

Ravenbank Reading Policy



Version	Date	Action
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Ravenbank Primary School

Reading Policy

Our Vision

At Ravenbank Primary School, we believe that learning to read well is one of the most important foundations for future learning and life. We are ambitious for every pupil and believe that all children, regardless of background, starting point or additional need, should become confident, fluent and thoughtful readers.

Our approach to reading is built around a coherent journey from phonics and early word reading to fluent, increasingly independent comprehension. In the early stages of reading, pupils are taught through Ready Steady Phonics, before progressing into increasingly sophisticated reading through high-quality shared reading, including Ready Steady Read Together from Year 2 onwards.

Our aim is that pupils:

- learn to decode accurately and increasingly automatically;
- develop secure knowledge of the alphabetic code;
- apply phonics confidently in both reading and writing;
- develop fluency, appropriate pace, phrasing and prosody;
- acquire an increasingly rich vocabulary;
- understand, discuss and respond to a wide range of texts;
- develop the knowledge and strategies required to comprehend increasingly complex texts;
- experience ambitious, diverse and high-quality literature;
- read widely and often for pleasure, information and learning; and
- leave Ravenbank equipped to access the demands of the secondary curriculum.

Our ambition is not simply that pupils who fall behind receive additional help. It is that they are identified quickly, taught precisely and supported systematically so that they catch up wherever possible.

1. Intent

At Ravenbank, reading teaching has three interconnected priorities:

- **Word reading** – pupils develop secure phonics knowledge and increasingly accurate and automatic decoding.
- **Fluency** – pupils learn to read accurately, at an appropriate pace and with phrasing, expression and prosody.
- **Language comprehension** – pupils develop vocabulary, background knowledge and the strategies needed to understand, interpret and respond to increasingly complex texts.

These strands develop together. Pupils need secure decoding to access texts independently, but they also need rich language, vocabulary, knowledge and opportunities to engage with books from the earliest stages of school.

We maintain high expectations for all pupils, including pupils with SEND, disadvantaged pupils, pupils with English as an additional language and pupils working below age-related expectations.

2. Phonics and Early Reading

Ready Steady Phonics

Ravenbank follows Ready Steady Phonics by Literacy Counts, a DfE-validated systematic synthetic phonics programme. The programme provides a clear and cumulative approach to teaching pupils the knowledge and skills they need to decode words successfully and become fluent readers.

Phonics is taught daily following the programme's agreed progression. The sequence is carefully structured so that new learning builds systematically upon previously taught grapheme-phoneme correspondences.

Teaching follows the Ready Steady Phonics four-part lesson structure, ensuring consistency in the way phonics is delivered and enabling pupils to revisit, learn, practise and apply their developing knowledge.

Teachers follow the programme faithfully so that pupils experience:

- a consistent approach to pronunciation and terminology;
- explicit teaching of grapheme-phoneme correspondences;
- regular opportunities to blend for reading;
- segmenting and application of phonics within writing;
- repeated practice of previously taught content;
- teaching of common exception or tricky words;
- opportunities to apply phonics in connected text; and
- frequent formative assessment so that gaps are identified promptly.

The agreed phonics progression is followed carefully. Teachers do not move pupils through content simply because a particular point in the school year has been reached; they use assessment to understand what pupils know securely and where further teaching or practice is required.

Decodable Reading Books

Children learning to read through phonics are given books that are closely matched to the sounds and words they have been taught. Ready Steady Phonics is supported by matched decodable texts in print and online, enabling pupils to practise what they learn during phonics lessons through meaningful reading. Children should therefore be able to decode the vast majority of words in their reading book using knowledge already explicitly taught.

Teachers encourage repeated reading so that children move from:

decoding → accuracy → automaticity → fluency.

Rereading familiar texts is valued. It helps pupils become increasingly confident and fluent, rather than continually encountering unfamiliar text before their prior knowledge is secure.

Parents and carers are encouraged to support this approach by reading the texts sent home and encouraging children to reread them until they can do so confidently and fluently.

3. Keeping Up and Catching Up in Phonics

At Ravenbank, the expectation is that pupils will be able to keep up with the phonics programme. Teachers use ongoing assessment during daily phonics teaching to identify pupils who are beginning to fall behind. Additional support should begin promptly rather than waiting until the end of a term or assessment point.

Pupils who require additional teaching receive targeted support through Ready Steady Go sessions in addition to the whole class sessions.

