

Reading Policy

Freemantle C.E. Community Academy Trust



Reviewed by:	Mark Seymour & Nicholas Whittle	Date: February 2024
Approved by:	Directors	
Next review due by:	February 2026	

Contents

1. Mission Statement	2
2. Aims	3
3. Approach to Teaching and Learning	3
4. The Structure of a Reading Lesson	5
5. Storytime and Opportunities for Reading Across Academy Life	7
6. Independent Reading	8
6.1. Accelerated reader	8
6.2. STAR Assessment	8
6.3. Reading at Home	8
7. Curriculum	9
8. Monitoring Arrangements	9
9. Assessment and Pupil Progress	10
10. Equal Opportunities	10
11. UN Convention on the Rights of the Child	11

OUR VISION IS TO FOSTER A DEEP AND GENUINE
LOVE OF ENGLISH THROUGH THE USE OF A WEALTH
OF ENGAGING BOOKS.



1. Mission Statement

“Through reading in particular, pupils have a chance to develop culturally, emotionally, intellectually, socially and spiritually. Literature, especially, plays a key role in such development. Reading also enables pupils both to acquire knowledge and to build on what they already know. All the skills of language are essential to participating fully as a member of society; pupils, therefore, who do not learn to speak, read and write fluently and confidently are effectively disenfranchised.” – National Curriculum 2014

At Freemantle, we recognise the enduring power of reading to shape and develop minds, in the classroom, and beyond it, for life, which is why we have placed reading at the core of our curriculum, our

day and the very building we learn in. All subjects depend upon rigorous reading ability and excellence across the curriculum depends upon it; we therefore prioritise the teaching, learning and development of a genuine love of reading in every Freemantle pupil.

We are united in our belief that the key to a pupil's holistic academic and personal success, in school and beyond, is tightly bound to reading.

2. Aims

- To be a school where reading is at the heart of all we do
- To enable children to read and enjoy books as soon as possible.
- To expose our pupils to a broad range of ambitious and challenging texts, from a broad range of authors, voices and cultures addressing the curriculum and beyond
- To close the vocabulary gap through the precise and explicit teaching of meaningful vocabulary
- To read and embed more non-fiction into our reading teaching to help develop Freemantle pupils' understanding of their world, local and beyond, and to build a solid foundation of knowledge to support their understanding of the texts they read
- To provide opportunities across the curriculum for learners to utilise and embed their reading skills.
- To ensure all pupils become confident, independent and fluent readers.
- To instil a love of reading in every pupil that remains with them for life

3. Approach to Teaching and Learning

At Freemantle, our approach to teaching and learning in reading is as follows:

1. We prioritise the teaching of phonics (using the Little Wandle Letters and Sounds scheme) and the development of excellent phonic knowledge and skills.
2. Through whole-class and group approaches, we teach fluency, prosody and comprehension in reading across all year groups.
3. We explicitly teach vocabulary and make connections across all subjects.
4. We teach pupils the strategies to comprehend texts of increasingly complexity and highlight the conventional and thematic link between texts to allow pupils a better understanding of the literary world.
5. We seek to engage, motivate and inspire our pupils to love reading and see its value as both an activity for pleasure and learning.
6. We show our pupils how reading develops understanding of their world.

In KS2, we teach reading through a shared, whole-class approach.

Key Stage 2 pupils are taught explicit reading lessons, also 4-5 times a week. Both key stages draw on a wide variety of text types identified on our reading spine and rigorously selected to provide every Freemantle pupil with a progressive, varied reading diet that links meaningfully to their own personal development, British values and SMSC, and which supports them in developing as readers and ensuring they are exposed to texts beyond those which they would choose to read themselves.

“Shared Reading: Allows students to enjoy materials they may not be able to read on their own. Ensures that all students feel successful by providing support to the entire group.”

Improving Literacy in Key Stage 2 Guidance Report- Education Endowment Foundation, Professor Steve Higgins, Thomas Martell, Dr David Waugh, Peter Henderson and Professor Jonathon Sharples-2017

Phonics lessons

All phonics lessons follow the Little Wandle Revised Letters and Sound scheme which is built around four pillars. The pillars form the basis of understanding that unites education with neuroscience and leads to the most effective learning.

