

Whole School Threads

(from our intent/curriculum rationale)

- ❖ **Positive Attitudes for Learning (PAL):** We will develop positive learning behaviours and attitudes, focusing on engagement, motivation and critical thinking.
- ❖ **Equality and Diversity:** We aim to provide an equitable start for our children, where communalities and differences are valued and celebrated. Our pupils will develop cultural awareness through a diverse and inclusive curriculum.
- ❖ **Reading at the heart of everything we do:** We will develop confident readers, instil a love of reading and provide purposeful cross-curricular reading opportunities.
- ❖ **Develop an understanding of how to care for our environment:** We will support children to take an interest and responsibility, as global citizens and custodians of our planet.

English

COMMUNICATION:

Talk Partners: We will teach children the skills to effectively communicate by listening and responding carefully to each other and using high level vocabulary within their discussions.

READING:

Preparation for life: We will teach children how important reading is in being the key to unlocking all future learning and be prepared for life.

Text choices: We will use carefully selected texts which expose children to different genres, cultures and themes alongside immersing them in ambitious vocabulary.

WRITING:

Writing for a reason: We will provide meaningful opportunities for children to write purposefully across the curriculum and within independent learning / continuous provision.

teaching of English will give every child, regardless of their background, needs or current attainment, the fundamental skills they need to read fluently, write coherently and communicate effectively. We systematically teach the skills of reading and writing using the phonics programme 'Read, Write Inc'. Alongside this, we teach English discretely to embed elements of comprehension, grammar and spelling. We provide purposeful cross-curricular reading, writing and speaking opportunities to embed and deepen knowledge.

Intent

Rationale

At Robert Miles Infant School we place **reading at the heart of everything we do**. We truly believe reading unlocks the whole curriculum and future learning depends on it. We immerse children in a **language-rich environment** and value the teaching of **ambitious vocabulary**. We are very passionate about children's literature and creating a life-long love of reading for children.

We teach every child, regardless of their background, needs or current attainment, the fundamental skills they need to read and write **accurately, fluently** and **confidently**.

At Robert Miles Infants, children will learn the fundamental skills of reading and writing through the high-quality teaching of systematic **phonics**. We place paramount importance on providing opportunities for children to **listen** to fluent, expressive reading of different **genres** (stories, poetry and non-fiction) through our daily **story time**. We provide **purposeful cross-curricular reading and writing** where children are given regular opportunities to practise the skills they have learned throughout the day. Children are expected to read and write a range of **genres** across the curriculum, regularly and within a range of contexts.

We recognise the importance of teaching **comprehension** alongside word reading. This is taught within our Read, Write, Inc lessons whereby children learn to show their understanding of a text. It is also taught explicitly through the use of **VIPERS** during our discrete English lessons.

Alongside this we use our reading spine to immerse children in a wide range of rich and varied texts, exposing them to ambitious vocabulary and a rich literature heritage. Children start school with varied exposure to vocabulary and a wide range of oral language skills. We recognise that **vocabulary** matters to academic success and life chances and therefore we seek every opportunity to explicitly teach vocabulary to children across the curriculum and regularly recap taught vocabulary to ensure it is remembered long term. We provide experiences to widen children's vocabulary at the earliest stages of their lives within a **language-rich environment**.

Through the use of core texts teachers provide **creative learning experiences** that engage and inspire children. We use the 'Power of Reading' and 'Talk for Write' approaches to enhance our teaching of reading and writing, including learning experiences such as role play, hot seating and story mapping. Teachers are flexible in their planning, enabling them to respond to children's interests. Topic and lesson 'hooks' are carefully thought out to engage children in the learning experience, which is then used to inform reading and writing opportunities.

Each class has a book area whereby texts are carefully selected to support children in developing a **love for reading**. We encourage a learning environment where children are able to develop a love for reading and writing in which they chose to **read and write widely for their own pleasure**. We want them to be enthusiastic, motivated and independent life-long learners. We promote a 'reading for pleasure' culture in our school through providing children opportunities to choose books that they want to read or listen to.

Children will be given opportunities to **develop excellent speaking and listening skills** that allow them to express themselves and communicate confidently with both staff and their peers. We encourage children to share their own thoughts and opinions on the texts they hear and read. We use 'Talk for Writing' approach to ensure children can plan, practise and rehearse the sentences they want to write.

We value a **strong partnership with parents** and encourage children to read books at home which are directly matched to their phonic ability, to help embed what they have learnt in school. As well as this, children take home an additional practise book (closely matched to phonetic ability) and a family sharing book to encourage reading for pleasure. We work closely with parents to share progress and attainment and discuss individual needs of a child with the parent as soon as possible; working together to find ways in which we can support at home. We provide a range of interventions for target children, depending on their needs and abilities, as well as every day high-quality teaching whereby individuals are targeted and challenged within lessons.

