**St Thomas CE (VC)**

**Primary School**

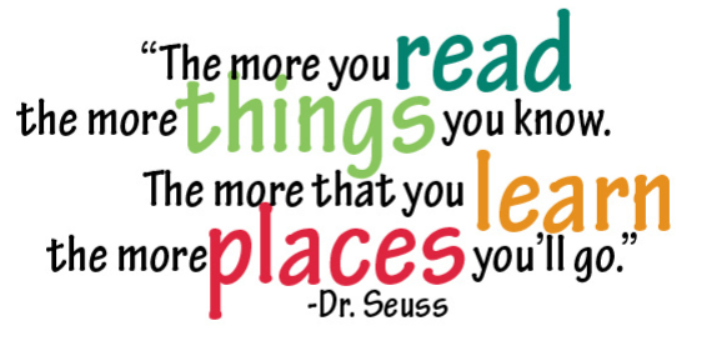


**Reading Policy**

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| **Policy Reviewed on:** | **November 2023** |
| **Review Date:** | **November 2024** |

**Reading Subject Policy – St Thomas Primary School**

**At St Thomas Primary School the whole school community knows how important reading is to raise standards across the whole curriculum. As a result, we make it our top priority to support ALL pupils in becoming confident, engaged and successful readers – achieving the highest possible standards.**



**INTENT:**

At St Thomas Primary school, we recognise that reading is one of the most important skills that children will ever acquire. Reading is integral to the teaching of every subject and gives children a chance to develop culturally, emotionally, intellectually, socially and spiritually. As a result, we strive to embed a culture of reading into the core of what we do here at St Thomas. The aims of the reading curriculum in our school are to develop pupils who:

* Take great pleasure when listening to adults read and when choosing and reading books for themselves.
* Are happy, healthy and curious learners who read confidently and fluently and seek to acquire knowledge independently.
* Can read prosodically with accuracy, automaticity, and speed, freeing up the working memory to understand and comprehend the text.
* Build a wealth of vocabulary (rich language acquisition) that gives them the word power they need to become successful speakers and writers as well as confident readers.
* Develop a lifelong enjoyment of reading taking genuine pleasure from what they read, becoming enthusiastic, independent and reflective readers.
* Have the reading skills they need to access all areas of the curriculum.
* Active prior knowledge, building on the skills, knowledge and understanding acquired previously.
* Automatically, break down words and phrases, reading around the unknown/confusing text, gaining a clearer understanding.
* Make responses to what they read, retrieving key information from the text as well as making accurate inferences and justifications.
* Can summaries the main points in the text, considering the who, what, when, where and why.
* Are exposed to reading a variety of high-quality literature that is interwoven into our curriculum throughout the day e.g. various genres, popular authors, texts linked to projects taught etc.

Reading is a vital skill that will support children’s learning across the whole curriculum. As a school, we ensure that our children are taught to read with fluency, accuracy, automaticity, prosody and understanding through a variety of discreet and cross-curricular learning opportunities. Reading is taught daily, right through school from Reception to Year 6. In addition to this, during English lessons, children carefully study the structure/layout and content of a variety of texts including stories, poems, rhymes and non-fictional texts resulting in pupils confidently writing in that same genre, using complex, subject specific vocabulary introduced, discussed and understood.

**IMPLEMENTATION**

**Special Educational Needs Disability (SEND) / Pupil Premium / Lowest 20%/ Higher Attainers**

Where children are working below the national expectation in reading for their age group, opportunities are provided throughout the day for additional support and guidance.

*Lowest 20% Readers*

The lowest 20% readers within each year group are identified quickly and interventions are set up as a matter of urgency, so pupils who are falling behind are supported. Interventions set up for pupils are dependent on their need e.g. extra phonics (ELS), fluency or comprehension support (60 second comprehension tasks). All of the lowest 20% readers, have daily intervention, either with a learning mentor, individual support worker or teaching assistant. During such interventions, pupils are supported to sound and blend, develop a rich store of words that they know the meaning of, fluency, accuracy, automaticity, prosody and speed of reading so that their working memory can be freed up to comprehend and understand the text well, allowing them to access all areas of the curriculum. Interventions have been timetabled and prioritised to avoid cancellation.

