**St Paul’s Catholic Primary School**

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**Reading Guidance Handbook**

**Introduction**

**By now, most children will be reading fluently across all types of books and texts that vary in content, length, purpose and type. They will be using their reading for learning across all subjects as well as for pleasure, and they will be developing their own reading tastes.**

**However, this does not mean that their reading development is complete!**

**The emphasis is now on reading and responding to what they read accurately and quickly. They should be observing the use of grammar and punctuation, as well as adventurous ideas, vocabulary & phrases. They should be obtaining and retaining a good understanding of the text and be able to answer questions both thoroughly and concisely without the need for prompts.**

**They need to be discussing and listening to the views of others, so they can enhance their own understanding.**

**Authors should be explored, and their use of techniques examined to see how they influence the text.**

**All of these things are vital components in them improving their comprehension and developing their own writing.**

**The following guidance notes will provide you with some tips to help your child in these areas.**

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**Decoding**

Decoding is a vital step in the reading process. A skill that your child has been using since they have been learning to read. Whilst the necessity to decode words will have decreased as they have progressed through the reading scheme, it is a skill that will take them through their adult life and should therefore continue to be practised. Average readers need to see a word 4 to 14 times before it becomes a ‘sight word’!

To aid this, encourage your child to:

* Read a wide range of fiction & non-fiction texts so that they encounter new vocabulary and can practise this skill
* Continue to observe and discuss spelling patterns, syllables and phonic knowledge to aid them in the decoding of any new vocabulary
* Continue to observe and reinforce their understanding of common prefixes, suffixes and root words. For example, the prefix *multi-* means *many* and the suffix -*less*means *not* or *without*

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| **Fluency**When children can read quickly with few errors, they are “fluent”. Fluent readers read smoothly and at a good pace. They group words together to help with meaning, and they use the proper tone in their voice when reading aloud. If a child has to decode too many words, it can prevent them from building up a secure understanding of what they are reading. Reading fluency is therefore essential for good reading comprehension.To aid your child with this, encourage them to:* Read regularly
* Read books at their level so that they can practise this skill in line with their ability
* Read books of different genres
* Read texts in different formats e.g. newspapers, plays, poems
* Encourage them to read a passage several times
* Model good reading practises by reading texts aloud together

**Vocabulary**To understand what you’re reading, you need to understand most of the words in the text. Having a strong vocabulary is a key component of reading comprehension. Students can learn vocabulary through instruction, but they typically learn the meaning of words through everyday experience and also by reading. The more words children are exposed to, the richer their vocabulary becomes.To aid your child with this, encourage your child to: * Have frequent conversations on a variety of topics
* Stop at new words when reading and define them
* Use context to work out the word’s meaning themselves
* Explain even simplistic words so they can practise explaining what words mean
* Investigate a new word, encourage them to explain it in their own words to secure their understanding
* Use the new word often. e.g. for the new word ‘*essential’*, you might talk about what is *essential* to pack in their school bag or discuss what is *essential* for happiness etc…
* Find the word that means a certain thing; does it always mean that?
* Provide synonyms and antonyms for words
* Ask how a particular word choice has created a feeling of …
* Identify common phrases and what they mean
* Discuss how they might use particular vocabulary in their own writing

**Coherence/Cohesion** **Coherence** refers to the general sense that a text makes sense through the organisation of its content. The term **cohesion** refers to the conjunctions and pronouns used to **link the parts of a piece of writing**. Using the same verb tense throughout a text also offers cohesion.Both these skills are also important for reading comprehension. Knowing how ideas link up at the sentence level helps children get meaning from passages and entire textsChildren need to be able to construct a timeline of events in their mind to aid with their comprehension.To aid this, encourage your child to: * Observe and discuss how punctuation, conjunctions, verb tenses, pronouns and vocabulary choice influence the text
* Sequence the events that have taken place so far at a given point
* ‘Scan’ the text for particular words, facts, figures or extracts.
* Explain relationships between characters and events
* Summarise what they have just read.
* Look at a certain point in the book and ask what impression they get of a particular character or what is happening at each stage of the text providing evidence to support.
* Predict what they think might happen at any given stage and provide evidence.
* Analyse writing styles/tools used and their effects e.g. sentence length, sensory devices, sound devices, tone, word choice, irony, onomatopoeia, metaphors, similes, personification, idioms

**Reasoning and Background Knowledge**Most readers relate what they’ve read to what they know. So it’s important for them to have background or prior knowledge about the world when they read. They also need to be able to “read between the lines” and pull out meaning even when it’s not literally spelt out. They can then use this background knowledge to make inferences and draw conclusions.To aid this:* Expose your child to different experiences and talk about what you have learned from experiences you have had together and separately
* Help them make connections between new knowledge and existing knowledge
* Build knowledge through reading, conversations, movies and TV shows, and art. Life experience and hands-on activities also [build knowledge](https://www.understood.org/en/community-events/blogs/teacher-tips/2017/06/06/teacher-tip-the-most-fun-way-to-build-reading-skills-for-back-to-school).
* Make a statement about what you have just read, and ask them to explain why you might think that (using evidence from the text).
* Ask ‘w’ questions ‘why’, ‘where’, ‘who’, ‘when’ and ‘what’
* Ask what impression do you get of …? What evidence is there to support this?
* Ensure they understand the difference between ‘fact’ and ‘opinion’ ‘Do you think this statement is a fact or an opinion?’
* Ask them to explain certain phrases e.g. ‘It dawned on me…’
* Ask them ‘How can you tell/know…’ questions ensuring they provide evidence.

**Working Memory and Attention**When children read, attention allows them to take in information from the text. [Working memory](https://www.understood.org/en/learning-attention-issues/child-learning-disabilities/executive-functioning-issues/working-memory-what-it-is-and-how-it-works) allows them to hold on to that information and use it to gain meaning and build knowledge from what they’re reading.The ability to [self-monitor](https://www.understood.org/en/learning-attention-issues/child-learning-disabilities/executive-functioning-issues/4-ways-kids-use-self-monitoring-to-learn) while reading is very important. Children need to be able to recognize when they don’t understand something. Then, they need to stop, go back, and re-read to clear up any confusion they may have.To aid this:* Encourage them to create a picture in their mind of what they’ve just read or heard.
* Ask them to explain how to do something that involves making sense of information and mentally filing it.
* Give them opportunities to read a section of text and ‘highlight’ (with an appropriate medium!) what they feel are the important bits of information. Then discuss.

**Discuss the Author**Exploring how and why an author has used particular strategies will aid your child to secure their understanding and enable them to use such devices in their own writing. To aid this:* Look at how the author has created feelings within the reader e.g. excitement, pity, anger, suspense
* Point out that the feelings of the reader may be very different from the character’s e.g. A character’s trauma may well lead to a reader’s excitement.
* Ask ‘Why does the author…?’, ‘Why did the author use this word/similes/adjective/pronoun/tense…?’
* Explore the author’s background and evaluate how it might have influenced their writing
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