Implementation

*(What might an observer typically see in a **Read Write Inc.** lesson?)*

The initial teaching of reading and writing is taught through the Read, Write, Inc. (RWI) Phonics programme, where children learn the underpinning skills to be able to decode to read and segment to write. To ensure consistent coverage across the school, children begin this journey at the earliest opportunity in reception and continue on the programme until they have achieved proficiency in reading and writing. We deliver high quality teaching through tightly-structured, small-steps that are progressive throughout the lesson, the week and through the groups (*Rosenshine's 10 principles*). RWI is taught cumulatively with the aid of simple, clear resources that are familiar to children (*Oxford University Press*).

Every RWI lesson begins with the teaching of a new sound alongside recapping sounds that have already been taught. This overlearning is essential in enabling children to recall and use their sound knowledge confidently within their reading and writing. They learn how to read the new sound and previously learnt sounds within real, nonsense and multi-syllabic words. Children then learn how to spell using the new sound, as well as practise spelling with previously learnt sounds, again providing spaced repetition to allow for overlearning to take place (*Rosenshine's 10 principles*). Children are similarly taught sounds and words from a book that they work on for a number of days, depending on their grouping and level of learning. They engage in 'partner practise' to teach each other the sounds and words from the book. The teaching of reading is systematic as the books that children read within our RWI lessons match the children's phonic knowledge (*Education inspection framework, 2019*).

Teachers read the book to enable children to hear confident, fluent and expressive reading. Children will read the book at least three times: once for decoding, once for fluency and finally once for comprehension, so they learn to read with confidence, expression and fluency and develop a solid understanding of what they have read (*Oxford University Press*). The comprehension activities that are taught throughout the week teach children to accurately retrieve and infer from the text alongside developing their reasoning and explanation skills when giving their opinions and predictions. The definition of unfamiliar vocabulary is explicitly taught at word level so children gain a better understanding of the text.

Within RWI, children learn to compose sentences that are grammatically correct. They use the book as a stimulus for their writing and will write a combination of dictated sentences as well as learning the skills to create their own sentences/piece of writing. The teaching of writing is progressive and children will be expected to continually build on their prior learning. The teacher models and marks the writing elements of the lesson with the children to enable them to identify and correct their own errors.

The structure of each lesson is the same every day. Therefore, children are familiar with the routine; freeing children's working memory and allowing for the focus to be on the new learning that is taking place. As RWI ensures that the teaching of phonics, reading and writing is progressive the lessons will look slightly different across the groups, ensuring the pupils read books containing sounds that they are confident in reading (*Oxford University Press*). However, lessons will build cumulatively on knowledge that children have learnt as they move through the book levels and groups. (*School inspection handbook, 2019*).

*(What might an observer typically see in an **English** lesson?)*

The teaching of English is taught as discrete lessons alongside the teaching of RWI. We use detailed English progression maps which set out coverage of core knowledge and skills and ensure teaching is progressive within year groups and across the school. The teaching of discrete English lessons are to ensure children are exposed to their year group objectives and can be accurately challenged and assessed by their own teacher. In reception this takes place twice a week with RWI taking place three times a week. In Key Stage 1 this is taught in a two-week block intermittently. When children are ready to move off the RWI programme they have English lessons daily. We use carefully selected texts from our reading spine to inspire and engage children, taking them on a meaningful learning adventure. We also use 'Power of Reading' in conjunction with a range of high-quality resources such as Literacy Shed, Pobble 365 and 'Talk for Write' approach to enthuse and motivate all children. Children need a wide range of experiences to develop their understanding of written text in all its' forms. Research shows that this should include active engagement with different media and genres of texts (*EEF, 2017*). In English we allow for first-hand experiences, teachers to be flexible to follow children's interests and provide creative learning experiences that engage and inspire children. We recognise that children may enter our school with low levels of language and vocabulary. Therefore, we begin the block of English by introducing and learning the meaning of ambitious or unfamiliar vocabulary found in the book. We teach progressively in small steps, to build on prior knowledge in order to achieve a certain outcome over a set number of days or weeks. For example, we will teach children the use of appropriate and interesting adjectives, expanded noun phrases and exposure to similes, alongside engaging in purposeful role play and 'hot seating'

which will lead to writing a character description. Within our English lessons children will be expected to engage regularly with reading activities, developing their comprehension skills by allowing them to give verbal and written predictions as well as retrieving and inferring from the text. We use VIPERS (*Literacy Shed*) to ensure that comprehension skills are taught both discretely within English lessons and across the curriculum. The teaching of specific grammar is also regularly taught through the books or topic stimuli, making it more meaningful to children. Spelling of common exception words is taught discretely in Key Stage 1 and are recapped regularly throughout the week, providing many opportunities for children to practise the taught spellings at word and sentence level.