*SEND Readers*

SEND pupils, who have been identified as working at pre-key stage levels, are provided with a reading curriculum specific to their learning needs and targets. Specific objectives, for each pupil, are identified based on the Bradford baseline assessment toolkit. Teachers provide input and model activities set, allowing time for pupils to practice and develop skills, using a range of helpful resources to support. We also offer many other interventions to support our SEND pupils with their individual learning needs throughout the day e.g. Toe by toe, Progress in learning, Black sheep press, Language for thinking, plus many more (see separate ‘Rainbow Timetables’ for each class).

*Classroom support*

Individual class teachers also timetable into the week, specific intervention-based activities based on test analysis and whole class, group or individual needs e.g. a comprehension group focusing on specific reading domain questions, morning work activities focusing on breaking down and understanding tricky words and phrases.

*Disadvantaged Readers*

Pupils who have been identified as disadvantaged, who are not working at nationally expected levels for their age group are also provided with timetabled intervention, based on their area of need.

*At Risk*

Detailed analysis of data, also identifies those pupils who are at risk of or have started to show evidence of slightly slipping behind in reading (NFER results/scaled scores). Teachers are made aware of these pupils and are expected to provide the support required to get them back on track e.g. targeted support, differentiated tasks, extra in class intervention. These pupils are also provided with timetabled intervention in an afternoon with a learning mentor, individual support worker or teaching assistant, at least twice a week.

Challenge for our most able pupils is provided through careful planning and differentiation of independent tasks.

**St Thomas Primary Reading Spine**

The school’s reading spine contains a range of high-quality books that captivate and inspire the children. This document is intended to support the progress of whole class quality reading and vocabulary across the school as well as offer a range of inspiring books. Books highlighted for each year group, have been carefully selected after much research and consideration of the needs and likes of our children. Texts selected are age appropriate to ensure progression takes place and build on those read the previous year in both complexity, language, syntax, semantics, layout, linguistic features, levels of meaning and narration. Where possible, books chosen (both fiction and non-fiction) link well to the wider curriculum, helping pupils to develop a greater depth of knowledge. We have endeavoured to provide a reading spine that spans both modern and classic books, from texts where there is a complex narrative, to texts with figurative and symbolic story plots. The books we read are diverse in both their authors and characters, exposing pupils to a range of books across a wide selection of genres. Pupils in LKS2 and UKS2 are exposed to a greater number of ‘chapter books’, whereas more text driven picture books are read lower down the school. Pupils in KS2 have particularly enjoyed covering the picture books, Journey, Quest and Return (a trilogy of books), which span year groups allowing pupils to build on their prior knowledge/understanding, allowing their imagination come alive. The reading spine, shows some flexibility, allowing staff the opportunity to select books they believe will work well with their classes needs e.g. reluctant boy readers, as well as to incorporate newly published books, that will continue to motivate and inspire our pupils, strengthening our reading spine further. As well as books, pupils at St Thomas Primary are encouraged to read songs, newspapers, comic books, diary entries, short pieces, scripts etc- these sometimes work better when focusing on particular skills or comprehension strands. During reading lessons, teachers read aloud to their children regularly, in a way that shows how pleasure can be gained from reading.

As soon as pupils have cracked the phonics code (sounding out and blending), it is important to immerse them with the rich and diverse texts, provided by our reading spine. They need to be exposed to a breath of vocabulary to support their language comprehension. Ensuring children become fluent and engaged readers at the very earliest stages remain high importance, as it helps avoid the vicious circle of reading difficulty and demotivation that makes later intervention more challenging. St Thomas Primary, promote a positive reading culture where pupils develop a love for reading, understanding the meaning of what they read, justifying responses. We are constantly working hard to develop children’s discrete word-reading skills, comprehension and love of books. Staff at St Thomas are knowledgeable advocates for reading, promoting and making time within the school day for reading.

***“There is a great variety of books that have been chosen for us to read in class that include super/up-levelled vocabulary for us to magpie, exciting story plots and twists! They definitely keep me engaged!” Xander Year 6.***

**Reading Schemes**

We have made significant investments in a variety of reading books to ensure children have access to a range of texts suited to their own personal interests and individual reading level, whilst also extending their reading ability and confidence. Once pupils are able to sound out and blend and have past their phonics screening test (hopefully at the end of Year 1), they move away from the ELS phonics scheme and move onto the ‘Oxford Reading’ and/or the “Collins Big Cat” reading scheme, where pupils move through the different levelled books, specific to their reading ability/age. These levelled books help to keep fluency, comprehension and stamina going throughout Primary while providing the right amount of challenge to each reader. There are great number of books (fiction, non-fiction, poetry) at each level, allowing pupils to choose books that interest them. Children from Year 2 - 6, are encouraged to change their books at least once a week and are required to bring their books into school daily so that they can be listened to read at any point. We closely monitor, the return of books so that pupils who are not reading at home can be identified quickly and suitable intervention, at school, can be set up. Weekly texts are sent out to remind parents/carers, of their child’s book change day and well as texts and letters reminding parents/carers of the importance of reading with or listening to their child/ren read at home.

