality texts for children to take home and either read or be read to
- RWI information and resources for parents to use at home
- Promotion of in-school events on social media and through newsletters

Impact

All books in our class libraries are carefully selected to encompass a variety of themes and genres, including both fiction and non-fiction, giving our children a wide selection to choose from and promoting the love of reading.

From year two onwards, once children have completed their reading book, they take an Accelerated Reader reading practice quiz on that text to ensure that they are comprehending their independent reading. The results of these tests, along with the teacher's judgement, help us to decide whether the child is ready to move on to more challenging texts.

The end of KS2 data for the academic year 2018/19 shows that attainment in reading at Excalibur Primary School exceeded both local and national averages. In Year 2, 90% of our children achieved EXP or above and 27% achieved Greater Depth in reading. In Year 6, 93% of our children achieved EXP or above and 40% achieved Greater Depth in reading.

