

Reading at St Patrick's



When we welcomed your child to St Patrick's School they received their reading book bag and their first book as a gift from the school. This gift is to emphasise our aim to foster a love of books and reading from your child's first day with us. We create a reading culture that starts with reading books and text for sheer pleasure and that ethos permeates through the school.

In Foundation Stage, we share books with children daily to continue the work that parents start at home. We look at illustrations and encourage book talk from all of the children. We read to the whole class and in groups looking at a range of stories from traditional tales to well-established authors like Michael Rosen. We love to read together and through this we develop the children's concepts of print. In continuing work from the different nurseries, the children look at sounds in our environment and listen to different sounds that we can make with instruments, our bodies and a whole range of other items. Listening to rhymes is an important development that we seek to improve through games, playing and our rhyme of the week. We introduce the children to phonics to break down words into individual sounds so that we can read on our own and use synthetic phonics using the Phonics Bug scheme to develop our decoding skills. We share books together and model how to read a book changing voices through pitch and tone to make our reading more interesting.

In Key Stage 1, we continue the work started in Foundation Stage and develop children's understanding of letters and sounds through teaching of synthetic phonics basing lesson on the Phonics Bug scheme of work. Daily phonics lessons help children to decode the language they encounter each day and, as the children get older, we move towards helping use our phonics to develop spelling through investigating the weird and wonderful world of the English language. Many of these patterns have strange and interesting variants which we love to discover.

In Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 Children are encouraged to use their reading to help them with their writing skills. We tell them about how a magpie likes to pinch objects that they find attractive and we ask them to 'magpie' i.e. pinch, any outstanding wow words or phrases from famous authors so they can use them in their own writing. These are placed on walls in the classroom, on word mats and in word logs so children can access them when they write.

Guided reading, using a wide range of material from Phonics Bug, Heinemann Story World and Discovery World and Oxford Reading Tree, takes place daily across the school and children love being able to read with an adult. Children look through a book at a suitable level and discuss what they think might happen. Children remind each other what to do if they get stuck on a word before reading. After a while, they stop and take part in a discussion about the book and this is the best part! From year 2 to year 6 the children are encouraged to maintain a reading log to record their thoughts and feelings about the books that they have read, both at school and at home.

A wide range of reading books are sent home daily and parents can write comments about how well their children are doing with the books at home. These books are from various book schemes to ensure a broad and balanced range of reading material and are placed in bands that get gradually harder as the children progress. They start with books which have no words to develop good reading behaviours and progress to complex fiction and non-fiction. When children become fluent readers, they move onto choosing their own books from the class library where they can browse and select a range of books. This develops their skill of looking at books and making a quick summary based on a short reading time and the blurb on the back of books. Parents in Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 also have access to books from Phonics Bug on the school's learning platform

We use specially trained teaching assistants to support children who are not at the same level as their peers and use programmes such as Better Reading Partnership and Toe by Toe to help support those who need it. For children in key stage 2 who are still struggling with fluency and comprehension, we have a specialist teacher who delivers the Conquering Literacy programme in small group and 1:1 teaching situations.

We celebrate World Book day each year and love dressing in crazy costumes to promote reading. We also hold regular book fairs which are amazingly well supported by our fantastic parents who play such a big part in teaching their children to read.

By the time children leave us, we aim to have developed fluent readers who are interested in reading as it is a key life skill for a successful future.