

# Mersey Park Primary School Reading Policy



## **OUR AIM**

As a school we are committed to continually raising standards in Literacy. Our aim is to ensure the highest standards of reading and literacy for every child by providing them with the skills necessary to read with confidence, fluency and understanding.

## **TEACHING READING**

Our school identifies the two key phases in reading development: learning to read and reading to learn. Teaching strategies are carefully employed that recognise children's needs in each phase.

- Positive attitudes to reading are fostered through carefully designed teaching activities and classroom provision. The need for children to enjoy reading and actively choose to read for different purposes informs this provision.
- Teachers use a balanced approach. Teaching activities promote children's abilities to decode written language at word and sentence level, and to search for meaning in the text. Teaching activities also reflect the need for children to engage imaginatively with texts, empathise with characters and develop their specific interests in the world around them through their reading.
- A variety of teaching strategies are employed to teach shared, guided and individual reading. Throughout KS1 and KS2 we use the VIPERS approach to directly teach focussed comprehension skills. This approach links directly to the reading domains of the National Curriculum.
- The teaching of reading is embedded within meaningful contexts. We teach all children the skill of reading by providing access to a wide range of high quality narrative and non-narrative texts.
- 'Oxford Reading Tree' scheme materials are used for both independent and guided reading sessions. We are extremely well resourced in this scheme allowing children to access: Floppy's Phonics, Traditional Tales, Snapdragons, Fireflies and Glow-worms. As the children progress in their reading these ORT texts are then supplemented by a broader range of graded reading materials and with carefully chosen high quality novels. These more challenging texts help our children to experience a range of genres and writing styles. They provide different sentence structures, vocabulary, layouts and contexts and help our children to experience a wealth of texts and begin to form opinions and preferences in literature.

**Throughout their time with us at Mersey Park, all children are encouraged to acquire a love of literature that will prepare them to become lifelong readers.**

## **EARLY READERS**

*"We read to know we are not alone"* **C S Lewis**

From the start of their school experience, children are immersed in a world of literature with books chosen to stimulate their imagination. Children are introduced to the conventions of books, reading from left to right, regarding the illustrations as an integral to the story, turning the pages singly etc. The use of stories and rhymes is key at this point. Children are encouraged to act out well known tales and join in with a repertoire of nursery rhymes. There is a very strong focus on listening to familiar stories and puppets and role play help to bring these alive. We provide a reading rich environment beginning with the children's own names and including the use of captions, labels and instructions. Home support is encouraged with Home Early Learning Packs which include high quality texts and helpful questions which allow parents to be involved in their child's learning. As the children progress and become more confident, individual home readers are provided with parents being encouraged to read daily with their child and communicate with school through comments in a reading log. Guided reading is introduced to the children with two weekly sessions, this carefully chosen text is also sent home to consolidate their reading. Additional, individual reading is also provided for those children who need it. Quality literature and the use of big books continues to be a stimulus for topics, role play and early writing.

Throughout this early reading phase the teaching and application of phonics is key. The children are taught to tune into sounds which they hear in both the classroom and outdoor environment. They learn how to listen through story, games, rhymes and talk. The Jolly Phonics scheme is used alongside Letters and Sounds, children are taught to segment and blend words moving onto letter recognition and formation when ready. As the children develop at different rates they then join differentiated daily phonics group specific to their needs.

## **DEVELOPING READERS**

*"I am not afraid of storms for I am learning how to sail my ship."* **Louisa May Alcott, Little Women**