These four pillars are central to the resources and teaching approach:

1. **Focused attention** – learning phonics for short periods, regularly and frequently repeated
2. **Active engagement** – having a continual expectation of children in chorus and individual oral response
3. **Error feedback** - errors are best countered by a teacher modelling the correct response
4. **Practice and consolidation** - small items of learning are practised and repeated many times

Nursery

Within our nursery, we facilitate a combination of child-led and adult-led experiences that support curriculum expectations for 'Communication and Language' and 'Literacy'. These include:

- sharing high-quality stories and poems
- learning a range of nursery rhymes and action rhymes
- exploring activities that develop focused listening and attention skills, including oral blending
- explicit teaching of high-quality language and vocabulary

Our intention is for children to leave our nursery well prepared to begin learning grapheme-phoneme correspondences (GPCs) and blending in Reception. In summer 1, Nursery transition to use the Little Wandle content to further explore nursery rhymes, listening and attention skills and oral blending skills.

Reception

- 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.
- In order for children to make a strong start in Reception, teaching begins immediately. We follow the Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised expectations of progress.
- Over the course of the academic year, 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.

Year 1

- In Year 1, we teach full-length 30-minute phonics sessions each day. Each Friday, we review the week's teaching to help children become fluent readers.
- Over the course of the academic year, 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.

Year 2

- In Year 2, we teach full-length 30-minute phonics sessions each day, reviewing Phase 5 content in the Autumn term before transitioning to a Bridge To Spelling scheme and then a Year 2 Spelling scheme which covers spelling rules in the National Curriculum (2014).
- We provide Rapid Catch Up phonics lessons for any child in Year 2 who did not pass the Phonics screening check and/or any child who is not on track. We use the Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised assessments to identify the gaps in their phonic knowledge and teach to these using the catch-up resources – at pace.

Key Stage 2

- If any child in Year 3 to 6 has gaps in their phonic knowledge when reading or writing, we plan phonics 'Rapid Catch Up' lessons to address specific reading/writing gaps.

In KS1 and Early Years, in addition to daily phonics lessons, pupils are taught English lessons in a sequence, which combine reading and writing teaching and learning into one sequence of learning. Reading features heavily in the early stages of the learning sequence so that pupils have a clear understanding of the text. In addition, pupils work in small groups and are taught to read through Little Wandle, Letters and Sounds reading practice sessions three times a week. This enables pupils to have opportunities to build upon reading words and sentences in the phonics lessons, applying their knowledge to fully decodable reading books during reading practice sessions.

The 3 sessions each have a specific focus:

- decoding
- prosody: teaching children to read with understanding and expression
- comprehension: teaching children to understand the text.

4. The Structure of Phonics & Reading Lessons

To ensure a progressive and consistent approach towards the teaching of reading, lessons are structured purposefully and consistently. Phonics lessons have fidelity to the Little Wandle Letters and Sounds scheme, maintaining a well-resourced and effective approach to early reading.

Phonics lessons (structure):

Phonics lessons have 3 key elements. Within each element, there are procedures/routines that are followed to ensure pupils

Revisit and review	Teach and practise	Practise and apply
• Reviewing and revisiting GPCs, words & tricky words	• Learning a new GPC • Oral blending • Reading new words	• Reading/writing a caption or sentence • Spelling a word or writing a sentence.

Every 5th lesson is a review of content taught previously. The review lessons follow the same 3 elements: Revisit and review; Teach and practise & Practise and apply.

To reduce cognitive overload, the activities within review lessons are consistent and repeated.

Reception reading (within English) structure:

In Reception, pupils initially immerse in the text through book sharing (led by the class teacher), bringing it to life so that pupils develop engagement and understanding. This provides pupils with opportunities to develop and apply their oracy skills when talking about the book/text. Throughout the sequence of lessons in English, pupils are taught explicit vocabulary and revisit key parts of books/stories in a 'close read' where discussion develops comprehension.

KS1 reading (within English) lesson structure:

In Key Stage 1, pupils have English lessons where books are used as the anchor from which to develop knowledge and skills in both reading and writing.

