Children at St George’s Catholic School are encouraged to express themselves when Speaking and Listening, Reading and Writing.

**Speaking and Listening**

Talking is fundamental to a pupil's learning. Pupils are encouraged and helped to talk clearly, confidently and with expression in order to communicate ideas and feelings. Similarly, and just as importantly, is the need to listen carefully and respond appropriately. All children are provided with opportunities in all areas of the curriculum to develop skills when speaking and listening. In order to respond to the many needs of our pupils who may speak more than one language at home, we offer, where possible, a practical and experienced based curriculum which is wide and vocabulary rich. Our Reception Class has been involved in the Neli Intervention Programme designed to improve spoken literacy.

**Reading**

One of the greatest gifts that we can give a child is the ability to read. We encourage our children to read every day at home as regular reading ensures the best possible chance that that children will become fluent and confident readers.

We believe that reading should be an enjoyable activity and our approach to reading here at St George's  is based on this.

We employ a variety of techniques to foster a 'love' of reading.

We have a school Library Club, in school library sessions with a dedicated team of  librarians , curriculum linked whole class readers and shared reading texts, guided reading texts which are either quality tests which ensure a breadth and depth of reading or which are linked to the curriculum so that children read to learn, reading logs,  comprehension activities which are chosen on the same rationale as our Guided Reading texts,  a well-stocked and continually renewed reading scheme, Little Wandle daily phonics , daily in class reading from our Pie Corbett Reading Spine collection, a Golden Ticket Scheme to reward home reading , a teachers' Book Club, a poetry step, World Book Day fun every year, visiting authors, Skype chats with authors and a healthy Twitter account regularly used to promote reading and well followed by the Twitter community.

We update our Reading Scheme on a regular basis. We have opted for a mixed scheme in the past our of choice in order to offer variety however, recently we have invested in Big Cat Collins texts to provide consistency between the move from guided reading within phonics and reading from the wider school scheme. We have chosen Big Cat Collins for its quality texts and its suitability to the needs of our cohort.

We have an online reading resource called Bug Club to which every child has access. This has a read to me function to support any families who may find it hard to read with their children. Bug Club allows us to track pupil reading and progress and was invaluable as a reading resource during Lockdown. We now also Big Cat on line for youngest readers in order to further support phonics.

We have a new school library system called Libresoft to ensure that children have experience of a real library where they can borrow and return books. This is a digital system which can also track children's reading.

We have recently updated our Phonics and Reading Policies as a result of making the change from Read Write Inc phonics to Little Wandle.

The staff have recently created a new St George's Curriculum and reading opportunities have been embedded and signalled within the new plans.

There is a Reading File in each classroom where teaching staff can easily access data and record information about a child’s reading. We have catch up programmes for children who may need extra phonics support and we hear priority readers. We have intervention programmes to ensure children are taught the skills they need on a one to one basis to enable our most vulnerable pupils to keep up.

We run clubs and events to encourage and inspire our able readers. This year we have an Ovid in the Westcountry Club , our online Library Club and our physical Library Club where we appoint avid and passionate readers as librarians.

We subscribe to Resources for Learning so that we can have access to regular fresh supplies of both fiction and non fiction texts in our classrooms.

We reach out to parents through our social media accounts with regular support for reading and with the best  advice on reading and authors.

We invite parents in to reading events.

We have regular visits from Taunton Library and we take our children to the library to inspire them to join with their families.

**Writing**

Writing is best learned if children are encouraged to do it for 'real' reasons.

We try to offer as many real  purposes to write as possible.  We plan in WOW events, trips, visitors and opportunities to write across the curriculum to this end.

Children are encouraged to see marking comments as tips on how to improve their writing. We have an agreed marking scheme. Children are provided or create their own Toolkits and Success Criteria and these support the writing process. We teach Alan Peat Sentence types to provide children with an extra set of tools for writing. Alan Peat sentence types help with the process of progression in writing as the types have been chosen and shared between year groups with though given to progress. We use Talk for Writing Principles from Reception onwards and this technique is firmly embedded within our Literacy and Language Scheme which is used from Year 2 to Year 6.

We try to avoid making too hard too quickly (a response to pupil feedback). Teachers model writing and demonstrate themselves as writers who are ready to reflect upon and edit their work. Children are encouraged to polish their own work. Peer marking is well established across the school.

Children are given 'next steps’ or ‘wishes’ when they write and will improve their work accordingly. Time is given for them to do this.