Each pupil, has a reading record book that is kept in school so that all phonics/reading interventions that take place in school can be recorded down – a working document. In EYFS and KS1, all pupils also take a reading record home so parents can record down any reading that takes place outside of school. Pupils in KS2 take home a reading bookmark instead for the same purpose.

Once pupils have passed their ELS phonics screening test, we strive to ensure that pupils are reading books that are matched to their reading level/ability. Currently, we use results gained from termly NFER reading tests as well as results from Hertfordshire Reading Tests (where pupils are provided with a reading age), to identify a level that best suits each pupil. Teaching assistants and/or learning mentors then listen carefully to pupils read, to ensure levelled books selected match their fluency and well as word and text level understanding. Teaching assistants and/or learning mentors are then to use their professional judgement to either keep the child at that level text or to move them up or down.

**Reading in EYFS:**

Reading at St Thomas is prioritised early, to ensure that pupils can access the full curriculum. The curriculum in the Foundation Stage offers many opportunities to develop the skills required for reading. Speaking and listening are two of the first skills to be focused upon; these are developed through listening to stories, shared reading, role-play, opportunities for talk through continuous provision and Phase 1-5 of the Essential Letters and Sounds phonics scheme. Within both Foundation Stage settings there are dedicated reading areas both indoors and outdoors that promote the love of reading. Within the provision, there are key opportunities to rehearse and retell stories using roleplay and small world play. Parents support reading in the classroom by volunteering as a mystery reader to engage pupils. Within the EYFS unit every child reads to an adult at least once a week in school.

**Reception:**

Within Reception, reading is taught through both literacy-focused activities based on books and through specific teaching of the Essential Letters and sounds Phonics Programme. Topics are well planned and based around high quality texts making links with the wider curriculum. Throughout the continuous provision, books linked to the topic theme and provision areas are displayed and the children are encouraged to use the books alongside their play and learning. Our focus in on broadening vocabulary, knowledge and application. In reception every child has a 1:1 reading session individually with an adult. During these sessions children are heard reading a chosen book linked to the phonics taught.

Children who have been identified as needing support to improve their reading are targeted for additional reading whenever possible. Every child has a reading record and an individual scheme reading book that they take home regularly. Reading at home encourages parental involvement. The book is shared and read with an adult up to four times, the reading record signed and then can be changed every Friday as this links to the phonics teaching sequence. Any parents who do not comply are spoken with to encourage a positive home reading experience.

**Year 1:**

In Year 1, children begin the year being taught phase 5 phonics following the Essential Letters and Sounds Programme building on what was taught in Reception. They then move onto alternative sounds within phase 5. These phase 5 sounds are taught to compliment the previously taught sounds. The ELS phonics programme is followed throughout the year. Interventions take place every afternoon to support those pupils requiring extra phase 2/3 support.

The children read with their teacher or the support assistant 1:1 every week to allow for quality reading (pupils who have been identified as ‘Disadvantaged’ and/or one of the ‘Lowest 20%’ read more often). The books read link to the sounds taught through the ELS programme. These same decodable books, with sounds learnt from the week, are sent home every Friday (linked to their phonics ability) and parents are encouraged to read the book 4 times within the week (re-read) so the children develop fluency and accuracy as well as increasing their speed in decoding and their recalling of sounds.

Every Friday afternoon, Year 1 also welcome into class a ‘Mystery Reader’, this can be anyone from a parent, teacher from another classroom, library representative, older child etc. The pupils really do look forward to seeing who is coming to read to them and the book they have chosen to read.

**Phonics (See Phonics Policy).**

**Reading in KS1 and KS2:**

As the children progress we aim to build on the reading experiences already acquired. The aim is to develop independence, word level knowledge, sound comprehension and fluency.