In Year 1, explicit vocabulary related or featuring in the focus book is shared and discussed every day. Pupils are exposed to the whole book/text initially. Through the Curious Quests approach, pupils look back on key elements/parts of the text/story and within a comprehension focus, they chant key probing questions before discussion and modelling unlocks comprehension and understanding – this is known as the "Gadabout".

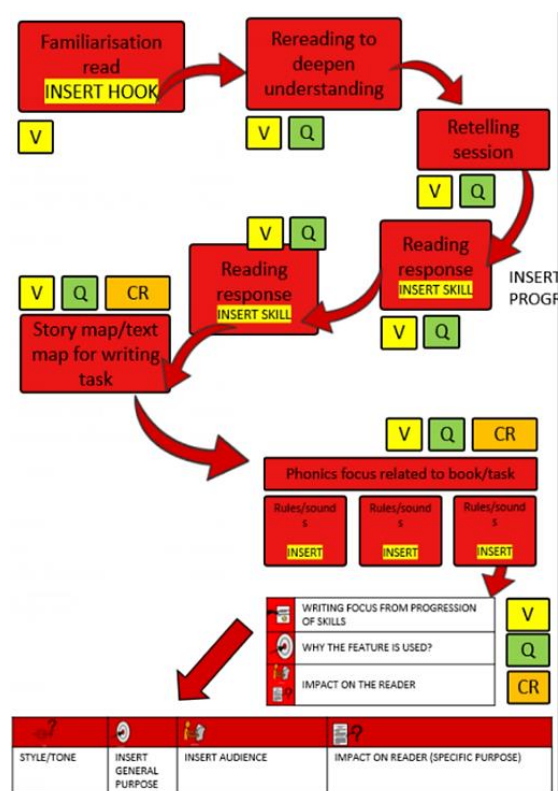
Book Snuggle	Sharing of our key text, which is featured on our Reading Spine.
Gadabout	During this element of the lesson there is a comprehension focus in which children chant key probing questions before discussion and modelling unlocks comprehension and understanding.

In Year 2, explicit vocabulary related or featuring in the focus book is shared every day. Through an S plan sequence for English, pupils initially immerse in the text. Through retelling and rereading, pupils develop a deep understanding of the key text and use this to develop key comprehension skills orally and in a written form.

Pupils in Year 2 also follow the 'Curious Quests' approach and therefore also benefit from the following key elements:

Book Snuggle	Sharing of our key text, which is featured on our Reading Spine.
Gadabout	During this element of the lesson there is a comprehension focus in which children chant key probing questions before discussion and modelling unlocks comprehension and understanding.

A typical sequence of lessons can be seen below:



A typical Key Stage 1 English lesson contains the following reading-focused elements:

1. **Gaddabout:** (see above)
2. **Explicit Vocabulary Instruction:** At the start of each lesson pupils take part in explicit vocabulary teaching during which they learn and apply new language. Teachers carefully choose tier-2 vocabulary either from the text or thematically linked to it.
3. **Shared Reading:** During this stage of the lesson, teachers model reading fluency and prosody to the class and engage pupils in an inspiring text. Teachers will re-read key sections throughout the learning journey to illicit understanding and spark conversations with pupils; they will model comprehension skills as part of teaching here, too.

Key Stage 1 lessons have different foci, but within every 2-3 week unit:

1. Pupils will read and then re-read a chosen text to develop a very confident understanding of each book or story. As part of this, pupils have a range of opportunities to engage in speaking and listening activities, including retellings, to further embed their understanding of each book and develop their oracy.
2. Teachers will model reading fluency and prosody, and pupils will be exposed to books beyond their reading ability.
3. Teachers will constantly model reading skills and provide pupils with opportunities to demonstrate their understanding of what they read.
4. Pupils will have opportunities to demonstrate their understanding through a range of written activities at select points throughout the journey in Year 2.

