

Literacy and Reading Overview

Reading:

At St Saviour's, we are passionate about books and our aim is to create life-long, enthusiastic readers through the study of high-quality books by compelling authors. Our programme of study is based on texts that have been carefully selected to provide interest, challenge and variety. Children will read and discuss a wide range of fiction genres and poetry, increasing their familiarity with myths, legends, traditional stories, modern fiction and books from other cultures and traditions.

In addition to a wide range of fiction, there is also a strong focus on non-fiction texts and the development of skills needed to access and extract information effectively, as well as developing technical and subject-specific vocabulary.

From year three onwards, we provide every child with a copy of the focus fiction book for each half term to encourage independent reading at home and promote discussion.

Literacy:

Our daily literacy lessons cover a range of writing genres and are based on the book being studied in the reading lesson. This immersion in a text creates a stimulus for writing and an opportunity for the children to emulate the style of the author, for example, to create tension, drama and vivid description through sentence structure and language. It is also an opportunity to apply new, higher-level vocabulary, exploring, for example, how synonyms create shades of meaning. Key skills in grammar and punctuation are also taught within the context of the genre of writing being studied so that these skills can be embedded in a meaningful way.

Programme of Study: Reading: Key Stage 1

Reception

In Reception, children build a strong foundation in reading and writing through daily literacy activities. Phonics is taught systematically using the Read Write Inc. scheme, which introduces letter-sound correspondences in a clear sequence. Children learn to blend sounds to read simple words and segment them to spell. Regular practice with 'green words' (decodable) and 'red words' (tricky words) helps build fluency and confidence. Early reading is developed through shared reading of high-quality picture books and simple texts. Children are encouraged to talk about stories, predict what might happen next, and discuss characters and settings to deepen their comprehension skills. Storytelling, rhymes, and songs are used to enrich vocabulary and promote a love of reading. In writing, children begin by developing their fine motor skills through activities such as mark-making, drawing, and using tools. They are encouraged to give meaning to the marks they make and are supported to move quickly on to forming recognisable letters. Children learn to write their names, labels, captions, and simple sentences, using their phonics knowledge to spell words. Teachers model writing and support children in composing and sequencing their ideas.

Year 1

Using the Ruth Miskin Scheme 'Read Write Inc. Phonics', children will be taught how to apply phonic knowledge to decode words and will learn the 40+ phonemes (letter sounds), including alternative sounds for graphemes. This will support the accurate blending of sounds in unfamiliar words. They will also read common exception words (for example 'said'), words with more than one syllable and contractions (I'll we'll). Children will

experience a range of good-quality books, consistent with their developing phonic knowledge, to build confidence and fluency in word reading.

Through listening and reading, children will become familiar with key stories and poems, and will be encouraged to discuss their ideas with teachers, other adults and their peers, relating these to their own experiences. They will show their understanding of these stories and poems by retelling, making predictions and using simple inference skills, for example, to discuss characters.

Year 2

Year 2 will continue to build on the phonic skills from year 1 until the automatic decoding of words is embedded and reading is fluent. Children will focus more on alternative sounds for graphemes and begin to learn common suffixes. They will continue to read a wide range of books and texts with greater fluency, reflecting their improving phonic knowledge and developing confidence.

As well as reading books independently, children will listen to and discuss a wide range of poetry, stories and non-fiction at a level beyond that at which they can read independently. They will continue to increase their repertoire of familiar stories, learning key literary language, and developing their vocabulary.

Reading: Key Stage 2

Year 3 and 4

In key stage 2, children will apply their growing knowledge of root words, prefixes and suffixes, both to read aloud and to understand the meaning of new words they meet. By now, the majority of children will be expected to have good phonic knowledge and the emphasis in reading is focused more on comprehension rather than decoding skills. Children will develop their skills selecting and recording key information and details from a wide range of texts. They will increase their understanding of higher-tier vocabulary, and develop ways to gain meaning of new words, for example, using context and their growing knowledge of prefixes. Inference skills have a greater focus and children will draw conclusions about characters in stories, how their feelings, thoughts and motives can be deduced through their actions, justifying inferences with evidence. Children will recognise different types of poetry and will have the opportunity to prepare and perform these using intonation to show their understanding.

Year 5 and 6

In years 5 and 6, children will continue to apply their growing knowledge of root words, prefixes and suffixes, both to read aloud and to understand the meaning of new words they meet. At this stage, there should be no need for further direct teaching of word reading skills for almost all children.

Building on lower key stage 2, children will continue to develop their retrieval skills, selecting and summarising key information from more complex texts. They will increase their knowledge of higher-level vocabulary, synonyms and colloquial terms, and develop strategies for making meaning from new and unfamiliar words, for example using their knowledge of root words. They will study an author's use of figurative language and the impact of this on the reader. Children will encounter a wider range of poetry, learning key poems by heart.

Handwriting

Our aim is for every child to use a continuous cursive style of handwriting that enables the writer to write with speed, legibility and consistency. Continuous cursive is a style of writing in which the letters are joined and have a flowing manner, with a lead in and exit stroke.

By the end of Key Stage 1, we expect all children to be able to join their letters, and by the end of Key Stage 2, to be able to do this at speed.

Spelling, Grammar and Punctuation

Cursive writing also helps with spelling as children develop a muscle memory of the movements of each word. The children are taught spelling, rules, patterns and strategies explicitly and integrated across the curriculum, following National Curriculum guidance. Grammar and punctuation are mostly taught within the context of the literacy lesson although there are lessons where these skills are taught discretely, following the expectations of the National Curriculum.