William Booth Primary and Nursery School

Reading Policy

(For a precis of our approach, see appendix 1 –William Booth Reading Approach Summary)

Children who enjoy reading read more regularly and therefore improve as readers (Willigham, 2014). This simple fact sits at the heart of our reading curriculum. At William Booth, our primary aim is to instil within children a life-long love of reading. Our approach, therefore, balances the need to develop reading comprehension, fluency and vocabulary through explicit instruction and rigorous practice with the need to encourage a deep love of reading. Our 'Values –led, knowledge-rich Curriculum' also greatly benefits our children's development in reading as a broad, factual knowledge base has been proven to greatly improve reading comprehension (Willigham, 2014). Our approach to the teaching of reading could therefore be summarised as:

1. Developing a broad, factual knowledge base through a rich and engaging wider curriculum.
2. Modelling and rigorous practice of comprehension strategies through whole class reading sessions
3. Development of vocabulary
4. A range of reading for pleasure activities which promote a positive relationship with reading
5. Ensuring there are plenty of opportunities for children to read and to discuss their reading

Research shows that explicit teaching of reading strategies improve children's comprehension (Rosenshine, 1997; Davis 2010; EEF, 2017). Therefore, our reading curriculum prioritises rigorous and explicit instruction in the key reading strategies through whole-class reading sessions, where group and paired discussion is encouraged and facilitated by the teacher. Teachers model the meta-cognitive processes involved in comprehension and plan opportunities and activities in their lessons for children to practise these strategies. For a description of some of these activities, see appendix 2 'Checking for Understanding – A Guide for Teachers'.

The Organisation of Reading

The focus of whole-class reading sessions in every year group is developing reading comprehension; therefore, most sessions will involve the teacher 'Read Aloud' where teachers read aloud to children and children focus on comprehending the passage. However, in order to develop fluency and independent reading stamina, teachers also make use of the guided 'Read-Along' and 'Accountable Independent Reading'. The way in which we manage the reading of material in reading sessions could therefore be summarised as:

1. The Read Aloud – the teacher reads the passage modelling expert prosody
2. The Read Along – children take it in turns to read parts of the passage
3. Echo reading – children repeat sentences of text mirroring prosody modelled by the teacher. This is 'chunked' into manageable sections for younger readers
4. Choral reading – children read sections of the text together
5. Accountable Independent Reading – children read the passage independently and evidence their understanding in a 'Checking for Understanding' activity.
6. Fluency Activities – children practise reading aloud a passage until they have reached fluency

The benefits of a mixture of the above approaches are clearly outlined in Doug Lemov's, *Reading Reconsidered* (2017) and in a fluency research project by the EEF (2017). At William Booth we expect that 50 % of the whole-class reading session is made up of a combination of these types of reading.

Reading for Pleasure

In addition to children's regular whole-class reading sessions, children also have a minimum of 20 minutes of 'reading for pleasure' time per day. This is time for children to read independently a book of their own choice and for teachers and teacher assistants to join in with this reading time, either reading to the children or reading a book of their own choice. It is also a time where children and staff can talk about books they have read and to recommend books to each other. There is no follow-up task, i.e. children can focus purely on enjoying the text. This is a necessary part of children's education in reading as we appreciate that some children disengage from reading as they grow to associate it with the need to do some form of task or assessment.

In a reading for pleasure session across the whole school, you should see:

- Children independently reading a book of their choice
- Children having the opportunity to talk about what they are reading
- Children having access to a wide range of reading materials (comics, i-pads, novels, magazines and newspapers etc)
- Access to the classroom reading corner
- Adults joining in the reading for pleasure experience
- Access to the classroom library in order to change books

Children should be actively engaging with texts in a purposeful way, and there should be evidence that the children are enjoying reading.

Teachers also value the need to discuss literature with their classes, as this is vital in developing their love of reading (Chambers, 1997). This can take place during formal reading lessons or at any time throughout the day whilst sharing a text. Teachers are encouraged to adopt strategies as outlined by Aidan Chambers in his book, 'Tell Me: Children, Reading and Talk'.

Each class has a collection of books tailored towards the reading level and interests of their class. Also, along the main corridor of school, is our library. Children are encouraged to take home a book at their reading level, guided by the reading bands used across school, and also a book of their choice. They have daily opportunity to access the classroom library and change their books.

There is a 'Star of The Week Assembly' every week which promotes a love of reading and celebrates different reading attributes.

