Curriculum

Reading at Ayresome Primary School

"Children's words are powerful tools; through writing, they discover their voices, share their stories and shape their futures."

Intent

Ayresome's curriculum statement of intent for reading has been carefully considered to ensure the content designed and delivered supports children to be the best version of themselves they can be.

The context that our children live in:

- Our children live in a community where developing the skills, resilience and emotional intelligence to thrive and grow as individuals is essential.
- Our children live in a world where understanding and celebrating their unique identities helps them navigate a challenging and ever-evolving environment.
- Our children live in a community where they need to feel empowered to make positive changes and believe in their own abilities.
- Our children live in a world where a strong network of relationships and community support is crucial for their growth and success.
- Our children live in a community where building vocabulary and language skills from an early age is critical to their future opportunities and achievements.

We want our children to:

- Be inspired to make a positive impact on their community.
- Have the ambition, resilience, and skills to succeed in a rapidly changing, interconnected world, and the confidence to use technology effectively.
- Have a supportive network within their community.
- Feel secure in who they are and be open to exploring their own growth and development.
- Develop a rich vocabulary and a lifelong love of learning.
- Strive to include others, focus on kindness and appreciate diverse perspectives.
- Live by a strong set of morals and understand the difference between right and wrong

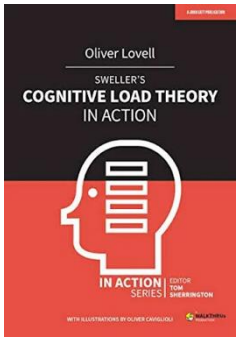
Therefore, we support our children's holistic development by providing lived experiences through the lens of the STARS values.

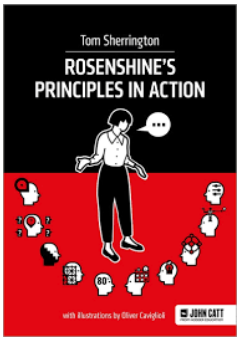
Support Togetherness Achieve Respect Success

Implementation

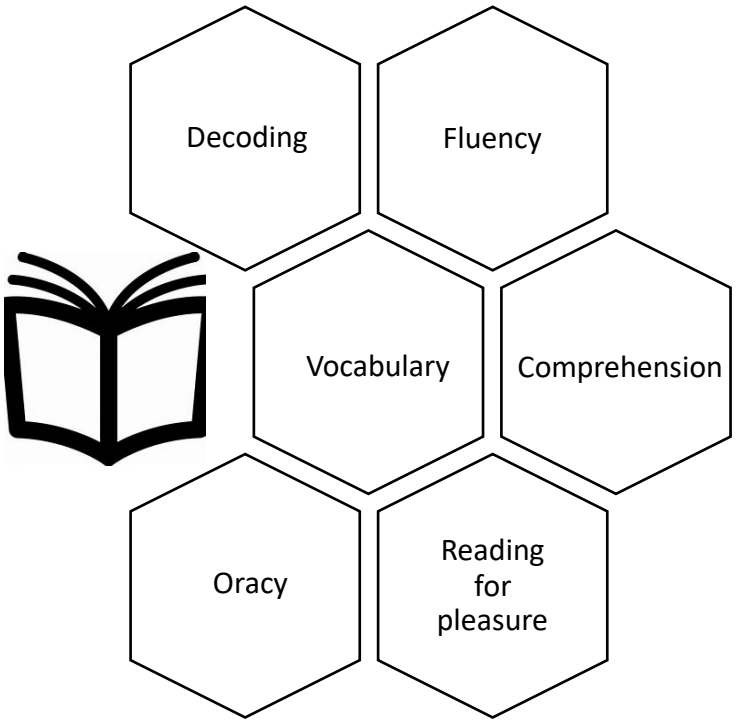
To ensure our everyday classroom practice transfers our intention, we use current research in cognitive science to develop pedagogy and quality CPD to ensure subject content is expertly delivered. This is alongside mentoring and coaching through our interconnected channels of leaders across school.

Using research from Sweller's Cognitive Load Theory, Rosenshine's Principles and Ebbinghaus' Forgetting Curve, the curriculum is implemented effectively using subject specific concepts. This enables pupils to attach new theory and ideologies onto growing schema as they move through Ayresome, year on year. This in turn helps pupils to make connections and make learning meaningful.





