

Mugginton Church of England Primary School



www.muggintonschool.co.uk

www.twitter.com/muggintonce

English Reading Policy

This policy has been written in accordance with the Christian ethos of our school, our recognition of British values, an awareness of our position in the Global community and taking account of all current Safeguarding and Child Protection guidance and the new national curriculum September 2014.

At Mugginton Church of England Primary School, we define reading as the process of extracting meaning from text and this involves 'dynamic interaction' between one's existing knowledge, information suggested by the text and the context of the reader.

The ability to read is a relatively recent skill in evolutionary terms. In actuality it has to be 'bolted on' to one's existing linguistic knowledge (Pinker, 1995), and seems to unfold effortlessly and automatically in skilled readers. An English-speaking adult's mental lexicon averages between 50,000 and 100,000 entries (Dehaene et al, 2014). Research from over a quarter of a century ago demonstrated that skilled adult readers spend just over 250 milliseconds processing each word, read an average of 200-300 words a minute (Jackson & McClelland, 1975) and can generate an inference in as little as 137ms (Clark, Haviland & Freedle, 1977). Del Cul, Baillet & Dehaene, (2007) found that the entire visual word recognition process from retinal processing to the highest level of abstraction unfolds automatically, without conscious effort, in less than one-fifth of a second. It is a miracle!

Children who develop into skilled adult readers progress incredibly quickly from mono-syllabic utterances as toddlers to mastery of the complete basics of syntax and grammar by the age of 5 (Berman, 2017). By the age of seven to eight years, a shift from 'learning to read' to 'reading to learn' (Prinsloo, 2009) is conceptualised. This is an extremely important period as a child's average vocabulary increases four-fold during their primary school career, resulting in a mental lexicon of around 40,000 words (Anglin et al, 1993). These figures are supported by a study looking at children's storybooks for 5-7 year olds (Stuart et al 2003). Altogether they found over 268,000 words with nearly 10,000 different words. 51% of the words only appeared once or twice. For fluent, skilled reading to be achieved, most children require a great deal of exposure, teaching and practice. For many children, reading development does not appear to be 'automatic' and requires training and exposure to print to be achieved (Cunningham & Stanovich, 1991).

In short, after safeguarding, we consider reading to be the most important focus of our school.

Intent

We believe that decoding is a vital part of the reading process, but that without focus on the ‘fuzzy’ part of reading (for example, self-concept, motivation and classroom relationships), it cannot be adequately researched, defined or taught.

To access the meaning of words and sentences, children must understand the relationship between letters and sounds, referred to as ‘grapheme to phoneme correspondences’ or GPCs (Seymour, 2006). However, the ultimate goal of reading is comprehension – building up a representation of the phrase, sentence or passage read (Harley, 2013) – and this is reliant upon the richness of the child’s total experience and memory. The common element in the discussion and definitions outlined above is the emphasis on meaning and the fact that reading involves the extraction of meaning from text (Goswami, 2008). Therefore, we believe that quality systematic synthetic phonics teaching alongside a literacy-rich classroom culture with texts meaningfully used, embedded and linked to our children’s real world experiences is the best way to maintain outstanding outcomes in reading and promote reading for pleasure.

Phonics instruction can be defined as the teaching of the sounds of a (alphabetic) language. This often involves focussing on the smallest unit of sound – the phoneme - although it need not necessarily be limited to teaching at this ‘grain size’ (Goswami, 2002). Larger units of sound are taught in some types of phonics instruction (table 1 below outlines sub-word level grain sizes).

Unit	Definition	Example
Phoneme	Smallest unit of sound.	Clock 4 phonemes: ‘c’ ‘l’ ‘o’ ‘c’
Grapheme	Letter(s) which represent the sound/phoneme.	Clock 4 graphemes: ‘c’ ‘l’ ‘o’ ‘ck’
Onset	Consonant or consonant cluster at the beginning of the syllable and before the vowel.	Clock Onset = ‘cl’
Rime	Vowel and any consonants that follow in the same syllable (Lewis and Ellis, 2011).	Clock Rime = ‘ock’
Syllable	Uninterrupted units of pronunciation having one vowel sound (Grabe & Stoller, 2019).	Player 2 syllables: ‘play’ and ‘er’
Morpheme	Smallest units of sound which carry meaning (Goswami, 2008).	Jumped 2 morphemes: ‘Jump’ and past tense marker ‘ed’.

Table 1.1, Sub-word level grain size definitions

More than anything, however, we want to instil a love of reading in our children. In cases where children do not enjoy reading, we are committed to changing this mindset by engaging with the child to find books on a subject they enjoy. At the very least, all children will be able to discuss books they have read and been exposed to whilst at our school.

In short, we aim for a balance between decoding skills and a rich linguistic environment from the very beginning of primary school.

In an English lesson at Mugginton, you will see:

Happy children, who feel safe and confident enough to contribute their ideas meaningfully and speak in front of their peers. The classroom will have vocabulary clearly displayed and the children will be able to tell a visitor words they are proud to have used in their writing and what to do when they encounter a word they do not yet understand. The children will listen carefully when they are read to by an adult and will be able to summarise what they have heard and tell a visitor about their class readers. The children will be able to talk about books they enjoy and use ambitious language when describing and creating pieces of literacy. The children will be able to tell you what they are learning and what skills/knowledge they need to use in order to succeed (in an age-appropriate manner). Children will be engaged and excited by their class and individual English lessons.

