

John Keats Primary School Reading Policy

October 2020

"Reading should not be presented to children as a chore or duty. It should be offered to them as a precious gift." — Kate DiCamillo.

Introduction

At John Keats, we recognise reading as a vital life skill, and acknowledge the vital importance of reading across all curriculum areas. We aim to foster a love of reading in our pupils, and teach reading in a variety of styles to meet the needs of all of the children in the school. We want our children to be able to read confidently, fluently and with interest, and all of our teaching is designed to develop these skills. We recognise that all children develop differently, and differentiate our learning accordingly so that each child is taught at a level that is appropriate and enjoyable for them.

Our children are exposed to a variety of different text types and are able to enjoy visits from authors and trips to the local library to broaden their experiences of reading.

Home Reading

We expect all parents to read with their children at least once per day, for between 10 and 30 minutes. We also expect the children to read independently where possible. Each child is sent home one 'levelled text' each week, matched to their reading level as well as a more adventurous, 'storytime' book that is designed to challenge them or to be shared with an adult at home, for example as a bedtime story. Class Teachers and Teaching Assistants read one on one with the children in order to regularly assess their reading level and to enable us to select the most appropriate texts for them.

The children's books are changed every Friday, and we expect parents to provide us with a short weekly update in the children's Reading Log to keep us up to date with their progress.

Early Years

The Fabulous Phonics scheme is used in the EYFS to teach children how to respond to graphemes and strategies to decode unknown words. Through the scheme the children are also taught tricky and high frequency words, as detailed in Letters and Sounds (DFE, 2007). Class phonic sessions have a focus on reading and writing and a good balance is maintained across the week, with sound buttons used consistently to support the decoding of words.

Strategies used higher up the school are introduced in the EYFS, such as the Core Text approach, the use of Drama to help children to understand stories studied, and daily story sessions. A wide range of texts are utilised within the classes continuous provision; such as books about transport near toy vehicles.

We establish early links with parents, and have run successful Phonics Sessions in school, explaining how we teach reading and writing and sharing high quality resources with parents such as word mats, alphabet charts and phonic stickers. We also encourage children to instil the love of books that is highly encouraged by our staff as the children progress through school, and share different strategies to support parents with this.

Reading in the Classroom

Our classrooms at John Keats are language rich environments, where reading forms a significant part of the school day. The school day always begins with a quiet reading session, when the children have the opportunity to select their own book from the class book corner and read it in a calm environment. This takes place at the start of the school day, from when the gates open at 8.50am till registration at 9.10am.

Storytimes are incorporated into the school day by Class Teachers, for example at the end of the day or while the children are having their mid-morning snack. These utilise the range of high quality and varied texts on offer in the class. Book Corners. Class Teachers use these storytimes as an opportunity for discussion around the books and to explore any themes or issues are raised through reading the story. These discussions help to foster a love of reading in the children, and aid their understanding of the stories that they have read.

Core Texts

At John Keats, we take a 'Core Text' approach to reading. This allows us to focus on chosen, high quality and engaging texts for extended periods of time, enabling teachers to immerse the children in the story and explore it in greater depth.

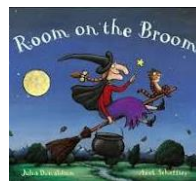
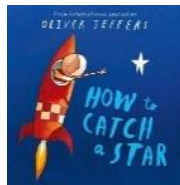
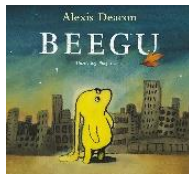
Typically, a class will focus on 2-3 texts per half term. These texts will be linked in to their Topic - for example, during their 'Who Am I?' Topic, Year 1 study the book 'Beegu', which tells the story of a lonely young alien creature who finds herself lost and alone on planet Earth.

The work that the class produces across a 3-4 week period will be largely linked to the core text. While they are learning about Beegu, a Year 1 Class might write letters home to her family, or create a character description of Beegu using adjectives.

While they are studying a Core Text, the children will have several opportunities to read it both as a whole class and independently. They will discuss the text in depth with their teacher and have the freedom to discuss issues and themes present in the text, in an open ended and respectful way.

Each week Who?? Year 2 and reception? , they will. Children will participate in regular drama activities linked to the Core Text that will help to deepen their understanding and knowledge of the text. These drama activities are also an immense help to children who are less confident readers.

The Core Texts are chosen by Class Teachers in collaboration with our Senior Leadership Team. They develop in complexity as the children progress through the school, and are subject to change depending on the needs of each individual class.



Guided Reading

Guided Reading is taught from Year 2 onwards. It is taught as a carousel, comprising a variety of different activities. These may include reading with the teacher and answering comprehension questions, listening to an audiobook using headphones, silent reading of a book of the children's choice and a range of other varied and engaging activities. Guided Reading is taught every day, so that every group can have a turn at each activity every week.

A range of different texts are used for Guided Reading, including (but not limited to) the class' Core Texts.

Book Corners

Book corners are a vital part of a child's reading experience here at John Keats, and each class' Book Corner is an integral part of their learning environment. Our Book Corners contain a wide range of high quality and expertly chosen fiction, and non-fiction texts. These are engaging and accessible to children, and are drawn on for class storytimes and for the children's 'storytime books' to be sent home.

In addition to books, our Book Corners contain displays featuring useful vocabulary, examples of favourite texts, the children's work and other images designed to support the children's reading and build a love of reading.

Free flow, independent learning makes up a large part of the transition from the EYFS to KS1, which gives these children the opportunity to use this time to read quietly in their class Book Corner. Book corners should be an inviting and relaxing environment for the children, providing a change of pace and an opportunity to learn in a different style.

Volunteers

In addition to the fantastic work carried out by our Class Teachers and Teaching Assistants, our Reception and Year 1 children are also lucky enough to receive support from a number of volunteers from Challenge Partners, an education charity based at John Keats Primary School.

Our volunteers read with the same children each week, enabling children in need of support to receive targeted intervention across the Year. This has seen proven results in improving children's reading levels, and is a highly enjoyable and engaging activity for the children.