



## English Curriculum: Reading

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## Reading Intent

At St. Catharine's, we believe that reading is the gateway to lifelong learning, academic success, and personal development. Our intent is to create fluent, enthusiastic, and independent readers who not only decode with confidence but also comprehend, interpret, and enjoy a rich variety of texts.

Our reading curriculum is designed to develop the key pillars of reading: phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension, while fostering a love of reading across all age groups.

We aim to:

- Ensure every child learns to read through a consistent and systematic synthetic phonics approach, enabling all children—particularly the most disadvantaged—to keep up and not catch up.
- Develop confident, fluent readers by providing daily reading practice that includes re-reading, modelling, and oral fluency work.
- Expand vocabulary and language comprehension by exposing children to rich, high-quality texts and direct vocabulary instruction.
- Promote a love of reading by offering diverse texts, daily story time, and opportunities for pupils to explore and talk about books, authors, and genres.
- Embed reading across the curriculum, enabling pupils to apply their reading skills in a range of subjects and contexts.
- Use assessment and early intervention effectively, identifying struggling readers early and providing targeted support using evidence-informed approaches.

Our reading curriculum is inclusive, ambitious, and grounded in research. By the time children leave us, they will be well-equipped with the reading skills and enthusiasm needed to thrive in secondary school and beyond.

## Reading Implementation

At St. Catharine's, the systematic development of reading comprehension is a core component of our reading curriculum. In line with the EEF Reading Framework's guidance on comprehension

strategy instruction, we have modified and implemented the 'Comprehension Crusher' scheme by Grammarsaurus from Year 2 to Year 6 to explicitly teach and embed key comprehension skills in a progressive and consistent manner.

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## How do we implement reading comprehension?

<p>1. <b>Whole-Class Teaching of Comprehension Strategies</b></p>	<p>Using the Comprehension Crusher as a base, we explicitly teach evidence-based strategies such as retrieval, inference, summarising, predicting, and understanding vocabulary.</p> <p>These are introduced clearly and modelled through shared reading and scaffolded discussion.</p>
<p>2. <b>Consistent Structure Across the School</b></p>	<p>Each week, pupils engage with a high-quality text and complete carefully structured tasks aligned with the 12 question stems. This consistency supports pupils in becoming familiar with different question types and developing confidence in tackling them independently.</p>
<p>3. <b>Text Variety &amp; Challenge</b></p>	<p>Texts are carefully chosen to offer breadth, depth, and cultural capital, including fiction, non-fiction, and poetry. This aligns with the research emphasis on high-quality texts and knowledge-rich content to improve both decoding and understanding. The texts chosen also allow children to revisit previous year group learning linked to wider curriculum subjects. For example, Year 5 will complete a focus text on The Romans which they learn about in history during Year 3.</p>
<p>4. <b>Explicit Vocabulary Instruction</b></p>	<p>We pre-teach and explore key vocabulary in each session, supporting pupils to access complex texts and deepen comprehension. This allows focus on the importance of oral language and vocabulary development in reading comprehension.</p>
<p>5. <b>Talk-rich classrooms</b></p>	<p>Lessons are discussion-led, with pupils encouraged to articulate and justify their answers using evidence from the text. Teachers model 'thinking aloud' strategies, echoing guidance on meta-cognitive approaches.</p>
<p>6. <b>Targeted support</b></p>	<p>Pupils who struggle with comprehension are identified quickly and supported through small-group or individual interventions, including re-teaching key strategies and pre-teaching vocabulary.</p>
<p>7. <b>Assessment for Learning</b></p>	<p>Ongoing formative assessment is used to track progress in reading comprehension. Teachers use questioning, pupil responses, and written outcomes to identify gaps and inform next steps.</p>

## Environment and Enrichment

We pride ourselves on the rich learning experiences we offer our children, and we work tirelessly to ensure our children have access to a high-quality English curriculum that is both challenging and enjoyable for all readers. Through quality first teaching, we teach our children to be inquisitive, thought-provoking readers, which allows them to enjoy asking questions about the texts they are reading, and, at the same time, gain a deeper understanding of what they have read. Our pupils are exposed to a range of novels during their English study as well as short texts during guided reading.

We are fortunate enough to have our very own school library, as well as a team of dedicated librarians from various year groups. Teachers utilise the library in a variety of ways, using it to support their English lessons but also to enhance reading in the foundation subjects, for example, retrieving factual information to support children's understanding of what life was like in the Victorian era. The librarians also enjoy the responsibility of organising the library at lunch times so that children are able to come and enjoy reading in a quiet area. We have also introduced our new 'community library' which is located just outside the school gates to encourage our wider community to get involved in reading.