Written work is assessed and next steps are given in accordance with the Interim or End of Key Stage Writing Standards developed by The Somerset Literacy Network in line with Statutory Guidance.

Handwriting, spelling, punctuation and grammar all play an important part in the writing process and although are taught as discrete skills we embed the learning in the writing process which is also a key feature of Literacy and Language which is our school writing scheme. Spelling is taught using the Headstart Spelling Scheme , Grammar through Headstart, Literacy and Language and Deepening Understanding resources and handwriting using Nelson resources.

KS One use Literacy Shed Plus and Somerset Literacy Planning Flowcharts as a planning tools for writing.

The staff have recently created a new St George's Curriculum and writing opportunities have been embedded and signalled within the new plans.

We use Talk for Writing as a basis for our agreed writing sequence method to ensure consistency . Key Stage One focus on learning stories and using these as models for their own writing. They also write across the curriculum and from real experiences. We try hard to link oral and written story telling.

Attention is giving to handwriting style. At first children learn to form letters correctly and then they are taught a model joined script, so they are able to develop a neat, flowing style of their own. We use Nelson Handwriting resources.

**Phonics at St George’s**

**Aims: We aim to teach high quality phonics to ensure the children have the best start possible in reading and writing.**

 We have recently chosen to invest in a new phonics scheme with a complete update of  home readers so that we can phonetically match home reading books to support ur children when reading at home.

At St George’s Catholic School, we believe that all our children can become fluent readers and writers. This is why we teach reading through Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised, which is a systematic and synthetic phonics programme. We start teaching phonics in Reception and follow the [Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised progression](https://www.littlewandlelettersandsounds.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/Programme-Overview_Reception-and-Year-1.pdf), which ensures children build on their growing knowledge of the alphabetic code, mastering phonics to read and spell as they move through school.

As a result, all our children are able to tackle any unfamiliar words as they read. At St George’s Catholic School, we also model the application of the alphabetic code through phonics in shared reading and writing, both inside and outside of the phonics lesson and across the curriculum. We have a strong focus on language development for our children because we know that speaking and listening are crucial skills for reading and writing in all subjects.

Comprehension

At St George’s Catholic School, we value reading as a crucial life skill. By the time children leave us, they read confidently for meaning and regularly enjoy reading for pleasure. Our readers are equipped with the tools to tackle unfamiliar vocabulary. We encourage our children to see themselves as readers for both pleasure and purpose.

Because we believe teaching every child to read is so important, we have a Reading Leader who drives the early reading programme in our school. This person is highly skilled at teaching phonics and reading, and they monitor and support our reading team, so everyone teaches with fidelity to the Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised programme.

Implementation

Daily phonics lessons in Reception and Year 1

* We teach phonics for 30 minutes a day. In Reception, we build from 10-minute lessons, with additional daily oral blending games, to the full-length lesson as quickly as possible. Each Friday, we review the week’s teaching to help children become fluent readers.
* Children make a strong start in Reception: teaching begins in Week 2 of the Autumn term.
* We follow the [Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised expectations of progress](https://www.littlewandlelettersandsounds.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/Programme-Overview_Reception-and-Year-1.pdf):
  + Children in Reception are taught to read and spell words using Phase 2 and 3 GPCs, and words with adjacent consonants (Phase 4) with fluency and accuracy.
  + Children in Year 1 review Phase 3 and 4 and are taught to read and spell words using Phase 5 GPCs with fluency and accuracy.

Daily Keep-up lessons ensure every child learns to read

* Any child who needs additional practice has daily Keep-up support, taught by a fully trained adult. Keep-up lessons match the structure of class teaching, and use the same procedures, resources and mantras, but in smaller steps with more repetition, so that every child secures their learning.
* We timetable daily phonics lessons for any child in Year 2 or 3 who is not fully fluent at reading or has not passed the Phonics Screening Check. These children urgently need to catch up, so the gap between themselves and their peers does not widen. We use the Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised assessments to identify the gaps in their phonic knowledge and teach to these using the Keep-up resources – at pace.
* If any child in Year 3 to 6 has gaps in their phonic knowledge when reading or writing, we plan phonics ‘catch-up’ lessons to address specific reading/writing gaps. These short, sharp lessons last 10 minutes and take place at least three times a week.