Key Stage 2 Lesson Structure:

Key Stage 2 pupils have dedicated reading lessons 4-5 times a week which follow a typical format:

1. **Learning Outcome:** Pupils explore the learning outcome linked to the skill that is being taught, usually in a block to allow clear development of that skill from being heavily modelled by the teacher and scaffolded to independence.
2. **Quickfire Retrieval Quiz:** Pupils begin each lesson with a quick retrieval quiz. Key Stage 2 classes read complete chapter books – we do not read extracts of texts – and so the goal of the retrieval quiz is to activate and reinforce carefully chosen prior knowledge through a range of simple questions that provide the teacher with an opportunity to check for understanding and to ensure a base level of understanding to build upon moving forwards, guarding against “gist reads”.
3. **Explicit Vocabulary Instruction:** At the start of each lesson pupils take part in an explicit vocabulary activity during which they learn and apply new language verbally and in writing. Teachers carefully choose tier-2 vocabulary either from the text or thematically linked to it. This section of the lesson is used to support pupils in developing their word meaning and skills associated with this so that they become more independent and fluent readers and gain greater understanding of the texts they are reading, which is often more challenging than those they can read themselves. This language is placed on each class’s vocabulary wall to be referred to regularly.
4. **Shared Reading:** During this stage of the lesson, teachers model reading fluency and prosody to the class while the pupils actively follow the same text; pupils have their own copies of the class texts we read. Pupils will then be asked to volunteer to lead the shared reading for short periods. By using shared reading in every lesson, teachers’ model to pupils how to use tone and expression as well as building phonemic connections. Oracy lessons focus on developing this fluency, drawing on a range of techniques including echo, choral and paired reading, whilst providing opportunities for pupils to develop their speaking and listening skills through activities linked to the book.
5. **Comprehension/Skill modelling:** The teacher will usually draw on close reads to model or teach comprehension skills following a shared read, with modelling reduced over the course of a block of teaching as pupils become more confident. This skill will be drawn from the reading progression of skills and knowledge document.
6. **Independent Application Task:** This time is an opportunity for pupils to apply the skill they have learnt in the lesson in a short activity. This activity can take many forms such as drama, hot seating, written responses, theme maps etc.

5. Storytime and Opportunities for Reading Across Academy Life

We believe in the power of shared story times and the power stories have to bring us together. Pupils in EYFS and Key Stage 1 have 3 additional storytime sessions set within the daily timetable where they will read and explore a wide range of texts that build their cultural capital and provide mirrors, windows and sliding doors. The texts are a combination of teacher-chosen texts, traditional tales, texts to revisit from previous years and non-fiction texts linked the key English texts.

“Books are sometimes windows, offering views of worlds that may be real or imagined, familiar or strange. These windows are also sliding glass doors, and readers have only to walk through in imagination to become part of whatever world has been created or recreated by the author. When lighting conditions are just right, however, a window can also be a mirror. Literature transforms human experience and reflects it back to us, and in that reflection, we can see our own lives and experiences as part of the larger human experience. Reading, then, becomes a means of self-affirmation, and readers often seek their mirrors in books.”
Rudine Sims Bishop

We are constantly reviewing our wider choices of texts to ensure **all** Freemantle pupils see true reflections of themselves in the texts we read, reflecting our multi-cultural, multi-national pupil body.

Storytime provides opportunities to re-read texts pupils have previously read to develop greater understanding and explore vocabulary. All pupils have a daily storytime session where adults will share either books or chapters from each class's text for the half term, a separate short story or non-fiction/poetry.

Enriching our pupils' lives with a range of stories and knowledge is a priority for every adult at Freemantle, so stories will frequently be used across the wider school, including in acts of collective worship, assemblies and through special reading clubs or additional opportunities outside of school from Nursery right up into Year 6.

6. Independent Reading

Pupils at Freemantle have access to a broad range of books and we have invested heavily in our library over the last three years in particular. While they progress through our phonics scheme, pupils read fully-decodable Big Cat books matched to the sounds they have learned in accordance with the Reading Framework. Pupils learning phonics read their phonics book 3 times in school before taking it home for additional practice opportunities to develop fluency.

Once pupils complete the phonics programme, they move onto books which are banded to ensure pupils read the right books at the right time to continue their development. We have a very wide range of texts within each band and pupils have free choice within their band, and outside of it, too – we do not restrict pupils' access to our library; however, we guide pupils to the books that our assessment protocols suggest are most appropriate for them. As well as having access to a book corner in every classroom, learners have a designated time in the library once a week where they are supported by their teachers and LSA's in selecting challenging and appropriate books to read and enjoy.