Intervention should be:

- matched precisely to the sounds, words or skills a pupil has not yet secured;
- frequent and focused;
- consistent with the language and routines of whole-class phonics;
- delivered by appropriately trained adults;
- additional to, rather than a replacement for, daily phonics teaching;
- regularly reviewed; and
- adapted or intensified if the pupil is not making sufficient progress.

The purpose of intervention is to enable pupils to catch up with the main programme, not to create a permanently separate curriculum.

4. Pupils Who Have Not Secured Phonics Beyond Year 1

Phonics teaching does not stop when a pupil moves into a different year group. Any pupil who cannot yet decode sufficiently accurately and fluently should continue to receive systematic phonics teaching at the level appropriate to their identified gaps.

This may include pupils in Year 2 and, where necessary, Key Stage 2.

For these pupils, teachers will:

- identify precisely which phonics knowledge is insecure;
- continue systematic teaching using the agreed Ready Steady Phonics approach;
- provide appropriately matched decodable texts;
- deliver targeted Ready Steady Go intervention where appropriate;
- provide frequent opportunities for repeated reading;
- monitor accuracy and fluency closely; and
- review whether intervention is accelerating progress.

A pupil should not be moved prematurely to comprehension intervention when the underlying difficulty is insecure decoding.

5. Transition from Phonics to Shared Reading

As pupils become increasingly secure decoders, teaching develops from a primary emphasis on learning the alphabetic code towards greater automaticity, fluency and comprehension. This transition is deliberately managed.

In Year 2, pupils continue to consolidate phonics where required while increasingly engaging with the Ready Steady Read Together curriculum. This ensures that pupils develop comprehension, vocabulary and fluency without losing sight of any remaining foundational reading needs. Our Ready Steady Spelling curriculum which begins in Year 2, also consolidates phonic knowledge.

Ready Steady Read Together enables pupils to encounter ambitious literature and develop comprehension skills even where independent decoding is not yet fully secure. The programme's intention is that pupils can access high-quality texts and develop vocabulary, fluency and understanding regardless of their current decoding ability. Ready Steady Read Together

This means that a pupil who still requires phonics intervention should ordinarily receive both:

- targeted teaching to improve decoding, and
- access to rich, age-appropriate shared reading and language development.

6. Shared Reading: Years 2–6

From Year 2 to Year 6, Ready Steady Read Together provides the principal framework for explicit shared-reading teaching.

The programme is structured around high-quality, vocabulary-rich texts and provides regular opportunities for reading, discussion, fluency, retrieval and explicit modelling of comprehension strategies. Ready Steady Read Together

Classes normally receive five explicit Ready Steady Read Together lessons each week of approximately 30 minutes. Ready Steady Read Together teaching sequence includes:

- **Explore** – activating prior knowledge, reading the text, developing vocabulary and fluency and establishing the lesson questions.
- **Teach** – explicitly modelling the reading strategy and making the thinking of an effective reader visible.
- **Practise and Apply** – pupils reread, discuss evidence, practise strategies and respond verbally and in writing.

This consistent structure helps pupils understand not simply the answer to a question, but how successful readers approach a text and construct meaning.

7. Fluency

Fluent reading is explicitly taught at Ravenbank.

Fluency begins during phonics teaching as pupils become increasingly automatic in recognising graphemes, blending words and rereading decodable text.

As pupils develop, teachers increasingly focus upon:

- accuracy;
- automaticity;
- appropriate pace;
- phrasing;
- expression;
- intonation; and
- prosody.

Strategies include:

- teacher modelling;
- echo reading;

- choral reading;
- paired reading;
- repeated reading; and
- rereading familiar passages.

The Ready Steady Read Together adaptations guidance recommends additional paired or adult-supported reading, repeated reading, Reader's Theatre and explicit modelling of phrasing and expression for pupils who require greater support. At Ravenbank, fluency is taught rather than simply measured.

8. Supporting Pupils Working Below Age-Related Expectations

When a pupil is working below age-related expectations, teachers should establish whether the primary difficulty lies within:

1. Phonics / decoding

Can the child recognise taught grapheme-phoneme correspondences and blend words accurately?

2. Automaticity / fluency

Can the pupil read sufficiently accurately and automatically to devote attention to meaning?

3. Vocabulary / language

Does the pupil understand the language and concepts within the text?

4. Comprehension

Can the pupil retrieve, infer, summarise, predict and explain ideas from what they have read?