Each of our classrooms also has a vibrant and inviting reading corner to encourage reading. Our reading corners include a range of high-quality texts and novels, as well as topic focus texts to support reading in the wider curriculum. Children are given daily opportunities to read a variety of materials in school, whether this be in lesson time, lunch time, or reading regularly with an adult. As well as children reading daily, we also recognise the importance of children being 'read to' and having the opportunity to be able to sit and listen to a 'storyteller'. With this in mind, staff read daily to the children and use this opportunity to show their passion about books and read some of their favourite novels while getting into character using intonation and expression. Reading to the children is also a great opportunity to demonstrate and develop fluency.

## Home Reading

Every child is given a home reading book that they can take home and enjoy in their own time. We encourage all children to read at least four times a week, though many children exceed this. Our expectation is that a family member listens to their child read their book and makes a comment in their child's school diary. Children are rewarded for their regular reading at home and every term a 'Family Reading Award' is presented to each key stage and are rewarded with prizes such as cinema tickets, family bowling experiences and a visit to Roller Rink. In Reception and KS1, all children are given a decodable reading book which is carefully matched to the phonic level they are working at. The books vary in several ways, including layout, size, vocabulary and length – this ensures children are provided with a rich diet of literature. We feel it is a fundamental aspect that all children are given books matched directly to their phonic knowledge as this allows them to rehearse and consolidate previously taught sounds without being exposed to unfamiliar phonemes. In turn, this allows children to flourish in their reading and become confident, accurate and fluent readers, before moving on to more challenging texts of greater difficulty. After children have completed the RWI programme, they then move on to colour banded books.

In KS2, children receive a home reading book which is linked directly to their reading level. This is assessed regularly throughout each half term to ensure an appropriate level of challenge is provided, thus ensuring children continue to improve their reading skills, as well as fluency. Once children have progressed through each stage of book bands, they become 'free readers' and begin to choose their own reading books, either from the wide selection of books we have to offer or a book they choose from home. Again, this is carefully monitored by staff and parents to ensure appropriate challenge and progression of reading, but also to ensure a love of reading.

## Oracy

Our reading curriculum, supports oracy by structuring high-quality questioning, vocabulary exploration and evidence-based discussion within reading lessons. Through explicit teaching of key vocabulary, insistence on full-sentence responses and regular justification of answers using textual evidence, pupils are required to articulate reasoning clearly and precisely. Opportunities for structured partner talk, oral rehearsal before writing and the use of consistent sentence stems strengthen pupils' spoken language, confidence and academic expression. This approach ensures that reading comprehension also develops pupils' reasoning, vocabulary and disciplinary talk.

## Fluency

Our reading curriculum supports reading fluency by providing structured opportunities for pupils to read texts multiple times, first to understand key vocabulary and then to retrieve and discuss information. By combining oral rehearsal, partner discussion, and sentence-stem scaffolds, pupils practice reading aloud with accuracy, expression, and appropriate pacing. The repeated engagement with texts, alongside explicit focus on decoding and comprehension, helps pupils read more smoothly and confidently, strengthening both their automaticity and prosody, which are essential components of fluent reading.

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# Reading Impact

At St. Catharine's, the impact of our carefully structured reading curriculum is evident in the progress, confidence, and enjoyment our pupils demonstrate as readers.

What Success Looks Like:

- **Children read fluently and with understanding.**

By the end of Key Stage 2, the vast majority of pupils are fluent, confident readers who can tackle age-appropriate texts independently. They use a range of comprehension strategies effectively and can explain, justify, and evaluate their thinking.

- **Progress is strong across all groups.**

Regular low-stakes assessments, comprehension tasks, and reading discussions show that pupils, including those with SEND, EAL, and disadvantaged backgrounds, make measurable progress in comprehension, vocabulary, and overall reading attainment.

- **Improved outcomes in national and internal assessments.**

Pupils achieve well in statutory assessments (e.g. KS1/KS2 SATs), with particular strengths in comprehension-based questions, reflecting their familiarity with structured questioning through our guided reading approach.

- **Pupils develop a rich vocabulary and a love of reading.**

Through regular exposure to high-quality, diverse texts and structured vocabulary instruction, pupils build an extensive word bank and demonstrate improved oral and written expression. They talk enthusiastically about books, authors, and genres.

- **Reading is embedded across the curriculum.**

Pupils apply their reading skills confidently in other subjects, such as science, history, and geography, supporting their overall academic success and ability to access a knowledge-rich curriculum.

- **Teachers are confident and consistent in their delivery.**

The delivery of guided reading provides staff with a clear, progressive structure, ensuring high-quality and consistent reading comprehension teaching across the school.

## Ongoing Evaluation

We continuously monitor reading data, pupil voice, and lesson quality to evaluate the effectiveness of our approach. Outcomes inform staff development, resource selection, and intervention planning, ensuring our reading provision remains high-impact and inclusive

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