At St Thomas Primary School, we follow a 7-stage format, a consistent approach/teaching sequence from Year 2 all the way up to Year 6. The 7-stage format is a rigorous approach to the teaching of reading that develops learner’s confidence and enjoyment in reading, allowing pupils to build on knowledge as they move through the school. For 30 minutes, four days a week, children work to develop their reading fluency, word level knowledge and comprehension, via a number of engaging and enjoyable activities. Texts chosen for this process are age appropriate, yet challenging in order to deepen pupil knowledge and understanding and to stimulate in-depth discussion. High-quality talk and discussion in a language-rich environment is promoted and encouraged throughout the teaching sequence. Partner and group talk is encouraged, where pupils are expected to speak in complete sentences, taking turns where appropriate. The amount of time spent at each stage is data driven. The format is familiar to staff and pupils alike, who are now accustomed to the terminology and types of activities delivered out at each stage.

**The 7-stage teaching sequence (disciplinary knowledge):**

1. **Activate Prior Knowledge:** In this stage, children are asked to make predictions about the book based on what they already know through word association and themes. Pupils may use the front cover, blurb, images or vocabulary that might appear in the book to help form predictions.
2. **Reading and Fluency:** This stage provides pupils with the time to develop their reading fluency and prosody. Teachers model with confidence and pupils have the opportunity to read out aloud. Often there is a reading focus based on what the majority of pupils need to work on. Pupils are encouraged to read and re-read texts, to build up the fluency of the familiar text e.g. paragraph, page, chapter. This help pupils to build on their understanding.
3. **Initial Thoughts and Observations:** In this stage, children are given background information and context they need to be able to access the book. They may read to or listen to a paragraph/chapter of the book and are given the opportunity to raise questions allowing for discussions and debate. Pupils have the opportunity to wonder and think aloud e.g. ‘I wonder…’, ‘I can see…’, ‘I feel…’
4. **Breakdown and Repair:** Pupils are taught a range of strategies to breakdown unknown words and phrases in order to gain a clearer understanding of the text they are reading. This process is modelled explicitly where needed (metacognition). Pupils are encouraged to consider what they don’t yet know, what confuses them and words they are not sure of.
5. **Delve at a Deeper Depth:** This aims to explore the book further and to delve into themes, characters and language present within a book. This stage deepens the thinking and encourages pupils to interrogate the text. It is covered in many different ways such as conscience alley, debates, freeze frames, character interviews, visualisation, in order to ensure that children are fully engaged and really understand their book.
6. **Comprehension Questions:** This stage often has a reading domain focus based around data analysis. Teachers identify gaps in learning and cover the domains which require extra teaching and focus. During this stage pupils are encouraged to think aloud to gain a better understanding of the questions asked, they are encouraged to find evidence and construct both meaningful oral and written responses.
7. **Summary:** This stage can be done at any point through the whole process. Pupils are encouraged to demonstrate a clear understanding of an extract, page, chapter and/or the whole text if needed.

Training has ensured that ALL staff are clearly aware of the 7-stage teaching sequence and are highly competent in its planning and delivery, offering quality first teaching on a daily basis. Training has also highlighted a bank of suitable activities that can be carried out at each stage – securing and embedding knowledge and understanding. We use a consistent coaching model to ensure teachers maintain expert knowledge of how to teach reading effectively – an ongoing process. Data from termly testing (NFER), is stringently analysed and teacher assessments are used to identify areas that require greater input, revision and consolidation. Assessment identifies precise gaps in pupils learning.

*“The 7-stages we follow during reading lessons have been really helpful, allowing me to understand the books we read in more detail. We have focused on one stage at a time, helping me answer questions more accurately. Gunvir Year 5.*

In addition to the 7-stage teaching sequence, once a week, pupils are given the opportunity to read a book of their choice (guided) during their reading lesson time (ERIC – Everyone Reading In Class). This may be a book from the class or school library or one they have chosen to bring in from home. Reading for pleasure matters to us. We believe that reading a LOT makes a difference.

**Across the Curriculum (Cornerstone Curriculum)**

At St Thomas primary we offer a broad, balanced curriculum, exposing pupils to age-appropriate, interesting and challenging texts. Such high-quality texts enable children to explore the wider curriculum while practicing their reading skills in a purposeful way. The Cornerstone Curriculum offers sequenced reading opportunities through engaging fiction and non-fiction texts as well as through glossaries. Texts selected contain subject specific vocabulary to ensure that children become familiar with technical and previously unknown vocabulary. Vocabulary is a thread that runs through every subject area. It is identified and explained to help pupils develop a rich and varied language store as the projects continue.