As the children progress in their reading they build a growing sight vocabulary. This and their ability to segment and blend sounds develops their reading skills. At this point they start to become readers for meaning and have more of an understanding of what they read. Children are taught to retell, sequence, predict and question as part of the reading process. Guided reading takes place daily alongside individual children who still need additional decoding support. Children are carefully grouped according to ability; each group has at least two guided sessions per week with either the teacher or teaching assistant. Comprehension work becomes a key feature of both guided and independent reading. The children are introduced to the VIPERS approach and are helped to develop finely tuned comprehension skills including: retrieval, inference, predicting, sequencing, summarising and the understanding of new vocabulary. Children are taught how to find evidence in a text and begin to explain their ideas to show their understanding. Each child continues to take home a levelled reading scheme book with a reading record. Parents and carers are expected to enter into a dialogue with school through this log which is an extremely valuable tool. Children are again grouped according to phonic ability and continue to receive daily structured, focussed sessions. Regular assessment ensures children who are not working at an appropriate level can have access to additional phonics sessions and reading interventions, including Successful

Reading Partnership and Project X Code. These regular interventions are carefully monitored and the children's reading progress is closely tracked.

Lenny's Library is open to every child in Foundation Stage and KS1. Children may borrow "free choice" books to take home to foster a love of reading. We also ensure that each classroom has an inviting book corner with a carefully selected range of books. Each classroom also has a number of non fiction books and reading materials related to their cross curricular topics.

## **FLUENT READERS**

*"So please, oh please, we beg, we pray,  
Go throw your TV set away,  
And in its place you can install  
A lovely bookshelf on the wall."*

**Roald Dahl Charlie and the Chocolate Factory**

The ORT reading scheme is continued for our more fluent readers and a full range of reading genre is offered. Children continue to take home a reading book and are heard read in school at least twice a week during guided reading sessions. More complex reading comprehension skills are increasingly taught and deepened through the VIPERS approach and will now cover a wide range of activities including answering and explaining questions related to the text, using inference and deduction, predicting, summarising and discussing language meaning, choice and effect. The children have experience of completing more challenging comprehension tasks alongside the teacher in whole class shared reading sessions and then independently. These more experienced readers are encouraged to use their knowledge of books to enhance their writing and language choices. Both oral and written book reviews are undertaken to encourage a desire to widen their reading experience. Children are also encouraged to read books from the individual class book corners and Larry's Library. Once the children have progressed through the scheme and are fluent, confident readers they are able to choose their own books which are carefully monitored by the teacher for quality and challenge.

## **STRATEGIES USED TO TEACH READING**

As a community of readers we expect all adults to model and communicate their love of reading. We strive to provide every opportunity for children to read independently, paired, as a group or a whole class.

### **Phonics**

The school uses synthetic phonics to teach reading. Daily phonics sessions follow a very structured format. Children are also taught to read and spell words from the National Curriculum and are tested on these each week. The structured sessions include handwriting and revision of a previous spelling pattern, learning to read new words, including those words in dictated sentences and developing memory skills to aid retention of new words. Phonics application and progress is tracked throughout the school and smaller teaching groups and fluid groupings allow for children to make accelerated progress.

### **Guided Reading**

Guided reading is used throughout the school as a key teaching strategy. Teachers and Teaching Assistants will work with each guided reading group every week. The sessions are carefully planned

and cover a range of Assessment Foci and Reading Domains. Groupings are as small as possible due to extra staffing and remain flexible and are constantly adapted to the needs of the children within the group.

Guided reading will be used to:

- Teach to the group's learning targets and needs.
- Teach reading strategies and provide an opportunity for pupils to practise their reading skills independently.
- Provide a context for pupils to share responses and understanding of different text types and genres with others.
- Explicitly teach and support pupils in their application of comprehension strategies using the VIPERS approach
- Monitor the comprehension and application of reading skills of individuals.  
Collect detailed evidence to inform next steps and future sessions.

### **Individual Reading**

At the learning to read stage, teachers and support staff listen to certain children read individually. All children at this stage will also be part of a guided reading group. The school actively promotes the support of parents in this process by hearing their child read each evening and recording this in the home-school record. Texts are chosen from the school's graded reading scheme and are at the instructional level for each child. Book talk sessions are held in school to promote home reading.