Teaching reading: Reading practice sessions three times a week

* We teach children to read through reading practice sessions three times a week. These:
  + are taught by a fully trained adult to small groups of approximately six children
  + use books matched to the children’s secure phonic knowledge using the Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised assessments and book matching grids on pages 11–20 of [‘Application of phonics to reading’](https://www.littlewandlelettersandsounds.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/LS-KEY-GUIDANCE-APPLICATION-OF-PHONICS-FINAL-1.pdf)
  + are monitored by the class teacher, who rotates and works with each group on a regular basis.
* Each reading practice session has a clear focus, so that the demands of the session do not overload the children’s working memory. The reading practice sessions have been designed to focus on three key reading skills:
  + decoding
  + prosody: teaching children to read with understanding and expression
  + comprehension: teaching children to understand the text.
* In Reception these sessions start in Week 4. Children who are not yet decoding have daily additional blending practice in small groups, so that they quickly learn to blend and can begin to read books.
* In Year 2 and 3, we continue to teach reading in this way for any children who still need to practise reading with decodable books.

Home reading

* The decodable reading practice book is taken home to ensure success is shared with the family.
* Reading for pleasure books also go home for parents to share and read to children.
* We use the [Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised parents’ resources](https://www.littlewandlelettersandsounds.org.uk/resources/for-parents/) to engage our families and share information about phonics, the benefits of sharing books, how children learn to blend and other aspects of our provision, both online and through workshops.

Additional reading support for vulnerable children

* Children in Reception and Year 1 who are receiving additional phonics Keep-up sessions read their reading practice book to an adult daily.

Ensuring consistency and pace of progress

* Every teacher in our school involved in the teaching of reading has been trained, so we have the same expectations of progress. We all use the same language, routines and resources to teach children to read so that we lower children’s cognitive load.
* Weekly content grids map each element of new learning to each day, week and term for the duration of the programme.
* Lesson templates, prompt cards and how to videos ensure teachers all have a consistent approach and structure for each lesson.
* The Reading Leader and SLT use the audit and prompt cards to regularly monitor and observe teaching; they use the summative data to identify children who need additional support and gaps in learning.

Ensuring reading for pleasure

‘Reading for pleasure is the single most important indicator of a child’s success.’ (OECD 2002)

‘The will influences the skill and vice versa.’ (OECD 2010)

We value reading for pleasure highly and work hard as a school to grow our Reading for Pleasure pedagogy.

* We read to children every day. We choose these books carefully as we want children to experience a wide range of books, including books that reflect the children at St George’s Catholic School and our local community as well as books that open windows into other worlds and cultures.
* We have invested in the Pie Corbett Story Spine across the school to ensure that the reading of quality texts is consistent and progressive across the school.
* Every classroom has an inviting book corner that encourages a love for reading. We curate these books and talk about them to entice children to read a wide range of books.
* We subscribe to Resources for Learning so that we have constant access to fresh resources to meet topics and so that we can refresh reading corners through the year.
* In Nursery/Reception, children have access to the reading corner every day in their free flow time and the books are continually refreshed.
* Children from Nursery/Reception onwards have a home reading record. The parent/carer records comments to share with the adults in school and the adults will write in this on a regular basis to ensure communication between home and school.
* As the children progress through the school, they are encouraged to write their own comments and keep a list of the books/authors that they have read.
* Each class receives visits from the local library through the year and the children are taken to the local library.
* The school uses social media to encourage children and parents to join the local library and provides support on how to join.
* The school library is made available for classes to use at protected times. It must be booked via the school booking system.
* Children across the school have regular opportunities to engage with a wide range of Reading for Pleasure events (book fairs, author visits and workshops, national events etc).
* The school uses social media to promote reading. It uses its online learning platform to share reading opportunities, offer advice and support to parents and to support the teaching of vocabulary and reading.

Impact

Assessment

Assessment is used to monitor progress and to identify any child needing additional support as soon as they need it.

* [Assessment for learning](https://www.littlewandlelettersandsounds.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/LS-KEY-GUIDANCE-GETTING-STARTED-ASSESSMENT-FINAL.pdf) is used:
  + daily within class to identify children needing Keep-up support
  + weekly in the Review lesson to assess gaps, address these immediately and secure fluency of GPCs, words and spellings.
* [Summative assessment](https://www.littlewandlelettersandsounds.org.uk/resources/my-letters-and-sounds/assessment-tools/) is used:
  + every six weeks to assess progress, to identify gaps in learning that need to be addressed, to identify any children needing additional support and to plan the Keep-up support that they need.
  + by SLT and scrutinised through the Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised assessment tracker, to narrow attainment gaps between different groups of children and so that any additional support for teachers can be put into place.

Statutory assessment

* Children in Year 1 sit the Phonics Screening Check. Any child not passing the check re-sits it in Year 2.