The foundations of reading:



Decoding is the ability to translate written symbols into spoken sounds. It relies on secure phonics knowledge and the application of grapheme–phoneme correspondences. Skilled decoders blend sounds confidently and accurately, enabling them to read unfamiliar words and build automaticity over time.
Fluency is the ability to read accurately, at a suitable pace, and with prosody. It allows children to read smoothly, phrasing text naturally and using tone and expression to reflect meaning. Using the EARS framework – Expression, Automaticity, Rhythm and Phrasing, and Smoothness – teachers assess and develop fluent reading that supports strong comprehension.
Vocabulary is central to understanding what is read. A wide and deep vocabulary allows children to make sense of increasingly complex texts. It includes both the explicit teaching of words and the incidental learning that happens through exposure to high-quality language and discussion.
Comprehension is the ability to construct meaning from texts. It involves using background knowledge, inference, prediction, clarification, questioning and summarising. Through structured strategy teaching and discussion, children learn to think actively as they read and respond with understanding and insight.
Oracy underpins all aspects of reading. Through high-quality discussion, children learn to articulate their ideas, build on others' contributions and explore language. Talk supports the development of vocabulary, inference and understanding, while also developing confidence and expression in reading aloud.
Reading for pleasure builds lifelong reading habits. It is fostered when children are given choice, time and access to a wide range of texts. Reading for enjoyment improves fluency, widens vocabulary, and supports emotional and social development, creating confident, motivated readers

Ayresome's curriculum is mapped using these foundations. We plan for pupil development following the year group progression map outlined in the impact section below.

Subject Delivery

Please see our Early Years Policy with regards to the delivery of Early Reading.

When?

Reading is taught every day across the school, tailored to children's developmental needs. In Reception and Key Stage 1, daily phonics sessions using Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised provide a systematic approach to decoding and early reading skills. In Key Stage 2, daily reading lessons focus on building fluency, comprehension, vocabulary and oracy, alongside continued phonics catch-up where needed.

How?

Our reading curriculum balances discrete phonics teaching in early years with rich, varied texts to inspire and develop confident readers. In Reception and Key Stage 1, phonics is taught through well-sequenced sessions that build secure decoding skills. From Year 3 onwards, reading lessons develop fluency, comprehension and vocabulary through whole-class teaching, guided discussion and opportunities for performing texts through our weekly Readers Theatre sessions.

Texts are carefully chosen to support curriculum themes and expand background knowledge, ensuring children develop both decoding skills and a deeper understanding of language. Teachers model fluent reading and create engaging experiences that build a lifelong love of reading. Assessment and responsive planning ensure every child's needs are met, including targeted support for those who require catch-up interventions.

Pedagogical Approach

Early Reading EYFS/KS1

Our pedagogical approach to reading in the Early Years and Key Stage 1 is grounded in the systematic and rigorous teaching of synthetic phonics through the Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised programme. We prioritise early reading as a foundational skill, ensuring all children develop the phonemic awareness and decoding skills needed to become fluent, confident readers. Daily phonics sessions are carefully structured and consistently delivered, with regular assessment to identify and address gaps in learning. Children read fully decodable books that are closely matched to their phonics knowledge, enabling them to apply what they have learned and experience success. Alongside phonics, we foster a love of reading through rich, high-quality texts, story time, and language-rich environments that promote vocabulary development and comprehension.

Key Stage 2

In Key Stage 2, reading lessons focus on developing fluent, confident, and engaged readers through a balanced and research-informed approach. We build on the secure decoding skills established in earlier years by deepening vocabulary knowledge, enhancing comprehension strategies, and fostering oracy and reading for pleasure.

High-quality, carefully selected texts provide a rich stimulus for exploring language, ideas and themes linked to the wider curriculum. These texts serve as a springboard for discussion, analysis and reflection, helping children to develop critical thinking and a love of reading that extends beyond the classroom.

Reading fluency is central to our approach. Using Rasinski's EARS framework (Expression, Automaticity, Rhythm, and Smoothness), we explicitly teach and model prosody to ensure children read aloud with meaning and engagement. As Rasinski notes,

"Fluency is the bridge between decoding and comprehension. When fluent reading becomes automatic, children can focus their attention on making meaning."

Alongside fluency, we prioritise teaching vocabulary in context to expand children's expressive and receptive language. Comprehension lessons use discussion-driven teaching of strategies such as predicting, clarifying, questioning, and summarising to deepen understanding and foster independent thinking.

Oracy skills are woven into reading lessons to build confidence in articulating ideas and engaging in collaborative dialogue. To further support reading engagement, Book Club sessions are timetabled several times a week. These sessions provide a dedicated time for pupils to immerse themselves in reading, share ideas and develop a community of enthusiastic readers. Book Clubs encourage discussion around texts, promoting critical thinking and a deeper connection to literature.

We also nurture reading for pleasure by providing a wide range of genres and authors that reflect diverse experiences and interests, encouraging lifelong reading habits.

Assessment and responsive teaching ensure that all pupils, including those needing phonics catch-up, make strong progress in becoming proficient and enthusiastic readers.