Individual reading will be used to:

- Teach reading strategies and behaviours at the instructional level of the child;
- Provide a context for the teacher to teach high frequency words, decoding skills, use of picture clues and use of context to support prediction.
- Provide an opportunity for the child to practise her/his decoding skills;
- Explicitly support the child in her/his application of comprehension strategies;
- Monitor the comprehension and application of reading skills of the individual child.

### **Shared Reading**

From Year 2 upwards, every class will also have at least one whole class shared reading session per week. This allows the teacher to demonstrate how to read a wide variety of different genres and text types and show that reading is a pleasurable and informative experience. Shared reading gives access to challenging texts for all our pupils and provides a secure environment for learning to read. It also provides a context for the explicit teaching of reading comprehension skills and enables teachers to model the skills and strategies used by effective readers. Once again the whole school VIPERS approach is an integral part of these sessions.

### **Independent Reading tasks**

Teachers set reading tasks for pupils that require them to read without teacher support. Some of these tasks might require a written response.

Independent reading will be used to:

- Promote enjoyment of reading.
- Develop and consolidate comprehension skills.
- Provide a meaningful context for the application of reading skills and knowledge.

## **READING MATERIALS**

The school uses a range of high quality, up-to-date resources for teaching reading. It provides:

### **A Reading scheme:**

For Early Readers this material is largely based around the Oxford Reading Tree scheme (ORT). Other materials and texts are also added to broaden the range of language, sentence structures and grammar that the children are exposed to. The scheme also provides engaging texts for our Developing and Fluent Readers. These texts have been carefully chosen to provide a mix of fiction, non-fiction, scripts, articles and poetry with a strong emphasis on stimulating interest and motivation for all pupils. We also use the Project X Code reading intervention to accelerate progress and engage and motivate pupils who are struggling with their reading.

### **Free Choice books:**

Additional books are also provided for pupils who have acquired the expected decoding skills for their age group. The texts are chosen to provide coverage of a wide range of text types, genres and poetry and to be matched to the ages and maturity of the pupils. Children are encouraged to develop their own reading tastes and to be challenged into trying new types of reading materials. Our well stocked libraries and class book corners are engaging and well organised with many non fiction topic related texts. Children are able to learn from what they read; facts and information as well as empathy for characters, situations and dilemmas that they encounter in narrative texts. Children are also directly involved in the purchase of their new books. As the children progress, they are encouraged to widen their use of books for reading for information and developing specific skills including skimming, scanning and note taking.

### **Whole school Reading Spine:**

This special range of books have been carefully selected to ensure that our children are exposed to a wide range of quality genres and authors. Each year group is allocated a number of books to read throughout the year. These books are intended to be read aloud by the teacher, used as a shared reading focus or as a whole class reading session. The teacher uses these sessions to model the reading process and teach the children to predict, reflect and ponder as a reader. Many of our 'Talk for Writing' projects begin with these memorable books and lots of these books are used within our writing curriculum. The spine is reviewed regularly in consultation with colleagues and pupils.

### **Additional Resources:**

- Power of Reading books to engage children and inspire drama, art and writing opportunities.
- The school subscribes to a weekly newspaper and news magazine for KS2.
- The school uses assessment material in line with the National Curriculum for baseline assessment and progress measure.
- Year group specific written comprehension tasks are used to familiarise children in preparation for SAT's tests.
- A poetry spine is also in place to ensure that children are exposed to a wide range of both modern and classic poems. There is a strong focus on reciting poetry aloud.

## **HOME READING**

Home reading is essential and is at the heart of our homework contracts with pupils and parents. Early and Developing readers are expected to read at home to an adult daily. This is recorded within their reading record log and monitored closely by class teachers and teaching assistants. Our more fluent readers in KS2 are expected to read at home independently or to an adult regularly and update their reading record log. Regular home reading and updated reading logs are an essential part of receiving our homework rewards. Regular reading is also essential for success in the whole school 'Homework League'. Parents are warmly invited in to school to hear their child read first thing in the morning. The school has also purchased a large number of 'I Love Reading Books'. These are free readers, popular, current titles and have been chosen to encourage children to read regularly at home. Commission from our book fairs is used for the purchase of new books which will ensure that children are challenged and motivated to read.

