



Totnes St John's Reading Strategy

Introduction

We believe that reading is central to our pupils' understanding of the school curriculum and is of vital importance in life.

We have three main aims for reading at TSJ. We work to ensure that:

1. all pupils learn to read by the time they leave our school
2. pupils learn from their reading because we put reading at the heart of all learning
3. our school environment and culture develop pupils' love of reading.

From the moment they join us, we aim to develop the knowledge, skills and understanding that pupils need to be readers. We have a coherent, systematic, whole-school programme, underpinned by evidence of what works; we have drawn on research in reading and on guidance from the Department for Education (DfE).

We want to ensure that, through their reading, our pupils become successful learners and knowledgeable participants, as well as confident individuals – three of the key outcomes of our ACE curriculum. They cannot gain new knowledge independently if they cannot read; cannot retrieve, from written text, knowledge they have learnt and recorded, if they cannot read.

We also want pupils to gain a love for and appreciation of reading which will stay with them for life. Fluent readers can enjoy a range of genres and writers and have access to the full range of life's experiences. This is especially important for our disadvantaged pupils: being unable to read disadvantages them further. No pupil should leave our school being unable to read.

Ensuring that all pupils learn to read

Pupils are taught phonics daily until they can decode speedily and accurately; this lays the foundation for fluency that underpins comprehension. We use the Read, Write Inc. (RWI) phonics programme, one of the systematic synthetic phonics (SSP) programmes validated by the DfE. We use the programme's 'virtual classroom' for remote and other learning, and for training and support.

To practise their early reading skills, pupils read (at school and at home) from books from the RWI programme that are exactly matched to what they have been taught in their daily phonics lessons. This means they achieve early success as a reader and feel confident about their own knowledge and skills.

Assessment of reading

Formative assessment consists of:

- assessment during one-to-one reading
- assessment during whole-class guided reading
- evidence from written work, where appropriate (such as to assess comprehension).

Summative assessment consists of:

- in-school RWI phonics screening for EYFS and KS1 each half term
- statutory phonics screening check for Year 1 (and Year 2 when required)
- national Year 2 and Year 6 reading tests
- termly PIRA assessments (for KS2)
- termly STAR assessments for Accelerated Reader (for KS2).

In particular, the RWI programme's assessments allow us to make sure that pupils are on track in terms of their phonic knowledge and skills, and to identify and rectify any gaps.

We provide effective catch-up for any pupils who are finding it difficult to keep up, so that they acquire the early reading knowledge they need. This targeted catch-up provision includes:

- RWI phonics – interventions and targeted group work
- RWI phonics – targeted one-to-one work
- precision teaching – opportunities for pupils to practise, in advance, aspects of a text or phonics knowledge that may come up in a lesson
- targeted, guided group work in class – working with a teacher on an area of need
- additional, targeted group work beyond lessons – working with a teacher on an area of need
- one-to-one daily reading – additional reading to develop fluency or with a specific target for progression
- targeted provision, before and after school, for the 'lowest 20%'.

Reading is taught through a whole-class approach. This ensures that all pupils receive first-hand, high-quality teaching. Pupils are taught phonics and, later, are involved in whole-class guided reading daily for a minimum of 30 minutes each day. Alongside their decoding knowledge and skills, we work to develop pupils' understanding, especially by reading to them from books that they cannot yet read independently for themselves and by introducing them to the work of a variety of authors.

Preparation for reading includes pre-teaching, as well as concrete preparation, exploring pupils' contextual and world knowledge and asking them to think about what a text might be about, so that we prime their understanding. Since this stage also makes sure that pupils acquire a basic understanding of the text, we explicitly teach any unfamiliar vocabulary they might meet in the text. **Reading for accuracy and fluency** focuses on ensuring that pupils read accurately and, in due course, with fluency, because fluent reading is critical to supporting their understanding of what they read.

We use the DERIC approach (see below) to develop pupils' comprehension, including their skills in drawing inferences from the text, i.e. reading between the lines. We also teach pupils to **make links beyond the text** by using and applying what they have learnt from it.

The DERIC approach	
Decode	Use phonic knowledge to decode words
Explain	Explore and explain the meaning of vocabulary within the text
Retrieve	Find key information from the text
Interpret	Develop understanding of the whole text
Choice	Understand the decisions the author has made

Putting reading at the heart of all learning

Reading is a fundamental skill for every pupil's learning and development. Prioritising reading by giving it dedicated time during the week helps to ensure that pupils experience and learn from what they read across different contexts. Challenging and purposeful reading materials and resources, whole-class guided reading lessons and daily class reads provide breadth of reading for pupils.

Reading is a tool for them to build and deepen their knowledge and understanding across the curriculum. We therefore link opportunities for reading to a range of learning experiences, both in and outside the classroom, especially through planning the learning journeys that form a core part of the ACE curriculum. In this way, we can provide genuine contexts for pupils to read and use non-fiction, as well as fiction and poetry.

Creating a supportive environment and culture for reading

We develop pupils' love for reading so that they want to read. Pupils have opportunities throughout the week for their independent reading, that is, dedicated time for reading for pleasure.

Pupils can choose books to read independently. All classrooms have class reading areas and the school library is accessible and engaging.

Every afternoon starts with opportunities for pupils to read and be read to. Each class focuses on five high-quality books each term – the 'Fab Five' – from a range of authors, so that pupils get to know these books inside out. This includes one class novel and four other shorter texts. Teachers show their own passion for reading through discussing and recommending books to pupils.

All pupils are expected to read daily at home. The Accelerated Reader programme for Key Stage 2 pupils encourages this and they can also access the Accelerated Reader quizzes at home.

Author visits, book clubs, reading competitions, celebrating World Book Day, and training Year 6 pupils to be school librarians all support our aim of creating a supportive environment and culture. Pupils visit the local library, a short distance away. We also hold events for parents of Reception and Year 1 pupils to familiarise them with our phonics programme and to support them in helping their child.

Training

The training, support and development activities we have undertaken mean that the approach to teaching phonics across the classes is consistent: all phonics lessons adhere to the detail, language and structure of the RWI programme. The 'virtual classroom' supports staff in the important skill of articulating phonemes correctly for pupils. Teachers – and other adults involved in teaching reading – practise elements of the RWI phonics lessons regularly without children present so that they can always provide their best teaching. Teachers also have the opportunity to team-teach, before reflecting on and refining their practice.