



Curriculum Intent for Reading

- a curriculum that is ambitious for all pupils;
- a curriculum that is coherently planned and sequenced;
- a curriculum that is successfully adapted, designed and developed for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities;
- a curriculum that is broad and balanced for all pupils.

What does reading look like at West Ashtead?

At West Ashtead reading is a vital life skill that is key to nurturing children to become curious, creative and lifelong readers. We believe that reading is a key element towards academic and social fulfilment. We equip our children with the skills to be fluent, expressive readers alongside the ability to be analytical and critical about the texts that they encounter. Children experience reading in a wide variety of contexts at West Ashtead. Our children read, are read to, and read with. They develop a love of reading and have a thirst for literature that will last a lifetime.

In Early Years and KS1, we follow the Little Wandle Letters and Sounds program which is a complete systematic synthetic phonics programme (SSP) developed for schools by schools. Based on the original Letters and Sounds, but extensively revised to provide a complete teaching programme meeting all the expectations of the National Curriculum, the Ofsted Deep Dive into reading and preparing your children to go beyond the expectations of the Phonics Screening Check. They work their way up the scheme before becoming 'free readers'.

In KS2, Whole class guided reading sessions are taught throughout the week. High quality, challenging texts are explored to broaden vocabulary and to provide opportunities to question, analyse and make inferences about what they are reading.

Reading is very much at the heart of school life, and is embedded in all areas of the curriculum. Texts are aligned to topics, giving children a cross-curricular context for their reading and broadening their range of vocabulary. All classes have stimulating book areas that allow the children to have easy access to high quality texts. Class displays promote the high-level vocabulary that children use and apply in their learning. Staff are avid and passionate readers who pass on their enthusiasm for reading and their knowledge of high quality literature to the children. Staff also recognise that some children may need extra support in their reading, and others need challenging further. All children are assessed regularly and staff plan their curriculum to take into account the needs of all of our readers.

What do our children say about reading?

“Reading in the library is calm and comfortable. It feels like home.”

“I like reading the new books we have - it’s really exciting!”

“I love doing the drawings and acting in our whole class reading lessons.”

“Learning new words makes me feel important. I like choosing our new words of the week.”

Why is reading important?

Reading has a huge impact on children's academic progress, their social and cognitive development, their well-being and their mental health. It opens up the world around them and encourages them to engage with it. Early reading has a profound effect on the development of the skills that children need when they begin to read independently. Language acquisition and language processing skills are all developed early on through being read to and listening to and discussing stories. Children learn about people, places and events that they may never have otherwise experienced.

They develop empathy through exploring different characters and different situations. They develop their ability to express their own emotions and those of others. They garner a deeper understanding of the world and their place in it. By encouraging and nurturing good reading skills and a love of reading, we equip children with the tools they need to make sense of themselves, their environment and the challenges of the future.

How do we enrich our children's understanding of reading?

At West Ashted we have a purpose built library, run by children in the upper school, where children can access a huge range of books and read in a relaxed but stimulating environment. We celebrate special events such as World Book Day, National Poetry Day and we have had illuminating visits from writers, publishers and other professionals from the literary world. Staff and children take part in a home/school reading challenge, we have local library visits (and visits from local library staff) and younger children share their reading with the older ones. We also have a volunteer reading initiative, where parents and grandparents come into the school to read with children.

Reading takes place across the curriculum, in our English lessons that are based around the Power of Reading scheme of texts; in our topic learning where we read about famous historical people and events or explore the geography of new and familiar places; in our Art lessons where we study artists and art movements from different times and cultures. Reading occurs when we debate a philosophical question; when we investigate real-life problems written in maths; when we share each other's instructions for a new game or when we follow a new recipe. It contributes to everything we do.