**Reading for Pleasure:**

**Story Time**

At St Thomas Primary, pupils have the opportunity to listen to their teacher read for 20 minutes, 4 times a week, during story time. This session is timetabled into the school day straight after lunchtime, allowing pupils to settle and calm down, before wider curriculum projects are delivered in an afternoon. Story times is prioritised and provided in a distraction-free environment, where children are often encaptured by the text. Story time provides pupils with the opportunity to listen to and engage with a text without interruption. Teachers read with confidence and enjoyment, modelling the correct use of prosody and reading speed, bringing characters to life and exposing children to a wide range of literature such as stories, poetry, rhymes and non-fiction. Teachers may also provide pupils with the opportunity to talk about the text, addressing their understanding, likes and dislikes etc. Whole class reading helps to extend children’s imagination, vocabulary and comprehension, as well as support with their writing.

**Book Club**

Once a week, pupils are also provided with a 20-minute session where teachers introduce new book titles and share recommended interesting reads. During this time, pupils are also encouraged to share and recommend their favourite books. This may be done through reading a chapter of their favourite book, introducing the main character, sharing fun facts they have learned as a result of reading a particular text.

**Learning Environment**

In our school, we will strive to give pupils a stimulating environment, where reading materials and pupil work is presented in an attractive, inviting and easily accessible way.

*Reading Displays*

Outside every classroom, there is a display focused solely on the reading that has been completed in each classroom that term. Reading displays are given high importance and are an essential part of the classroom environment, where pupil work is celebrated and valued, learning objectives covered are highlighted and the learning process is clearly evident. Key words and phrases (discussed during lessons) from the books read are included and key questions asked by the pupils are highlighted. Pictures of pupils enjoying reading, whether independent, paired or whole class reading, are included, clearly showing how much pupils at St Thomas are enthused and motivated by reading. Within every classroom, there is also an English working wall – an interactive display that evolves daily. Learning aids, from each lesson are included, with an aim of supporting pupils with their work.

*Classroom Reading Areas*

Each classroom’s reading area is stocked with a rich variety of age appropriate and engaging books based upon the children’s interests thus allowing the children to have access to a significant collection of books on a daily basis (mini libraries). Reading areas are made welcoming and comfortable, and pupils are encouraged to use such areas, to read for pleasure, when an opportunity arises. Where possible, books are forward facing so that pupils can be enticed by the cover, title and/or author more easily.

*Library*

Our school library is well stocked with a variety of genres, by an array of different authors which cover a wide range of interests and cultures. Every class, and every child, has the opportunity to visit the School Library to borrow and explore the books on a weekly basis. The School Library is also open at lunch times, where pupils who have a love of reading have been selected to take on the role of librarians, welcoming pupils into the library, supporting younger children with their reading. The library is also open, after school, to allow parents to visit with their children, borrowing books to take home. Within our school we have established good links with Kirklees library and have enjoyed many visits to the main library in Huddersfield, taking part in projects run by the library itself. We also welcome the library team into school, who have run further projects, inspiring pupils whilst introducing them to further literature. In the Summer term, staff from the local library visit to deliver an assembly based upon the annual Summer reading challenge to encourage children to read, for pleasure, during the holidays.

*Story Hub*

The Story Hub is a large, tent-shaped wooden building that has been built in the grounds of the school. We are extremely fortunate to have this wonderful resource at St Thomas. It contains a myriad of objects, for example, an old tin bath, ballet shoes, coloured bottles, a suitcase, a giant chair and a grandfather clock, which stimulate pupils and encourages them to talk and write, in addition, promotes and supports pupils with reading and story- telling. We have often had visits from actors dressed as characters, such as the giant from Jack and the Beanstalk, to the hub to make the learning even more exciting.

**Whole School Reading Challenges:**

At St Thomas we promote a whole school reading, at home, via a number of challenges.

In Years Reception – Year 6, children are encouraged to read a set number of books and are then asked to complete an activity based around one of the books read – Bingo sheet.

Number of books read before an activity is carried out:

Reception – 2 books.

Year 1 – 3 books.

Year 2 – 3 books.

Year 3 – 4 books.

Year 4 – 4 books.

Year 5/6 – 3 longer books.

