
Reading Policy

St Andrew's CE Infant School

Our Vision for Reading

At St Andrew's CE Infant School, reading is at the very heart of our curriculum and school life. We believe that **learning to read is one of the most important skill children will acquire** during their time with us. Reading opens the door to the whole curriculum and supports children's academic success, emotional wellbeing, imagination, and spiritual development.

We are committed to ensuring that **every child becomes a confident, fluent reader** who develops a lifelong love of books and reading. Strong foundations in reading are a priority from the moment children start school, and reading is given the **highest priority across the school**.

A Strong Start in the Early Years (EYFS)

We place great importance on providing children with a **strong start in reading in the Early Years Foundation Stage**. From Nursery and Reception, children are immersed in a language-rich environment where stories, rhymes, songs, and poems are shared daily.

Key features of our EYFS approach include:

- Daily high-quality story times and book talk
- Explicit teaching of phonological awareness
- Rich vocabulary development through carefully chosen texts
- Opportunities to retell stories, act out narratives, and respond creatively to books

Reading is embedded across all areas of learning, ensuring children see themselves as readers from the very beginning.

Phonics – Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised

Author Kay Heath, January 2026

St Andrew's CE Infant School follows **Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised** as our systematic synthetic phonics programme.

This ensures:

- Daily, discrete phonics lessons from Reception to Year 2
- Consistent teaching approaches and language used by all staff
- Regular assessment to identify gaps and provide targeted support
- Immediate keep-up interventions so no child is left behind

Phonics is taught with fidelity to the programme, enabling children to build secure decoding skills and early reading confidence.

Reading Books – Fully Decodable and Closely Matched

All our reading books are **new and fully decodable**, ensuring children can practise the phonics they have been taught.

EYFS and Year 1

- Children read **Big Cat for Little Wandle** books
- Books are precisely matched to each child's current phonics level
- Children read the same book multiple times to build accuracy, fluency, and confidence

Year 2

- Children continue to use **Little Wandle Fluency Books** where appropriate
- As decoding becomes secure, children access a **wide range of fiction and non-fiction texts**
- Fluency, expression, and understanding are further developed through guided and independent reading

Strong Foundations and Reading as a Top Priority – 'The Reading Hour'

We believe that **strong foundations in reading are essential** for future learning. Reading is prioritised in:

- Curriculum time
- Staff training and professional development
- Assessment and intervention
- Communication with parents and carers

Reading progress is closely monitored, and additional support is provided promptly to ensure all children succeed.

Every morning across the school at 8.45, each child is immersed in a phonics session. At 9.15am on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday the 'Reading Hour' commences in KS1. This hour is from 1pm in Reception.

The hour is split into 20-minute sessions. One session in the reading practice group and we share Teaching Assistants and even the school business manager and head teacher join in! One session is handwriting and the other is a quality story or poetry session with focus on extending vocabulary.

Reading for Pleasure

Reading for pleasure is actively promoted across the school. We believe that children who enjoy reading are more likely to become lifelong readers.

We promote reading for pleasure by:

- Daily class story times
- Sharing favourite books and authors
- Encouraging children to talk about books they enjoy
- Creating inviting reading areas in classrooms

Teachers carefully select high-quality, engaging texts that reflect a range of cultures, experiences, and themes.

Children take home 'Reading for Pleasure' books as regularly as they wish and may change them when they wish. Each class has a selection of books, each with a sticker on which give parents some guidance about how to share the book.

The School Library – The Heart of the School

Our school library is **the heart of St Andrew's CE Infant School**. It is a welcoming, well-stocked space that celebrates books and reading.

The library:

Author Kay Heath, January 2026

- Provides access to a wide range of high-quality fiction, non-fiction, and poetry
- Encourages independent book choice
- Supports reading for pleasure and research
- Reinforces the value we place on reading as a community

Children are taught how to respect books and use the library responsibly.

The library also houses all the school's reading books which are organised into phases and sets of six, reading books for the reading practice groups which happen three times a week across the school.

High-Quality Texts at the Heart of the English Curriculum

The English curriculum at St Andrew's is **heavily influenced by high-quality texts and books**. Carefully chosen core texts form the basis for:

- Reading comprehension
- Writing opportunities
- Vocabulary development
- Speaking and listening

There is a **clear progression of books across the school**, ensuring that children are exposed to increasingly rich language, themes, and text structures as they move through the year groups.

Poetry – A High Priority

Poetry holds a special place in our reading curriculum. We believe poetry:

- Develops rhythm, expression, and vocabulary
- Builds confidence in speaking aloud
- Encourages enjoyment of language

All class teachers:

- Read poems regularly to their class
- Provide opportunities for children to listen to, learn, and perform poems
- Encourage children to **recite poems by heart**, supporting memory, confidence, and oracy

Reading Comprehension – KS1 VIPERS

In Key Stage 1, children are taught reading comprehension skills through **VIPERS**:

- Vocabulary
- Inference
- Prediction
- Explain
- Retrieve
- Sequence

VIPERS supports children in understanding texts deeply and helps them learn how to talk about what they read. These skills are taught explicitly through guided reading and whole-class reading sessions.

Working in Partnership with Parents

We recognise that parents and carers play a vital role in supporting children's reading development. We:

- Share clear guidance on phonics and reading at home
 - Encourage daily reading
 - Provide workshops and information about Little Wandle
 - Celebrate reading successes together
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Conclusion

At St Andrew's CE Infant School, reading is more than a subject—it is a **shared love, a daily joy, and a powerful tool for learning and life**. Through strong foundations, high-quality teaching, and a deep commitment to reading for pleasure, we aim that every child leaves us as a confident, capable reader