(What might an observer typically see in a handwriting lesson?)

Although the initial teaching of letter formation is taught and recapped during our RWI lessons, we recognise the need for children to have the opportunity to practise their handwriting regularly in a calm, quiet environment. It is within our handwriting lessons that we can focus on reminding children of the importance of their posture and positioning to enable them form letters accurately and of the correct size. Staff model the formation of letters on large lined paper so that children can clearly see the formation and positioning of each letter. We provide time for children to assess their own handwriting by identifying which letter/word is formed most accurately. The teaching of handwriting is progressive throughout the school. Children begin by learning how to correctly form each letter, starting and finishing in the correct place. This will then lead to learning how to form ascenders and descenders clearly and of the correct size, with an importance of sitting letters correctly on the line. As children progress they are expected to form all upper- and lower-case letters of the correct size and by the end of key stage 1 learn how to join some letters correctly. We expect that children transfer their handwriting skills across all areas of learning. Staff use the same agreed language consistently across the school to ensure children know and understand what is expected of them.

Cross-Curricular Learning:

We recognise the importance of providing opportunities for children to apply and practise their reading and writing skills during lessons and within their independent learning throughout the school day (*EEF, 2017*). We expect children to read and write regularly across the curriculum, with expectations being progressive within and across the year groups. An example of this is during our independent morning work; a reading activity might be on the table for children to complete or there could be spellings on the board for them to choose and formulate within their own written sentence. Another example in Year 2 is children writing a booklet as an assessment task within science to show their understanding of 'suitability of materials'. In maths we encourage children to read problem solving and reasoning tasks if their reading ability allows for this. Staff ensure daily opportunities are provided to read aloud stories, poems, rhymes and non-fiction texts that develop pupils' vocabulary, language comprehension and love of reading (*School inspection handbook, 2019*). We place paramount importance in ensuring that we develop a culture whereby children develop a love for reading through immersing them in a range of reading experiences. Children choose 'family sharing books' to take home from our library or from their own class reading areas to share with family at home. Children have opportunity to vote for a book to be read within the school day and they are then encouraged to share their own thoughts and opinions on what they hear and read.

Learning Environment:

In both RWI and English lessons teachers limit the cognitive load (*Rosenshine's 10 principles*) placed on children, simplifying the process of learning and using a range of set routines familiar and consistent across the school. Our working areas contain resources and displays that are useful. For example, English working walls that are progressively added to and phonics displays which look similar across the school, only displaying the most important information e.g. speed sound charts and red (tricky) words. We strive to create learning environments that allow the learner to focus solely on the learning (*Education inspection framework, 2019*). Vocabulary that we expect children to know and remember is displayed appropriately in the classroom. Children are encouraged to refer to this and use this regularly within their learning. Our classroom reading areas reflect the fact that 'the books are the most important aspect' of a reading corner. (*The Reading Framework, Teaching the Foundations of Literacy, July 2021, DFE*) We have carefully chosen a range of books which include different genres and cultures and books are displayed at children's level. We have reduced the amount of books which are displayed at one time and children take a daily vote for which book they would like, enabling them to share their own reasons, thoughts and opinions. (*The Reading Framework, Teaching the Foundations of Literacy, July 2021, DFE*)

Assessment:

The assessment of children's reading is thorough, consistent and carried out regularly across the school. Our RWI phonics assessment allows for quick identification of children who are not achieving as expected within their sound knowledge and therefore tailored one-to-one tutoring can be given promptly. RWI assessments are carried out every half-term to ensure children are in the correct groupings for their phonetic ability. If concerns are raised for about a child's phonic knowledge, they can then be individually re-assessed in between our main assessment points, re-grouped if necessary and targeted intervention can be put in place immediately. We recognise the importance of not only assessing children's ability to read words but to assess their comprehension. To ensure this is assessed consistently across the school we have created running record assessments whereby not only word reading is assessed but also carefully chosen questions are asked which cover all of our VIPERS. We also carry out comprehension quizzes to assess children's understanding; verbally in reception, progressing into simple written form in year 1 and more comprehensive written answers in year 2. All information gathered then enables teachers to make accurate judgements about children's whole reading level and ensure they are then taking the correct books home to practise.

