



Reading at Ampney Crucis C. of E. Primary School



Intent

At Ampney Crucis C. of E. Primary School, we want to develop a deep love of reading in all pupils and aim for reading to be a pleasurable experience for all.

As a staff, we are passionate about helping children to acquire the skills needed to become proficient, fluent readers to take them through all levels of education and beyond. We encourage all children to read for pleasure as well as to aid their learning across many subjects. We understand that reading is the key to learning and aim to instil a love of reading a variety of genres.

Implementation

Our EYFS children start their exciting reading journey in Maple Class with daily phonics sessions, following the DFE validated Twinkl Phonics scheme. This is a full, systematic, synthetic phonics scheme which provides children with all they need at the start of school to become fluent readers and writers. By using the Twinkl scheme we provide a consistent approach to teaching phonics in both our Reception and Key Stage 1 classes. Linked intervention programmes can also be utilised for those children identified as requiring extra support to keep up. This happens within the first few weeks of children starting at school and teachers and TAs are all fully trained to assess and support learners at every stage.

Our 'Play to Learn' approach to continuous provision in the lower part of the school provides ample opportunities for children to practise their phonetic learning and is encouraged and modelled daily.

In KS1 phonics sessions, children rehearse taught sounds, allowing all children to join in orally and fully embed prior learning. Over a week, the children will be introduced to a new sound, hearing, saying, reading and writing it through a range of tasks. They learn the initial sounds and how to segment and blend them. They are encouraged to join in with stories, songs and rhymes throughout the day. Each unit culminates in a short task, using a book tailored to that sound, which the children then answer questions about. This early start to comprehension is a great introduction to their future reading and learning.

Individual reading books are carefully matched to children's phonic understanding. These books are used both in class and at home, encouraging frequent reading sessions with repetition so that phonics knowledge is embedded further. We use Rhino Readers which are matched to the Twinkl Phonics scheme, covering all phases to Level 6. Having completed the phonics reading scheme, and attained the skills to become a reader, children then progress to our colour-banded books. These are collated according to challenge and include books from a range of genres and reading schemes to provide a breadth of reading material for our pupils.

Once completed, students are classed as 'free readers' who will then select their own reading material from the library trolleys or bookshelves. Staff will check that books chosen are matched to a reader's ability, as well as providing some challenge to help them develop further. However, the key aim is that children enjoy reading and having the choice of what they read.

Each classroom has a welcoming and accessible book corner, stocked with great reading material to encourage all children to read for pleasure. Topic related book boxes are also available to learners on rotation so that children can read around a subject being studied in History, Geography, Science or RE.

Our school library trolleys have a wide range of books to suit all abilities and interests, and our pupils have opportunities to borrow a book of their choice on a weekly basis. The organisation of this is carried out by our wonderful reading ambassadors who are able to recommend books and support others in their selection.

Throughout the school, a dedicated, daily story time is time-tabled to ensure that children benefit from being read to. Class reading books are chosen to be shared due to the quality of the writing and to introduce a range of rich vocabulary and thought-provoking themes. These are sometimes linked to other areas of the curriculum and complement the learning in that subject.

We recognise the need for fluency to be embedded in order that comprehension follows and with this in mind, we give all children as many opportunities in school to read for pleasure, as well as honing their reading skills.

Short, taught reading comprehension sessions happen weekly Key Stage 2. The majority of these sessions will involve a high-quality text selected through Reading Vipers or linked to the class topic. Some sessions (an average of once per term) focus on a non-fiction text that supports learning in History, Geography, Science or RE. Throughout all sessions, there are opportunities for children to be read to, read with a partner or individually, as well as discussion which helps develop their understanding, confidence and verbal communication. Questioning in these sessions – both verbal and written – covers the full range of skills including inference, prediction, retrieval, summarising and explanation. Tier 2 vocabulary is addressed within context, as well as experiencing subject-specific Tier 3 words, which encourages and supports understanding in other lessons. As a staff, we are currently completing CPD with children's reading guru, Christopher Such, so as to develop fluency sessions further in our school.

Throughout the year, all children will experience reading events which may include author visits, reading challenges or on-line events. Our reading ambassadors pride themselves on promoting the joy of reading and have various responsibilities from buddy-reading with younger children, overseeing library sessions, book 'show and tells', creating book 'wish lists', fundraising (related specifically for reading resources and experiences) and setting challenges and competitions.

We have been involved with the Corinium Trust's Year of Reading Project in the academic year 23-24, and are excited to be continuing this work, with the Trust, for the year 24-25. This is aimed at improving the overall enjoyment and progression of reading for all pupils and ensures that children who struggle to read are supported in the best possible way. Last year, pupils from all classes were invited to experience events at both the Cheltenham and Stroud Literature Festivals, and the funding from our involvement in this scheme helped to improve the school reading environment and pay towards other events. The generous donation from our Friends meant that we could invite 4 published authors to our school for our very own Literature Festival, which was an incredibly exciting day for all. As a result, our pupils are increasingly confident and successful readers, ready for a life-long love of books.

We are also working on building in informal book talk sessions to enable children to develop the confidence to discuss their choice of reading material, their preferences and views on what they have read, as well as finding out about titles enjoyed by their peers.

Impact

Our children's progress in reading is measured regularly with short written and verbal comprehension tasks, on-going teacher assessments and twice-yearly standardised reading tests created by NFER. We also collect data regarding children's reading ages, as well as their reading habits, in order to inform decisions and changes relating to interventions and our school reading culture.

We have completed our second year of using Twinkl Phonics with a 100% pass rate and the 23-24 Y2 SATs test also produced a 100% pass rate, meaning that our youngest readers are off to a fabulous start!