



## **Subject: Reading and Phonics**

### **Intent:**

At St Thomas More, we value reading as a key life skill, and are dedicated to enabling and creating a culture for our pupils to become lifelong fluent readers. We believe reading is key for success and so to ensure we have a holistic approach to the teaching of reading.

### **Implementation**

1. EYFS/KS1 we use Essential Letters and Sounds, which is a synthetic Phonics programme, learning letter sounds and blending them together to read and write words. As part of this, children have daily phonics sessions in small groups where they participate in speaking, listening and blending activities that are matched to their developing needs. The teachers draw upon observations and continuous assessment to ensure children are stretched and challenged and to identify children who may need additional support. These children will receive extra interventions. Children work through the different phases, learning and developing their phonics sounds and knowledge. Children also take part in daily Guided reading sessions.
2. Until children are 'free readers', and they have completed Phase 5 in the Phonics stages, they work through our school reading scheme – these are books which match with the Phonics stage and sounds being taught. The children also bring home two sharing books a week which are matched to their reading ability. We expect family at home to read these books with their child daily and make comments in their child's reading record and older children to read with their parents as well. By the time children leave St Thomas More they are competent readers who can recommend books to their peers, have a thirst for reading a range of genres including poetry, and participate in discussions about books, including evaluating an author's use of language and the impact this can have on the reader.
3. KS2 children take part in whole class Guided Reading lessons 3 times a week where children are exposed to a range of different texts and can demonstrate their understanding and thinking behind these by oral comprehension and through discussion or more formal setting of questions.
4. Whole School -We have a wide range of reading books in our school.
  - We follow some literacy planning from Herts for Learning which link Key texts for reading a writing stimulus. Where other planning is used core texts are still at the appropriate pitch e.g using the Herts For Learning recommended reading list.
  - All children from Nursery to Year 6 choose a reading book to take home and this reading book is changed in EYFS /KS1 weekly or more frequently as required.
  - Each classroom will have a selection of books in their classroom which are directly linked with the class topic. This offers opportunities for the children to apply their reading skills across the curriculum.
  - Children are read to each day by their class teacher. In EYFS and KS1 they also share Nursery Rhymes too.
  - Each classroom has a reading area that is filled with books suitable for their reading age. This is a comfortable place for children to read throughout the day
  - Recommended book lists are given out at parent meetings
  - Regular visits from the Library services / authors visit to promote reading
  - Reading records are checked regularly to ensure a variety of reading is taking place at home.

Reading is assessed in EYFS and Year 1 through Teacher Assessment and Phonics. In KS1 And KS2 Reading is assessed against the Hertfordshire Assessment Criteria , Optional SATs together with Government TAFs. Regular teacher assessments inform planning and allow teachers to identify any gaps in learning. Teachers in EYFS and KS1 also

complete half termly Phonics Tracker Sheets. The children are placed onto a tracking grid, which ensures interventions are put in place where needed.

## **Impact**

Through the teaching of systematic phonics, our aim is for children to become fluent readers by the end of Key Stage One. This way, children can focus on developing their fluency and comprehension as they move through the school. Attainment in reading is measured using the statutory assessments at the end of Key Stage One and Two. These results are measured against the reading attainment of children nationally. Attainment in phonics is measured by the Phonics Screening Test at the end of Year 1. However, we firmly believe that reading is the key to all learning and so the impact of our reading curriculum goes beyond the results of the statutory assessments. We give all children the opportunity to enter the magical worlds that books open up to them. We promote reading for pleasure as part of our reading curriculum. Children are encouraged to develop their own love of genres and authors and to review their books objectively. This enhances a deep love of literature across a range of genres, cultures and styles.