To ensure pupils can work on individual targets and quick, targeted support is given to those who are at risk of falling behind, pupils who require it will read or have phonics catch up or keep up sessions with a teacher, LSA, or intervention teacher in addition to whole class lessons usually during independent reading slots timetabled into Key Stage 2 afternoons, or during afternoon time in EYFS/KS1.

6.1. Accelerated reader

Pupils at Freemantle, in Years 2-6, use the Accelerated Reader program to quiz, track and choose books in and out of school. Accelerated Reader provides pupils with regular opportunities to demonstrate understanding and knowledge of the texts they read, opportunities to practise reading skills and helps to improve reading engagement among pupils.

For teachers, this provides accurate tracking of individual pupil engagement reading at book and word-level, opportunities to analyse pupil understanding of texts and assess appropriateness of texts read and data to ensure support with reading is pitched correctly.

We provide opportunities for children to quiz inside of school as well, and track this closely to ensure engagement with reading from all our pupils. Close links to parents have been established through the use of reading records and parent access to their child's Accelerated Reader portal so that parents are aware of their child's reading ability and can support at home.

6.2. STAR Assessment

Pupils take STAR reading assessments termly, which provides reliable, easily acquired information about pupils' reading that we use to inform teaching at individual, group, whole-class and school-level. This assessment also provides pupils with a Zone of Proximal Development, ensuring both they, and staff, can make choices which result in pupils reading the right books at the right time, reducing the number of books which are started and not finished.

In class, teachers track reading engagement, the choices of books made and use the in-built STAR reading assessment to make accurate judgements of children's reading ability and provide tailored support to those who need it.

6.3. Reading at Home

We recognise the vital role parents and carers play in developing positive reading habits and nurturing a love of reading. All pupils throughout EYFS and KS1 (and pupils who need access in KS2) have access to a well-matched fully-decodable Big Cat book at home – our expectation is for parents and carers to read with their children at home daily. Pupils also take home a picture book from the library

which may be beyond their phonics ability – this ‘free-choice’ book allows pupils to develop a love of reading and explore interests.

Pupils who have finished our phonics programme take books home from our library; we encourage parents and carers to either read at home with these pupils or support daily independent reading at home, which we track in school.

Every child has a home reading diary to record their home reading. We set homework and expect children to read at least 6 times a week, but we target 7. On Fridays, teachers acknowledge these reading diaries and track home reading, following up with parents and carers when necessary. We also track Key Stage 2 pupils’ reading habits using Accelerated Reader reports and share these with parents and carers at key moments throughout the year.

Every class has a reading area or book club and pupils across school have daily opportunities to explore, change and read books from our book corners as well as the library.

For pupils who may not have access to books at home or struggle to read at home, we run phonics, book and homework clubs in school where pupils spend time with their teacher reading a new text together for pleasure.

7. Curriculum

The Freemantle reading curriculum has been structured to support the acquisition of knowledge and address the vocabulary-deficit many of our pupils arrive with. By embedding non-fiction texts into our fictional texts in an intentional and strategic way, we address the knowledge gap, as well.

By linking fiction and non-fiction, whilst supplementing both with poetry, we use all three to develop the knowledge of our pupils, creating a knowledge-snowball effect where the knowledge gained from non-fiction helps our pupils to gain more knowledge and understanding from the fiction, which helps them to gain more knowledge and understanding from their non-fiction.

A wide-range of high-quality fiction, non-fiction and poetry from a wide-range of voices and cultures have been chosen to form the long-term reading curriculum at Freemantle. The fiction choices were informed by several factors, including ensuring a range of voices, but also were chosen to cover a wide-range of styles, some of which children may find challenging and, without exposure to, will struggle to read.

The Freemantle spine of texts is linked to our thematic curriculum wherever possible and ensures all our pupils are guaranteed a rich and varied range of texts during their time with us.