Implementation

Synthetic Phonics

Synthetic phonics is a form of systematic phonics which focusses on the phoneme and on phonological awareness. It is labelled a 'part-to-whole' approach because children are taught to decode words by sounding out and blending out of the context of sentences and books. 'Nonsense words' are used frequently to reinforce decoding skill. Typically, children are restricted to books containing words already covered in the programme (Johnston & Watson, 2004) and are not encouraged to use higher level reading strategies such as inference, context, analogy, orthographic or whole-word knowledge (Torgerson et al, 2006). We believe that synthetic phonics is most effective when an experienced and skilled teacher delivers high quality discreet systematic synthetic phonics as a major part of a literacy/ book-rich curriculum.

Children in Reception and Year One are taught using the Read, Write Inc. programme. This programme is used to provide child-specific intervention for older pupils as necessary.

Programme of Study

The National Curriculum Programme of Study sets out the expected progression in the learning of reading. At Mugginton CE Primary School pupils progress at the rate appropriate for their level of ability and so may be working above or below this level. However, most children are at least at the expected level.

In the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 there will be a focus on teaching phonic knowledge and skills as the prime approach to the teaching of early reading, alongside developing vocabulary depth and breadth and whole word recognition. For beginner readers, great focus is placed on securing word recognition knowledge and skills, as recommended in the Rose Report (2006). Initially, the focus will be on helping children master the alphabetic code, apply their phonic knowledge and skills as they decode words and develop a store of familiar words - developing automaticity in their word reading. This discreet teaching is delivered alongside listening to and discussing a wide range of poems, stories and non-fiction. We work on developing speaking and listening skills, phonemic awareness, vocabulary development and language comprehension to enable children to understand both the books they can read and those they listen to.

Key Stage 2

The focus of teaching in the junior class/ later reading development will emphasise comprehension and response as children develop as critical and fluent readers, moving from learning to read, to reading to learn, engaging and interacting with a wide range of texts for purpose and pleasure. All children will be given the opportunity to respond to literature, at an appropriate level, and acquire the more advanced reading skills. Older pupils will develop an understanding of prediction and inference through their work in class and will learn to summarise a text and identify key ideas and details.

A wide range of resources are available: fiction texts of all reading levels including guided reading texts, a wide range of poetry, play scripts and non-fiction, good quality children's books in both classrooms, including a display which allows pupils to request books for school which we do not have currently.

All children are encouraged to take books home and are asked to read for an increasing amount of time each day as part of their homework. Home/school reading records are used, particularly in Years 3 and 4, to keep parents and teachers informed of home reading. Termly reading challenges keep the focus on reading for pleasure.

We believe that the best route to success in reading and to develop a love of reading is to do it everyday. Key Stage 2 lessons are planned around six high quality texts (our 'Class Reader') and reading or listening to a book being read is evident in almost every literacy lesson.

Reading at Home

We recommend that it is the responsibility of teachers to help children learn to read with confidence. However, it is unequivocally the case that children who read at home often and are exposed to storybooks, nursery rhymes and talked to from a young age have a greater likelihood of developing into skilled readers.

We aim for younger pupils to read in school to an adult at least 3 times per week. In addition, they take part in group reading sessions with the class teacher. In the junior class, the children read for at least 30 minutes every day and access group reading sessions with the class teacher, SENCO or teaching assistant and focus pupils read each day to an adult to improve their fluency and understanding of the text.

We ask that parents read with your child whenever you have time—a minimum of three times per week and sign their reading record. School will always supply you with books and recommendations whenever required.

Impact

Assessment and recording

See policy on assessment, reporting and recording.

Within the first six weeks of schooling children will be assessed using the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile (EYFSP). Continuous assessment will then be made using the EYFSP and the daily phonics sessions.

During Key Stage 1 reading will be frequently assessed using a variety of assessment techniques. At the end of Y1 the statutory Phonics Screening Check will be used. At the end of Key Stage 1 reading will be assessed through the use of Task and/or Test materials. In Years 3, 4 and 5 children will be assessed using the QCA and other non-statutory tests. At the end of KS2, Statutory Assessment Tasks will be used.

Children's reading will be informally assessed whenever the child reads to the teacher. Group guided reading grids will be highlighted when appropriate and used to inform target setting for future guided reading sessions.

Resources

There is constant updating of our library based on pupil-need, pupil-recommendation and the topics covered. The school has a live Amazon account to order books quickly and with ease and at least once per year a group of children visit a local bookshop to speak to their staff about books and purchase more texts for school.

Children working with Mrs Dennis have access to the Nessler online learning program whilst younger children have a range of 'banded' books to choose from. Banded books are updated every two years with help from staff at Gemma Books.

Monitoring and review

The subject leader is responsible for monitoring the standard of the children's work and the quality of teaching in line with the school's monitoring cycle. This may be through lesson observations, work scrutiny, monitoring of assessments or pupil interviews. A port

The subject leader is also responsible for supporting colleagues in the teaching of PE, for being informed about current developments in the subject and for providing a strategic lead and direction for the subject in the school.

We allocate special time for the vital task of visiting classes to observe teaching in the subject and to discuss PE with children and staff.