Greater Depth in reading goes beyond accuracy and fluency; it involves developing critical and analytical skills that enable pupils to engage with texts on a deeper level. Children working at greater depth demonstrate sophisticated comprehension by making inferences, analysing authorial intent, recognising nuances in language and evaluating the reliability and perspective of texts. They are able to compare themes, structures and viewpoints across different texts and apply higher-order thinking skills to form well-supported personal responses. Teaching for greater depth encourages metacognition, prompting pupils to reflect on their understanding, question assumptions and self-monitor their interpretations. Strategies such as text annotation, discussion-based enquiry and creative responses support children to 'deepen the moment', moving beyond surface meaning to explore subtleties and complexities in reading. This approach fosters confident, independent readers who are able to appreciate the richness of language and the power of storytelling.

Poetry

Each term begins with a Poetry Day, designed to immerse all pupils in the exploration and appreciation of poetry as readers. Each year group engages with a different poem, aligned to that term's theme, allowing for progression in understanding poetic forms and literary devices from EYFS to KS2.

Poetry Day is structured around reading, exploring, discussing and responding to a selected poem. Pupils develop their comprehension skills by examining vocabulary, imagery, rhythm, and meaning within the poem. They also learn to appreciate how poets use language creatively to convey emotions and ideas. This process deepens pupils' understanding of poetic techniques and supports their broader reading comprehension.

Additionally, Poetry Day fosters pupils' oracy skills through collaborative discussion and performance. Pupils are encouraged to express meaning clearly using intonation, tone and volume, helping them to engage with poetry as an expressive art form. These experiences enrich vocabulary, develop listening skills and build confidence in speaking, all of which support their overall reading development.

Reading for Pleasure

At the heart of our reading curriculum is a strong commitment to fostering a lifelong love of reading. To support this, we run regular timetabled Book Club sessions several times a week, designed to ignite children's enthusiasm, curiosity and sense of discovery. In Book Club, teachers actively share reading recommendations and guide pupils to find books that match their interests and challenge their thinking. This creates a welcoming space where pupils feel supported to explore new genres, share their thoughts and build a personal connection to reading.

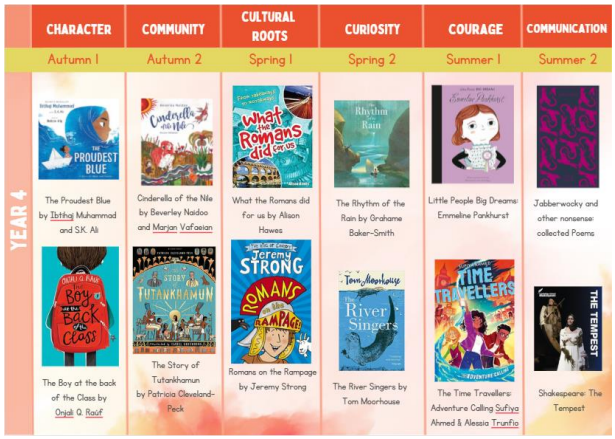
Our Book Club nurtures children's independence as readers and helps them develop a rich reading identity, building confidence and fostering a community where every voice is valued. This motivates pupils to become resilient, adventurous readers who love to share their reading journey.

We further enrich our reading culture through a well-resourced school library, regular author visits, participation in the National Literacy Trust's Young Readers Programme and celebrations such as World Book Day. These experiences connect pupils to wider reading communities and real authors, showing them that reading is a vibrant, living experience that extends beyond the classroom.

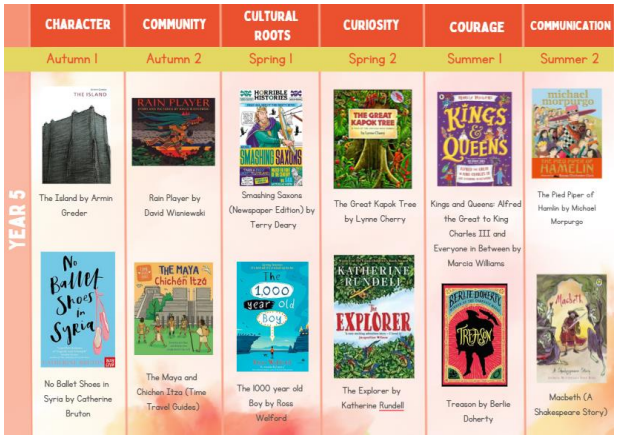
By embedding reading for pleasure at the core of our provision, we aim to cultivate enthusiastic, lifelong readers who read widely, think deeply and enjoy the magic and power of stories.

