



Reading at St John's

Intent

At Watford St John's CE Primary School, we believe every child should enjoy reading and be equipped with the skills to become lifelong readers. We promote a 'Reading for Pleasure and Progress' culture, recognising that children with the 'will' and the 'skill' to read is pivotal for academic success, their wellbeing and increased knowledge of the world.



Reading for Progress: the Skill

Everyone at St John's understands that reading is the foundation for the best progress across the curriculum and that we accept only excellence in our teaching and learning of reading. The teaching of systematic, synthetic phonics through our Little Wandle programme is a priority,

enabling children to become fluent and confident readers by the end of Key Stage One. This prepares our children for Key Stage Two where whole class reading allows for the development of comprehension and discussion skills. We understand that reading is breathing in and writing is breathing out; that the best outcomes for writing are in response to the reading of high-quality, diverse texts that reflect our values and context. We understand that reading involves a healthy diet of: phonics, prosody, fluency, vocabulary and comprehension.

Reading for Pleasure: the Will

Everyone in the St John's school community encourages and models a shared ethos of reading for pleasure, knowing that reading regularly and with enjoyment improves children's life chances, wellbeing and attainment across the curriculum. We do this through our 'Reading for Pleasure' pedagogy and as the Teachers' Reading Group (TRG) Lead school for Watford and Hertfordshire. We continue to expose children to a diverse range of high-quality texts that offer mirrors, windows and sliding doors into our lives and the lives of our neighbours, reflecting our values as a Church of England school. We respect that children have a right to read and a right to be curious to choose what to read, and that we follow the 'rights of the reader' to support their reading journey through school and beyond.



Implementation

Reading for Progress: the Skill

At Watford St John's we use Little Wandle from EYFS to Year 2 to develop children's ability to decode and blend words for automaticity and fluency. In EYFS and Key Stage One, daily whole class phonics lessons are taught by the class teacher. Children are assessed regularly and then targeted in guided reading sessions and interventions, practising decoding, prosody and comprehension using their decodable Little Wandlebooks. These guided reading sessions take place at least three times a week supported by teachers and teaching assistants from both Key Stage One and Key Stage Two.

Through English lessons, children are also exposed to a range of high quality texts through our Literacy Tree sequences. Our books have been specifically picked to reflect our monthly Christian values and our diverse context, while challenging stereotypes and offering links to further curriculum learning.



From Year 2, children are explicitly taught the skills of reading (predicting, inferring, word meaning etc) as set out in the National Curriculum through whole class reading. We use the 'Readers' Theatre', utilising choral, echo and partner reading, as well as strong teacher modelling, to immerse children in the act of reading to further practise their prosody. Discussion of the meaning of texts happens in response to the context of the book. Vocabulary is explicitly taught, understanding that this is 'the golden thread' that ensures greater success in both reading and writing.

Reading for Pleasure: the Will

We are a lead school in Hertfordshire for 'Reading for Pleasure'. Our termly Teacher's Reading Group (TRG) partners us with other schools, the Open University and the UKLA. We are led by the evidence that a strong 'Reading for Pleasure' pedagogy encourages children's intrinsic will and love to read. We do this through:

- Independent reading time, often in our library
- Book-talks (with our regular Book Chat Podcasts and Book Buddy programme)
- Daily 20 minute Storytimes
- Engaging, interactive reading environments in our library and in our classrooms
- Children taking ownership of displaying and recommending books
- Weekly Book Clubs, where families are invited into our library
- A monthly Reading Newsletter
- Regular author visits
- Book fairs

- Celebrating World Book Day
- Strong links to Watford Central Library and the Summer Reading Challenge
- Tracking and engaging our reluctant readers

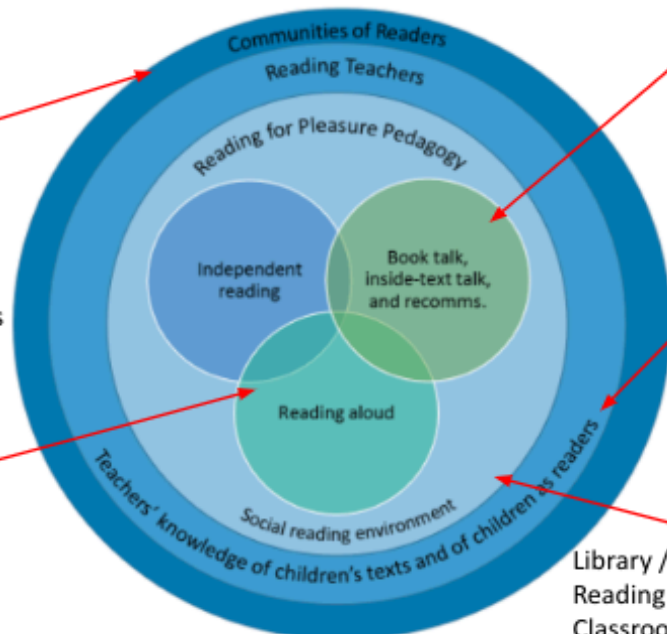
RfP Pedagogy



Weekly Book Clubs,
Reading Newsletter,
Book Fairs, Author Visits



St John's /
Farshore
national
research in
2022/ 2023



St John's
development
project 2023/24

Knowing our
children as readers
- engaging and
tracking the lowest
20%



Library /
Reading
Classrooms

Figure 1: Research insights regarding the effective development of reading for pleasure (based on Cremin et al. 2014)

Interventions

Through regular assessment we ensure children are kept on track with their reading through targeted interventions that accelerate their decoding and fluency skills while offering pre-teaching opportunities to ensure confident access to whole class texts. We also track and target our lowest 20% of readers by assessing both their 'skill' and their 'will' as individual readers, monitoring their attitudes and interests through pupil surveys while ensuring parental engagement remains strong.

A Community of Readers



We believe children will make the best progress in reading if there is a strong community of readers to support them. Children are expected to read at home for 20 minutes daily and parents are supported in this through regular workshops with the English Lead, Book Clubs and through information in our monthly Reading Newsletter. We have volunteer readers who read weekly with our lowest attainers



and we encourage Book Buddies across year groups to share a love of reading peer to peer. We are also proud to have ambassadors for reading from every class, known as our Eagle Bookworms, who welcome authors into our school, encourage book-talk and take responsibility for our reading environments.