Whole school reading events are carried out regularly throughout the year which promote reading for pleasure across school and across the wider community.

There is an expectation that all teachers read a class book to their children for 10 -15 minutes every day. This provides opportunities for both reading instruction and the development of reading for pleasure.

Reading Progression at William Booth

EYFS and Year 1

In her book 'What comes before Phonics' Sally Neaums (2017) highlights how 'Becoming literate with ease and success depends upon a range of knowledge, skills, understandings and attitudes that are developed before, and underpin, explicit, formal, literacy teaching. These include; Speaking, Physical activity (including running and climbing), Meta-linguistic awareness (thinking and talking about language), an understanding of the functions and forms of print**,** the ability to symbolize and Phonological awareness (hearing and distinguishing sounds).

In Nursery, we spend time developing all of these skills through a combination of taught, adult led sessions and through our continuous provision and high quality environment that immerses our children in quality print and books.

The children start with phonics sessions 2 or 3 sessions a week. These sessions develop children's phonics skills by exploring Environmental sounds, Instrumental sounds, Body percussion (e.g. clapping and stamping), Rhythm and rhyme, Alliteration, Voice sounds and Oral blending and segmenting (e.g. hearing that d-o-g makes 'dog').

From reception year onwards, the school follows the SoundsWrite Phonics programme which has been validated by the DfE.

In their Reception year children receive daily phonics lessons, which consists of learning sound – symbol correspondence and using blending and segmenting skills to read and write simple words and later, to read and write sentences. Children are also introduced to 'Common exception' (or special) words.

In year 1 children move into the extended code section of the phonics programme where they learn alternative spellings for sounds and the different sounds for spellings.

Children across this phase are exposed to a wide variety of books from poetry to fiction and non-fiction. Books are read to children daily during our Phonics sessions, reading for pleasure time or home time sessions. Children's interests and reading preferences are taken into account when resourcing our reading areas. Books feature throughout our environment and in all workshops.

During whole class reading sessions, which take place at least twice a week, teachers focus on the key comprehension strategies. During these sessions we explicitly teach vocabulary which is revisited throughout the following weeks to ensure that it is embedded. For children in Reception and Key Stage 1 children may follow up the reading with some form of 'Checking for Understanding' activity. This will regularly have an oral, drama or art based outcome rather than a written outcome.

'Helicopter stories' are an important feature in our EYFS and into Year 1. Children regularly have their stories scribed for them and then these stories are acted out with the whole class at the end of sessions. This not only supports the children's narrative writing skills, but also develops their confidence, builds self-esteem and their speaking skills.

Years 2-6

Children receive daily whole class reading sessions every week from years 3-6. During these sessions teachers focus on:

- Development of comprehension
- Development of vocabulary

- Development of background knowledge
- Development of fluency

As outlined in Section 2, the organisation of the reading varies between sessions and teachers aim to use a mixture of these approaches throughout the teaching week. Children may follow up the reading with some form of 'Checking for Understanding' activity (see appendix 2). As children's skills develop, written outcomes following a piece of reading become more common.

Teachers choose from a wide and varied canon of literature to ensure their children receive a rich diet in their reading instruction. Teachers ensure that children regularly read excellent examples of fiction, non-fiction and poetry. These examples will include a mixture of archaic and modern literature; complex texts and texts from other cultures. A reading spine has been created to support teachers, containing age-appropriate texts that link to the curriculum topic being studied. There is also a poetry spine for every year group and every topic.

Book Schemes

Children at William Booth learn to read using the SoundsWrite decodable books and the compatible Dandelion Readers. The books are matched to the children's reading level so that clear progress is made. Children move to the next reading level after an assessment carried out by the teacher to check their reading and comprehension skills. Children are heard individually, with extra 1:1 support given to children who are below age-related for their year group. Children who remain below age-related expectations in KS2 continue to be read with individually or during intervention lessons. Book banded story books and chapter books are used in KS2 alongside SoundsWrite books and Dandelion Readers.

Rock and read

'Rock and read' is our whole school initiative to encourage children to read at home for 10 minutes each day. Children visit the headteacher as they reach reading milestones at home. Children have a reading record which they use to record their reading and strengthen the link between home and school.