Text Overview

	CHARACTER	COMMUNITY	CULTURAL ROOTS	CURIOSITY	COURAGE	COMMUNICATION
	Autumn 1	Autumn 2	Spring 1	Spring 2	Summer 1	Summer 2
YEAR 3	Belonging by Jeannie Baker	Leo and the Gorgon's Curse by Joe Todd Stanton	The First Drawing by Mordicai Gerstein	Pop Up Volcano by Tom Vaillant	The Ancient Olympic Games by Jhonny Nunez	The Owl and the Pussycat by Edward Lear
	Anisha: Accidental Detective by Serena Patel	Orchard Book of Greek Myths by Geraldine McCaughrean	The Wild Way Home by Sophie Kirtley	Escape from Pompeii by Christina Balit	Magic Treehouse 16: Olympic Challenge	A Shakespeare Story: A Midsummer Night's Dream



	CHARACTER	COMMUNITY	CULTURAL ROOTS	CURIOSITY	COURAGE	COMMUNICATION
	Autumn 1	Autumn 2	Spring 1	Spring 2	Summer 1	Summer 2
YEAR 4	The Proudest Blue by Ibtihaj Muhammad and S.K. Ali	Cinderella of the Nile by Beverley Naidoo and Marjan Vafaeian	What the Romans did for us by Alison Hawes	The Rhythm of the Rain by Grahame Baker-Smith	Little People Big Dreams: Emmeline Pankhurst	Jabberwocky and other nonsense: collected Poems
	The Boy at the back of the Class by Onjali Q. Raúf	The Story of Tutankhamun by Patricia Cleveland-Peck	Romans on the Rampage by Jeremy Strong	The River Singers by Tom Moorhouse	The Time Travellers: Adventure Calling Sufiya Ahmed & Alessia Trunfio	Shakespeare: The Tempest



	CHARACTER	COMMUNITY	CULTURAL ROOTS	CURIOSITY	COURAGE	COMMUNICATION
	Autumn 1	Autumn 2	Spring 1	Spring 2	Summer 1	Summer 2
YEAR 5	The Island by Armin Greder	Rain Player by David Wisniewski	Smashing Saxons (Newspaper Edition) by Terry Deary	The Great Kapok Tree by Lynne Cherry	Kings and Queens: Alfred the Great to King Charles III and Everyone in Between by Marcia Williams	The Pied Piper of Hamlin by Michael Morpurgo
	No Ballet Shoes in Syria by Catherine Bruton	The Maya and Chichen Itza (Time Travel Guides)	The 1000 year old Boy by Ross Welford	The Explorer by Katherine Rundell	Treason by Berlie Doherty	Macbeth (A Shakespeare Story)

	CHARACTER	COMMUNITY	CULTURAL ROOTS	CURIOSITY	COURAGE	COMMUNICATION
	Autumn 1	Autumn 2	Spring 1	Spring 2	Summer 1	Summer 2
YEAR 6	The Journey by Francesca Sanna	Rosa Blanche by Ian McEwan and Roberto Innocenti	Martin Luther King Jr - Volume 33 by Maria Isabel Sanchez Vegara	Everest by Sangma Francis	Courting an Katherine by Helaine Becker	The Highwayman
	Can you see me? by Libby Scott and Rebecca Westcott	Letters from the Lighthouse by Emma Carroll	Journey to Jo'Burg by Beverley Naidoo	Dragon Mountain by Kate Tsang and Kevin Tsang	Phoenix by SF Said	Romeo and Juliet (A Shakespeare Story)

Impact

The ultimate measure of our reading curriculum's success lies in whether pupils have mastered the knowledge and skills we set out for them. This progression is carefully mapped against the Foundations of Reading to ensure a coherent and cumulative learning journey.

To evaluate impact, we regularly monitor and assess pupils' reading abilities and comprehension, providing both teachers and pupils with clear information about progress. We use a variety of 'checking for understanding' strategies in the moment, as well as tools to assess what pupils have retained over time and the depth of their understanding.

Our approach includes:

- Frequent formative assessment and targeted questioning to inform teaching and address gaps promptly.
- Retrieval practice embedded in lessons to reinforce learning and support long-term memory retention.
- The use of NFER tests, which provide standardised benchmarking against national norms, alongside Key Stage 2 SATs, to measure attainment and progress.

- Phonics assessments for early readers and those needing additional support, ensuring solid decoding skills.
- Fluency monitoring using the EARS framework (Expression, Automaticity, Rhythm, and Smoothness) to develop confident and expressive readers.
- Monitoring of comprehension and vocabulary skills, used to tailor future teaching.
- Encouraging pupils to apply their reading skills across the curriculum, fostering confident, independent learners who access knowledge effectively.

By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils will read fluently with strong comprehension, enabling them to engage critically with texts, access learning across subjects and communicate their ideas clearly. We are committed to nurturing lifelong readers, believing that reading underpins academic achievement and supports positive mental wellbeing.