

The Holy Family Catholic Primary School

"Love Jesus, love learning, love each other"



Reading Strategy

Our strategy:

Reading is central to learning at Holy Family. It underpins all subjects and is a life-long skill that enables pupils to access cultural literacy and develop as independent learners. The reading curriculum provides a carefully sequenced progression from early reading in Key Stage 1 to confident, fluent readers in Key Stage 2. Comprehension is developed through the integrated teaching of word reading, including phonics, and language comprehension, ensuring pupils can read with fluency and understanding across all curriculum areas.

Phonics and early reading are taught daily using Read, Write Inc, with pupils grouped according to ability and progress closely monitored. Groups are reassessed regularly to ensure teaching is responsive to pupils' needs. Fluency is prioritised, with pupils practising texts in which the majority of words are familiar and a small proportion introduce new learning. Pupils who do not pass the Year 1 Phonics Screening Check receive additional support through daily one-to-one reading and targeted monitoring by the Phonics Coach.

In Key Stage 2, pupils participate in daily guided reading sessions using high-quality texts across a broad range of genres. Lessons are structured around the reading content domains of the National Curriculum, with one domain taught explicitly each week through modelling, practice, and application. Visual cues, such as symbols and colour-coded icons, support pupils in recognising and applying skills, with key domains including retrieving, defining, and inferring emphasised in teaching and assessment.

Pupils are encouraged to develop a love of reading through initiatives such as Mobile Library Bus visits and author visits. Classrooms feature recommended reads selected by staff, and pupils in Key Stage 1 vote on a storybook for end-of-day storytime.

Through this approach, pupils develop confident decoding skills, a strong foundation in phonics, and early speaking and listening abilities. The curriculum provides a clear progression from early reading to Key Stage 2 reading domains, supporting continuity of learning. Pupils achieve improved outcomes in the Year 1 Phonics Screening Check and demonstrate strong reading attainment at the end of Key Stage 2, leaving school as fluent, confident readers prepared for life-long learning.

Phonics and Early Reading

At Holy Family, we teach phonics using Read, Write Inc in daily lessons. These sessions focus on learning different graphemes, developing oral and aural phonological skills and building sight vocabulary. Children are also explicitly shown how to apply their developing phonics skills in their writing. Pupils are grouped according to their individual needs and placed in phase-appropriate groups. Progress is closely monitored, with some groups reassessed every four weeks and reorganised as necessary to ensure targeted teaching.

Fluency is a primary focus in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1, with priority given to the development of reading. Pupils who are working at a fluent reading level are expected to decode a wide range of words accurately when reading aloud. Texts are selected so that approximately ninety per cent of words are familiar to pupils, with the remaining ten per cent introducing new learning. Fluency is assessed using Read, Write Inc materials to ensure pupils are developing their skills effectively.

Pupils who do not pass the Year 1 Phonics Screening Check continue to receive daily phonics lessons. These pupils are closely monitored by class teachers and supported through daily one-to-one intervention sessions delivered by the phonics coach or teaching assistants. The Phonics Coach assesses these pupils alongside those in the Early Years and Year 1 to ensure consistent progress and targeted intervention.

All pupils are expected to meet the reading standards outlined in the programme if they have followed the phonics curriculum from Reception, ensuring a strong foundation for future reading development.

	YR children can:	Y1 children can:	Y2 children can:
End of Autumn 1	Read single-letter Set 1 sounds	Read Purple Storybooks; read some Set 2 sounds	Read Blue Storybooks with increasing fluency and comprehension
End of Autumn term	Read all Set 1 sounds; blend sounds into words orally	Read Pink Storybooks; read all Set 2 sounds	Read Grey Storybooks
End of Spring 1	Blend sounds to read words; read short Ditty stories	Read Orange Storybooks; read some Set 3 sounds	Read Grey Storybooks with fluency and comprehension
End of Spring term	Read Red Storybooks	Read Yellow Storybooks	Access RWI Comprehension and Spelling programmes
End of Summer 1	Read Green Storybooks; read some Set 2 sounds	Read Yellow Storybooks; read all of Set 3 sounds	Access RWI Comprehension and Spelling programmes
End of Summer term	Read Green or Purple Storybooks	Read Blue Storybooks	Access RWI Comprehension and Spelling programmes

Aspect of Provision	What we do in Reception	Linked ELG Outcomes
Nursery Rhyme of the Week	Weekly focus on a nursery rhyme (e.g., rhymes and poems) to tune children's listening, rhythm and sound awareness.	Language Comprehension and Phonological Awareness: children use and understand vocabulary from rhymes, recognise rhythm and sound patterns.
Drawing Club Stimulus	Focused weekly literacy stimulus for Drawing Club: one week a visual tale, next an animation clip, next a storybook. Children discuss, draw and talk about narrative events.	Comprehension, Vocabulary and Speaking: contributes to ELGs for listening, understanding and speaking by encouraging children to retell, sequence and explain.
Reading Environment	Class reading corner displays; children's gallery of pictures and quotes; role-play linked to stories; book cover displays showing books children have enjoyed.	Comprehension & Speaking: children engage with texts through talk, retelling and role play, demonstrating understanding and vocabulary use.
Phonics and Early Reading	Daily Read, Write Inc phonics; small group target sessions; interactive phonics games; phase assessments; phoneme bingo; home reading books that match phonic learning.	Word Reading: "Say a sound for each letter ... read words consistent with phonic knowledge by sound-blending."

Classic Fairy tales & Story Texts	Shared reading of classic fairytales (e.g., <i>The Gruffalo</i> , <i>Little Red Riding Hood</i>) and discussion of narrative language, sequences and characters.	Comprehension: "Demonstrate understanding ... by retelling stories and narratives using their own words."
Speaking and Listening Opportunities	Daily whole-class storytime; story discussions; partner talk during Drawing Club; chance to share home reading; answering and asking questions about stories.	Speaking: "Participate in discussions ... offer explanations ... express ideas and feelings using full sentences."

Reading Skills

At Holy Family, the teaching of reading exposes pupils to a wide range of high-quality texts across all genres and is closely aligned with the reading content domains specified in the National Curriculum (2014). Daily, teacher-led sessions follow a whole-class approach. Once pupils have completed the Read, Write Inc phonics programme and progressed through the RWI comprehension activities, they move into early reading skills sessions. These sessions build on their decoding proficiency and focus primarily on developing comprehension skills, with particular emphasis on retrieval as a foundation for understanding texts.

As pupils progress into Year 3 and beyond, retrieval skills continue to be reinforced while other reading domains are gradually introduced and developed. One reading domain is taught explicitly each week, allowing teachers to model the skill before providing pupils with opportunities to practise and apply it across a variety of text types. All domains are important, as they support everyday reading, but particular focus is given to those most frequently encountered in daily reading and assessments, including retrieving, defining and inferring. These skills also form a substantial proportion of SATs reading questions, ensuring pupils are well-prepared for formal assessments. By structuring the curriculum in this way, pupils experience a clear progression from phonics and decoding through to comprehension, developing a secure understanding of comprehension strategies and becoming confident, independent readers prepared for Key Stage 2 and beyond.

Each reading domain is assigned a simple symbol and colour-coded icon to help both pupils and teachers identify question types during comprehension lessons. These visual cues act as memory aids, supporting children in recognising and applying the specific skills required for each domain.



Note: KS1 and KS2 content domain differs from 'sequencing' to later 'summarising'.

Our Reading Journey: How does the journey of our readers progress at Holy Family?