Classes read texts over a sustained period, prioritising the acquisition of knowledge and understanding. Reading lessons follow a format that includes a daily opportunity to review understanding of the text so far, explicit teaching of vocabulary (with opportunities to write using new vocabulary every day in KS2 lessons), shared-reading (with opportunities for pupils to read and develop fluency as well as teachers to model strong reading), explicit teaching of a reading skill (block-taught) and independent activity.

The reading curriculum compliments the writing curriculum, with fiction, non-fiction and poetry texts acting as the stimulus from which all writing is completed.

Outside of the reading lesson, pupils are exposed to reading regularly. Each day ends with a session of class reading, pupils have daily opportunities to read independently, and texts link to topics; teachers maximise the opportunities to use reading across the curriculum and we are developing our library to include a wealth of texts in dedicated areas for each subject.

8. Monitoring Arrangements

Teachers draw on the information provided by Accelerated Reader, STAR and their own formative and summative in-class assessment when assessing pupils. In EYFS and Key Stage 1, this includes half-termly assessment and assessment at the end of each phase to regularly track pupil progress in phonics.

The reading lead monitors the assessment/data provided by teachers, as well as STAR data from across the school, checking accuracy and completing reports which outline sub-group and year group

trends and identifying areas of development. This analysis feeds into pupil progress meetings and data presentations in which information and strategies are shared with teachers so that we can continue to improve the provision of reading.

The senior leadership team and the reading lead complete observations of teaching and learning as well as performing book checks. Feedback and actions are shared with teachers and senior leaders to ensure consistency in the planning and delivery of reading across the academy.

Learners also form part of the monitoring process and conferencing with learners is used to obtain information about attitudes, engagement and their views on the reading provision.

9. Assessment and Pupil Progress

Teachers at Freemantle use both formative and summative assessment. This assessment is used to plan differentiated lessons and individual targets.

Teachers use formative assessment in every lesson to check children's ongoing understanding. These take place at key points in the lesson (e.g. during the quickfire retrieval quiz, vocabulary and during close reads; in phonics, teachers are constantly using AfL to assess pupils throughout each session) and again during independent application, whether that is the 'read' section of phonics, where all pupils are developing fluency, or in written application to demonstrate comprehension further up the school. This provides information teachers act on with daily time designated to supporting pupils with interventions. Pupils working in lower school have daily opportunities for intervention based on teacher assessment in their daily phonics lesson.

Pupils take half-termly summative assessments to track progress and identify gaps. These include:

- Phonics assessments (at the end of each half term unit of teaching or every 4 weeks if completing a rapid catch up programme)
- STAR reader assessment (from Year 2-6) which assesses comprehension, fluency and vocabulary.

This information is used to identify key pupils or subgroups in need of additional support.

Pupils' attainment is also measured as part of a termly cycle. Teachers use the schools' reading trackers, which has been developed in conjunction with the Freemantle reading skills and knowledge progression document, to support them in making their judgements. The assessment tool is a combination of word-reading, including phonics, and comprehension skills and contributes to the wider picture of each child's attainment and progress.

Finally, statutory assessments are carried out in:

- Year R: Early Years Foundation Stage Profile
- Year 1 and 2: Phonics Screening Check (Year 2 where retake is necessary)
- Year 2: End of Key Stage 1 Teacher Assessment
- Year 6: End of Key Stage 2 Reading Test

10. Equal Opportunities

We provide activities for all pupils in which equality of opportunity is supported irrespective of gender, SEN, race, creed and disability, considering the individual needs of the children.

Our school library and book corners have a broad range of books, which reflect the families, cultures, experiences and beliefs of our school community and British life. We have strived in our reading spine to achieve the mirrors, windows, sliding doors analogy but know we always have more to do – we review the spine regularly to ensure it is fit for purpose not just as a tool to teach reading, but as a means to enrich our pupils' lives and develop their cultural capital.

For all pupils to access reading, we also have bilingual books as well as books in a range of other languages. These are used to support our children who are at the start of their reading journey in a new language.

11. UN Convention on the Rights of the Child

Article 28: Every child has the right to an education.

Article 29: Education must develop every child's personality, talents and abilities to the full. It must encourage the child's respect for human rights, as well as respect for their parents, their own and other cultures, and the environment.