The school also subscribes to the 'Bug Club' online reading resource. Through this, the children can access exciting interactive books which encourage reading for pleasure. The books are lively and inviting and aim to particularly encourage any reluctant readers. Children can earn rewards for the more they read and are also frequently tested on their knowledge and understanding of the books as they work through them. The resource also allows the teachers to further track home reading alongside our home reading scheme. Certificates are issued for those children who regularly access the Bug Club and complete the comprehension questions.

## **CELEBRATING READING**

*"I do believe something very magical can happen when you read a good book"* **J K Rowling**

- Whole school regular 'Reading Buddy' sessions allow children to read with a buddy from another year group. The older child is taught how to help the younger children to decode words and discuss the book they are reading. The sessions are planned alongside special events and themes in school.
- The use of 'Trophy Words' ensures a curriculum where new and challenging language is recognised and celebrated within texts and then applied to spoken language and written activities.
- Our yearly 'Vocabulary Parade' also aims to celebrate our love of unfamiliar, challenging vocabulary. Carefully selected words are given to the children and their costumes aim to help them remember these new words and apply this new knowledge in both reading and writing tasks. Words have included flamboyant, sleuth, opulent and iridescent.
- Our 'Magpie Books' allow children to record any unfamiliar words from reading sessions. Children record them in their special individual or class books, along with a definition and can then use them in future speaking or writing tasks. The 'Magpie Book' stays with the child throughout their time in school and is used like a little book of treasured words.
- The school has good links with our local library and always takes part in the Wirral Summer Reading Challenge.
- A whole school Mersey Park Mindset approach ensures that children are praised, encouraged and commended for both effort and improvement in reading. This allows

children to become resilient readers and respond positively to challenging texts and unfamiliar vocabulary.

- Reading for pleasure is celebrated and displayed through our whole school 'Reading Caterpillar'.
- Visits from 'Mystery Readers' provide an opportunity for classes to hear a different adult reading aloud from a chosen book. Past 'Mystery Readers' have included Governors, Midday Supervisors, Parent Partnership members and our School Nurse.
- Our yearly Poetry Week gives children the opportunity to read, recite, write and perform poems in preparation for a sharing assembly at the end of the week.
- We hold two successful Book Fairs every year.
- World Book Day is celebrated within school and has included author visits, bedtime story day, decorate a hat and a 'Drop Everything and Read' event. Our last event was a competition for each class to decorate their door in the style of a treasured book. The winner was chosen by our local librarian and members of the winning class were taken to Waterstone's book store to choose books for their classroom.
- Whole School celebrations and productions place a strong emphasis on the performance of poems and scripts.
- Children regularly see adults within school as readers with teachers sharing their own love of particular books, poems and authors.
- Staff share their recommendations for books to read with our children in staff meetings and many aspects of the teaching of reading are regularly on the agenda through our 'sharing good practice' section.

### **ACHIEVING OUR AIMS**

As a school we will persistently strive to:

- Expose our children to a stimulating range of books and texts.
- Provide a range of reading experiences including individual, paired, whole class shared and guided reading opportunities.
- Involve and encourage parents in the reading process as much as possible.
- Ensure reading is both structured and enjoyable.
- Use record keeping and regular assessment to monitor progress.
- Provide speedy support for children with Special Educational Needs as appropriate
- Supply engaging texts (in line with the National Curriculum) that are age related with appropriate vocabulary
- Encourage independence through the development of a variety of reading skills.
- Challenge our children to become confident readers with a true love of books.
- Present reading as a lifelong skill, something to treasure and not to fear or be seen as a chore.

### **REVIEW AND EVALUATION**

The policy for Reading will be revised annually. The implementation of the policy will be monitored by the Head teacher and English co-ordinator.