Alongside daily formative assessment of writing we ensure regular opportunities are provided for children to write independently so that we can see the skills that are embedded and how independently they access classroom resources to support their writing. The spelling of year group common exception words are also assessed at data points in the school calendar which aids the teacher assessment of writing and allows for individual spellings to be sent home to practise. Alongside this, teachers use quizzes to assess children's independent use of grammar and spelling. Teachers use exemplification materials and previously moderated writing pieces to assist in their assessing of writing. Internal (both in year groups and across school) and external (across our TRUST) moderation is carried out to ensure consistency and validity of judgements.

Celebrating Reading and Writing:

We value the importance of celebrating reading and writing in our school. We have a weekly celebration assembly whereby children are chosen to be celebrated for their learning attitudes, behaviours and/or work they've produced in class. We encourage children to show their piece of work to the school, enabling them to be proud of what they've achieved and be a role model for others. Children who complete reading and writing homework are recognised and praised within their classes. In addition to this staff chose a 'Reader of the Week' to be celebrated in assembly and across school. These children are chosen for their efforts and/or success in reading. Their photo is displayed in our corridor along with the reason why they are chosen so that this can be seen and celebrated by children, staff and visitors within school. Children are often chosen to take an outstanding piece of work to share with another class or member of staff to recognise the achievement. We celebrate 'World Book Week' annually which takes place in different forms. One example is each class choosing a different book from the same author or choosing a different author to focus on in each year group. Alternatively, each class choosing a text from a different country to base their reading and writing opportunities on for that week. We set up reading and writing initiatives throughout the year such as writing competitions and sponsored reading events which are engaging and fun for children to take part in.

Impact

Through the high-quality teaching of reading and writing we aspire for all pupils, regardless of needs, backgrounds or abilities to make sufficient or accelerated progress to meet or exceed age-related expectations.

We aim for children to gain the invaluable skill of being able to read and understand a wide range of texts and genres by the time they leave Key Stage 1. We have a strong belief that through the enjoyable, rich reading experiences and opportunities we provide we can encourage children to develop a passion to read for their own pleasure. We know reading is the key to accessing all other areas of the curriculum and through the provision of regular opportunities for children to practise reading in different contexts we hope this will enable them to thrive in all areas of learning.

We equip children to be able to explain their learning and thinking clearly and use subject specific vocabulary correctly and confidently by placing paramount importance in ensuring that ambitious, rich vocabulary is taught throughout the school; both discretely, through the wider curriculum and within conversations with our pupils.

We value the need to prepare children for their next stage within their learning and this is particularly enabled through the progressive way in which phonics, reading and writing is taught throughout the school. Our detailed progression and coverage documents enable any staff member, including staff new to our school, supply staff or ECTs to clearly identify what needs to be taught and when. These documents enable staff to know what children should be achieving each half-term in order to meet age related expectations by the end of the year. It ensures teachers plan lessons whereby knowledge can be learnt in small steps and teaching progressively builds on prior knowledge within a year and across year groups.

We want children to be able to know and remember what has been taught to them. We aim to embed learning in their long-term memory for quick retrieval to inform future learning. The way in which we teach, using Rosenshine's 10 Principles, enables teachers to focus on the quality of teaching and learning within the classroom. The way in which learning is presented to children in small steps and in simple form, reduces cognitive load and allows for children to focus solely on what they need to know and remember. Spaced learning enables children to constantly retrieve and recap previous learning which can then be developed and embedded further; therefore remaining in their long term memory.

Teacher assessments (June 2022) showed that, by the end of Year 2 **85%** of children passed the phonics screening test, with pre-covid pass rates being at 97% (June 2019) which is higher than the national (2019) outcomes of 91%. Our reading and writing outcomes for Key Stage 1 are in line with or exceeding national outcomes in both reading and writing.

Pre covid:

2018 reading: **77%** 2018 writing: **72%**
2019 reading: **79%** 2019 writing: **76%**

Post covid:

2022 reading: **67%** 2022 writing: **57%**

This level of attainment is also reflected in our Early Years data:

Pre covid:

2018 reading: **79%** 2018 writing: **75%**
2019 reading: **83%** 2019 writing: **77%**

Post covid:

2022: Word reading: **72%** Comprehension: **80%** Writing: **70%**

We continue to aspire to meet our FFT5 targets given to us by the TRUST. Our overarching aim is for children to leave our school with proficiency in reading and writing which they can apply confidently across the curriculum. We hope that children move onto their next stage of learning with a passion for reading and writing and their positive learning attitudes journey with them as they continue to grow and develop.

References:

Education Endowment Foundation, Improving Literacy in Key Stage , 2017

School inspection handbook, November 2019

Education inspection framework, May 2019

Rosenshine's 10 Principles

The Reading Framework, Teaching the Foundations of Literacy, July 2021, DFE