Planning

Teachers are provided with a planning format (see appendix 3) but this is a tool to focus thinking rather than an expectation. For each reading session, teachers are encouraged to consider

- the key strategies to be modelled in each lesson;
- what will be read by the teacher and what reading the children will do;
- what key vocabulary will be explored and defined through the children using context clues and which words the teacher will explain;
- what key questions will be discussed and what children will do as their follow-up activity;
- and how the teacher will provide challenge and support within the lesson.

References:

- Doug Lemov, (2014). Reading Reconsidered.
- Sally Nueams (2017) What comes before phonics
- Davis, Dennis (2010) A Meta-Analysis of Comprehension Strategy Instruction for Upper Elementary School Children.
- Education Endowment Foundation (2017) IMPROVING LITERACY IN KEY STAGE TWO Guidance Report.
- Rosenshine, (1997). The Case for Explicit, Teacher-led, Cognitive Strategy Instruction 1 BARAK V. American Educational Research Association, Chicago, IL. March 24- 28, 1997.
- Willingham, Daniel T, (2015) raising Kids Who Read: What Parents and Teachers Can Do.
- Chambers, Aidan (1997). Tell Me: Children, Reading and Talk

Appendix 1

Reading Approach at William Booth Summary

This is a guide for teachers at William Booth in Key Stages 1 and 2. It is also a brief summary of our approach.

1. All children should be seated in mixed-attaining seats so as to allow for frequent, paired discussion.
    - It is essential that less confident readers are exposed to higher order reasoning skills in discussions surrounding literature –mixed ability pairings is essential for this.
    - It also essential that a culture is created whereby children feel comfortable asking for clarification if they don't understand something and are indeed encouraged to do so.

2. The text chosen should be engaging and provide a clear challenge for all members of the class.
    - Where possible, a 'hook' should be used to introduce the book to the class to engage initial interest and set the scene for the lesson.
    - A good rule of thumb is that the text chosen should be between 12-18 months beyond the reach of your most able readers, that is to say beyond the reach of their independent reading of it ***and*** comprehending of it.

3. When reading, the teacher should model good use of intonation, movement, volume and expression.
    - Children will pick up good reading styles from teachers' performances. Good intonation, movement, volume and expression from the teacher are essential if children are to develop a reader's voice.

4. Teachers should endeavour to expose their children to a range of genres and style, including classical literature, poetry and stories that reflect/celebrate cultural diversity.
    - Consider your class carefully and try to pick texts that will appeal to them, considering books that appeal to both girls and boys; however our first priority is to expose children to a range of literature and to increase their cultural capital by reading and enjoying classical literature with them.

5. Teachers should be actively monitoring pace so as to ensure high levels of engagement throughout the lesson.
    - Reading/listening to reading for long periods of time can be mentally taxing for some children. Interspersing longer stints of reading with paired discussions/independent follow-up tasks can help with this.

6. Teachers should use targeted and open-ended questioning.

- Targeted questioning is not only good A*f*L but also a good way to ensure all children engage with the lesson – if they don't know who will be asked to provide a response, then they are more likely to consider your question and make good use of their talking partner.
- Open questions should be used to promote discussion and encourage children to provide evidence to support their thinking.

7. Allow children to focus on listening and comprehension.

- Encourage children to focus purely on listening to you read. This allows their short-term memory to focus on meaning, drawing inferences and making hypotheses. This may seem counter intuitive but research shows that trying to read along whilst being read to places too much demand on the short-term memory.

8. Use A.I.R and other accountability tactics to ensure all are on task and that individual reading stamina is developed.

- Use targeted questioning to keep all children focussed on your every word.
- Make use of Accountable Independent Reading (A.I.R) You read for so long and then ask children to read for a bit themselves. "Meet me at the bottom of page **". Ensure you have a question or mini-activity for the quicker readers to be doing whilst you wait for others to catch up.

9. All follow up tasks should be carefully thought out so as to provide challenge for all children and provide support for those who need it.

- A follow-up task is a good way for children to reflect on what they have read and an opportunity for the teacher to observe/assess the individual understanding of a piece. Often these tasks can be very simple in nature – a retelling in a graphic organiser, a short paragraph in response to an inference hypothesis (e.g. Mr Twit is an unpleasant man – do you agree? What evidence can you find to support your thinking?) Differentiating these tasks should not result in onerous planning/resourcing; simple tweaks are often enough.

10. When discussing literature, the teacher should model, and expect from children, high quality responses with evidence and explanations provided to support.