Parents are encouraged to record down, the books that have been read once they are satisfied, they have been read in full.

The Reception – Year 1 bingo sheet encourages hands on craft activities and oracy.

The Year 2 – Year 4 bingo sheet contains a mixture of craft, oracy and written activities.

The Year 5 – 6 bingo sheet is a new challenge that has been decided upon by the pupils themselves. The Year 5 and 6 pupils wanted a new challenge, to inspire and motivate pleasure for reading once again. We listened to their suggestions on the Seesaw Forum and via the school council. The bingo challenge contains a number of craft, fluency and extended writing tasks decided upon by the children.

The award levels are -bronze, silver, gold, ruby, sapphire, emerald, diamond, platinum and the jewel. On completing each award children are awarded with a certificate and a badge during collective worship. There is a ‘roll of honour’ board displayed outside the Year 3 classrooms**,** where the children’s names are added each time they complete a challenge.

**Leadership and Management**

The subject leader's role is to create a positive reading ethos around school and to empower colleagues to teach reading to a high standard and support staff in the following ways:

• By keeping up to date on current issues; disseminating relevant information and providing training for staff members (either directly or through other professionals).

• Leading by example by modelling lessons or styles of teaching, ensuring first quality teaching of reading occurs in my classroom, work completed by pupils in my classroom is of a high standard and follows all 7-stages, the reading display for my classroom contains the non-negotiables.

• Having a knowledge of the quality of the reading provision across the school (The 7-Stage format) and using this to provide a coaching and mentoring role.

• Identifying and acting on development needs of staff members.

• Monitoring expectations, provision and attainment across the school and providing feedback to develop practice further in order to raise standards.

\*Frequent book and planning evaluation, lesson observations, environment checks.

\*Having discussions with children based on their experience – listen to pupil voice and make adjustments where necessary to support pupils further.

**Monitoring and Evaluation**

The quality of teaching and learning is monitored as part of the appraisal process through lesson observations, learning walks, book and planning scrutinies and analysis of progress and attainment documents. In addition, continuity and progression across the school is monitored by the subject leader as is the implementation and impact of Assessment for Learning. The school development plan identifies actions intended to raise standards and the reading leader updates and develops this throughout the year with data, monitoring, actions and evaluations. A named member of the governing body is briefed to oversee the teaching and learning of reading and liaises with the subject leader.

**Partnerships with Parents**

At St Thomas Primary School, we value the importance of parental partnerships in order to provide the best education for their child. Co-operation and support from parents is paramount if a child is to become a successful and competent reader. We strive to develop and encourage a strong partnership between home and school. We encourage parents and carers to contribute to their child’s reading development, welcoming comments withing/on individual reading records/bookmarks that are sent home with reading books. Parents are encouraged to listen to their children read regularly at home and able/older readers are expected to read independently at home. Each child from Reception to Year 6, takes a ‘reading book’ home. During our Parents' Evenings, targets are shared and a written report is completed annually, in the Summer Term, sharing with parents/carers the level their child is working at. Homework, always contains a reading task to complete. We have a school bookshop, that opens half termly, providing pupils the opportunity to buy popular book titles at a cheaper rate, allowing pupils to expand their own personal library of books at home.

**IMPACT:**

At St Thomas Primary School we strive to promote a positive reading culture where books and the love of literature is both celebrated and valued. Through the teaching of phonics, our aim is for children to become fluent readers by the end of Key Stage One. This way, children can focus on developing comprehension skills as they move through the school. Attainment in reading is measured using the statutory assessments at the end of Key Stage One and Two. Across all year groups, we use formative teacher assessments and pupil self-assessment, during reading lessons, to inform next steps as well as data received from termly testing. Data from termly testing (NFER), is stringently analysed and teacher assessments are used to identify areas that require greater input, revision and consolidation. This information then informs reading planning allowing progression to occur. We firmly believe that reading is the key (centre) to all learning and so the impact of our reading curriculum goes beyond the results of the statutory assessments. We promote reading for pleasure where children are encouraged to develop their own love of genres and authors. We intend the impact of our Reading curriculum will ensure our pupils are academically prepared for life beyond primary school.

We measure the impact of our curriculum through the following methods:

• Phonics assessment half term (week 5);

• Phonics screening results;

• Book band level / phonic phase;

• Hertfordshire Reading Test;

• Summative assessments each term followed by PPR meetings

• End of Key stage SATs result.