Ongoing assessment for catch-up

* Children in Year 2 to 6 are assessed through their teacher’s ongoing formative assessment as well as through the half-termly Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised summative assessments.

The Wider Curriculum and Reading:

We fully support and promote both reading for pleasure and to gain knowledge. Every day, each class either reads or is read to: this is to foster the love of reading and its use as a tool for learning. We have invested in the Pie Corbett Story Spine to ensure that well chosen texts are read aloud in each class though the school. Our aim is to build a rich 'internal library' for our children.

In addition to daily phonics children in Key Stage One receive guided reading sessions three times a week with an adult. These are planned to develop basic skills of prediction, sequencing, retrieval, and inference and understanding vocabulary.

Children take home books linked to their phonic progress or shared texts that have been covered in class through shared story time or guided reading so that they feel confident as readers when they take home a reading book to share at home.

As the children transition into Key Stage Two , the focus shifts towards reading for meaning although attention is still paid to fluency and decoding. The skills of prediction, retrieval, inference and understanding vocabulary are progressed . To build on the skills previously mentioned, the children will also learn how to summarise texts, connect ideas, make comparisons and discuss how language choices contribute to the meaning of a given text.

All of the above, are taught in discrete reading lessons, which are - where possible - linked to topic themes and English writing units (Literacy and Language) to immerse children in a variety of genre and content. We believe this approach gives children the opportunity to deepen their understanding of not only the skills required for reading, but also the knowledge of a topic or genre. We also believe that reading within a familiar topic raises confidence and allows children to focus on higher order reading skills .

We use Head Start Materials for comprehension along with Deepening Understanding, Twinkl  and the questions related to the  texts in the Literacy and Language Scheme. We use a variety of sources for whole class guided reading and comprehension in order to provide breadth and to allow us to match topic content. Many of these reading resources allow for differentiation. We have a school wide approach to whole class guided reading to ensure consistency.

Teachers alternate whole class guided reading with text extracts with the guided reading of whole texts from 'real' books within each class's guided reading selection. These selections have been created to offer a breadth of reading material and to allow for reading within topic. In Key Stage One there are banded guided reading sets (Go Facts and book banded Badger Guided Reading ) with Teacher Packs to guide questioning.

Where there are no published packs for guided reading texts , teachers  create specific questions for chosen guided reading texts according to the skills they want the children to learn. These questions will be guided by formative assessment. Children are asked to give verbal or written answers on these texts. Lots of time is spent lingering over vocabulary before a text is read. We subscribe to the belief that vocabulary is vital.  Staff members have received Vocabulary is Vital Training from the Somerset Literacy Network and we use the principles from this training.

Children are guided to choose independent reading books from our scheme and have opportunities to read one to one to an adult through the week. Priority readers are heard more frequently. Reading Logs are checked in class weekly and by the Literacy coordinator at intervals through the year. Rewards are given in celebration assemblies for regular readers through our Golden Ticket scheme.  The appropriateness of scheme books are checked on a regular basis and children are moved through the scheme by staff according to need.

St George’s subscribes to Resources for Learning, where we benefit from a speciallised library service. Each class has access to a wide range of books across a variety of genres  ( non-fiction, fiction and poetry ) . Boxes of books can be ordered to refresh class libraries or as topic book boxes so that children can be given the opportunity to read to learn.

We fully encourage home-school links. We promote home reading through social media and through our GDocs platform.

We endeavour to provide additional enrichment opportunities to promote the love of reading and storytelling. We celebrate and participate in World Book Day, we order Reading Gazebos for the children to explore and we run an annual book fayre for all children.

In addition, we relish opportunities to take part in National Read Aloud Days, and the SLN Poetry Slam. We have hosted our own Poetry Slam in the past.  We invite in touring authors to inspire our children and have Skype interviews with authors. We have in the past had pen pals and reading buddies from other schools – before Lockdown  we were paired with Lyngford Park and we hope to reignite this partnership.

We are part of the Taunton a Reading Town hub group. We invite experts in to give talks to parents on the value of reading. We invite Taunton Library in to encourage the children to sign up to The Summer Reading Challenge. We have extreme reading events and lots of internal reading competitions. We visit the town library. We celebrate the work of Shakespeare each year with Shakespeare Week.

In addition to our strong links with primary schools, we undertake extensive transition work. In the past , Year 7 pupils have 'buddy read' with Year 6 pupils. One teacher from a secondary came to teach a reading lesson and brought brand new texts for the children to keep and read over the summer in readiness for the first English topic of the new term