- Children need to be able to say a response before they can write one; developing this skill at primary is vital for success at secondary. Teachers should model and encourage children to make good use of the sentence stems (e.g. The author has used the word _____ to suggest _____ , as the word _____ has connotations of _____)

Appendix 2

Checking for Understanding – A Guide for Teachers

This document is meant as a guide for teachers to help design activities to check for understanding in reading lessons. It can also be used for external accountability measures to clarify procedures at William Booth.

Once the reading of a text has been done in a reading lesson, it is useful for teachers to provide children with a Check for Understanding activity. This allows children to refer back to their reading, reflect and demonstrate their understanding. It also provides teachers with vital data as to which children have truly understood the text and which may need further support. It is not an expectation that every piece of reading is followed up with an activity, as this may be detrimental to our reading for pleasure initiative. However, over the course of a week it is beneficial to the teacher, and ultimately the child, for there to be some evidence of understanding that can be assessed.

The activities that follow are split into fiction & poetry and non-fiction but there may be cross-over. The list is a starting point and by no means exhaustive.

Questions and Response – fiction, non-fiction and poetry

We do not encourage the use of endless reading-comprehension-style questions; however, a few well-written questions can be extremely useful when checking for understanding. Open-ended questions that require considered responses and a degree of inference provide the most effective feedback for teachers, but also demand a certain level of writing proficiency, which could mean some learners are disadvantaged. Multiple-choice questions are more manageable for learners and provide quick feedback for teachers. Holding discussions where children present their thinking to the class can be incredibly illuminating for the teacher. For both written and oral responses, teachers encourage children to use sentence stems to provide articulate answers.

Fiction & Poetry

Sketch-to-Stretch

Children sketch key scenes (with annotations and quotes for older children), create maps of journeys taken by characters, or sketch predictions based on content from the story. These visualisations will show which children have successfully visualised the story and understood key details. Other ways to use art as a checking for understanding activity include

- draw a picture to show what just happened in the book;
- draw a picture to show what a character did, lost, saw heard and so on;
- draw a picture to show what might happen next;
- draw a picture of a particular character;
- draw a map to show the places involved in a story, or the movement of a particular character;
- draw the same scenario but from different character's perspectives

Drama

Children's performances following a piece of reading can provide vital information for the teacher as to which children truly understood the mood and/or key events of a story. Some ways to include drama are

- Freeze framing
- Thought tapping
- Mime
- Puppetry / Shadow Puppets
- Role Manipulation
- Conscience alley
- Hot seating

Story Map and Graphs

Children create story maps or flow charts to sequence key events. Older children can plot key events on an emotions graph, with time along the x-axis and emotional intensity along the y-axis (happiness to despair, for example). This requires children to sequence a story and summarise the key events in their own words.

Comparison Alleys

Children can use comparison alleys to compare and contrast key characters or settings. This requires that children summarise the key details and compare these details with another significant element of the text.

Annotations

Children can annotate images of key characters or settings with quotes from the text that show developing characterisation and/or atmosphere. Older children can comment on what exactly it is these quotes show about the character and evaluate their impact.

Lassoing

This activity is more suitable for older children. The text is provided and children lasso and then comment upon in annotations key language choices that tell the reader something significant or use language in an effective way.

Mood, Idea, Language

Children are given a short passage or poem and read it three times. On the first reading, they decide on the mood, on the second they summarise the main idea of the piece and on the third, they pick a piece of language and comment upon its effectiveness.

Non – Fiction

Concept Maps

The topic of the reading sits at the centre of the page. The teacher then litters the rest of the page with phrases showing the key concepts to be taken away from the reading. Children then link concepts together, annotating with an explanation as to how the concepts are linked.

Text Marking

Children highlight key phrases, sentences or passages that provide information about a specific aspect of the topic being studied. For example, if children were reading about Neolithic life, you may ask them to use a colour key to highlight information about 'diet', 'use of tools', 'shelter' and 'working in groups', ensuring that these aren't the sub-headings used in the text. Children then have to read the text and understand what the point of each sentence or passage is and whether it is relevant to any of the categories.

Transformations

Children read a text, make notes, and then replicate the key information in a different format. For example, children might read about life in an Anglo-Saxon town, take notes using key headings and then annotate a picture of an Anglo-Saxon town using their notes.

Reports

For older learners, reports can be an excellent tool for checking for understanding. Children can read extensively around a topic then produce reports.