Teachers should know:

- which pupils are currently within this group;
- the specific barrier affecting each pupil;
- whether they are making sufficient progress;
- what additional teaching they receive;
- who delivers this;
- how frequently it takes place; and
- whether it is working.

Senior leaders will discuss any pupils working below age-related expectations at termly progress meetings.

9. Assessment

Assessment in reading serves three purposes:

Assessment for learning – identifying what pupils understand during teaching and adapting instruction immediately.

Assessment of learning – establishing pupils' attainment and progress over time.

Assessment for intervention – identifying the specific knowledge or skill that is preventing a pupil from progressing.

Teachers use:

- questioning;
- observation;
- listening to pupils read;
- pupil discussion;
- written responses;
- low-stakes quizzes;
- phonics information;
- fluency assessment;
- termly reading assessments; and
- standardised assessment where appropriate.

Pupils in Year 1 complete an NFER assessment in the summer term and Year 2 pupils complete practice SATs papers in the autumn and spring terms and the DfE paper in the summer term.

Pupils in Year 3 and above complete three NFER formal assessments across the academic year, with analysis used to identify strengths and weaknesses within reading domains and inform subsequent teaching. The results of these assessments are shared with parents and carers.

10. SEND and Inclusion

Reading provision is ambitious and inclusive. Pupils with SEND should ordinarily participate in whole-class reading alongside their peers, with adaptations that enable meaningful engagement.

Appropriate adaptations may include:

- supported rereading;
- pre-teaching;
- visual cues;
- smaller chunks of text;
- explicit vocabulary instruction;
- assistive technology;
- additional processing time;
- alternative ways of responding;
- scaffolded speaking and listening;
- adult or peer support; and
- carefully selected intervention.

We use scaffolding, flexible grouping, language modelling and breakdown strategies as means of enabling pupils with SEND, dyslexia or language barriers to participate successfully. Teachers remain responsible for the reading progress of pupils with SEND in their class, including where additional interventions are delivered by another adult.

11. Pupils with English as an Additional Language

Pupils learning English should have full access to ambitious texts and classroom discussion.

Teachers may support understanding through:

- visual representation;

- explicit vocabulary teaching;
- modelling accurate spoken English;
- structured partner talk;
- sentence frames;
- dual coding;
- repetition;
- opportunities to rehearse responses orally; and
- appropriate use of technology.

EAL should not automatically be interpreted as a reading difficulty. Teachers should distinguish between developing English language proficiency and underlying reading difficulties.

12. Reading for Pleasure

We want children to see themselves as readers.

Alongside explicit reading instruction, pupils should have regular opportunities to:

- hear adults read aloud;
- explore authors and genres;
- discuss books;
- make recommendations;
- independently select texts;
- visit and use reading areas and libraries;
- encounter texts linked to the wider curriculum; and
- experience literature reflecting a wide range of cultures, experiences and perspectives.

The Ready Steady Read Together curriculum deliberately exposes pupils to high-quality and diverse literature and seeks to develop a lifelong love of reading for pleasure, knowledge and information. Ready Steady Read Together

Adults should model enthusiasm for books and reading.

13. Home Reading and Partnership with Families

Parents and carers are important partners in developing successful readers.

The school supports families by:

- communicating expectations for reading at home;
- ensuring books are appropriately matched where pupils are developing decoding skills;
- encouraging discussion about books as well as reading aloud;
- providing guidance where children require additional practice;
- sharing information about progress and areas for development; and
- suggesting suitable reading materials linked to pupils' reading level and interests.

The adaptations guidance similarly recommends providing families with information about appropriate books and reading material to enable further support at home.

14. Roles and Responsibilities

The Headteacher will:

- establish high expectations for reading across the school;
- ensure sufficient curriculum time is protected for reading;
- ensure staff receive appropriate training;
- review reading attainment and progress;
- monitor the progress of vulnerable groups and pupils in the lowest 20%;
- ensure intervention is appropriately targeted and evaluated; and
- ensure that pupils who fall behind receive prompt and effective support.

The Reading/English Leader will:

- provide professional leadership for reading;
- ensure consistent implementation of the agreed curriculum;
- support teachers in assessment and adaptive teaching;
- analyse assessment information;
- monitor teaching, books and pupil experience;
- identify professional-development needs;
- evaluate the impact of interventions; and
- report strengths and priorities to senior leaders and governors.

Class Teachers will:

- provide high-quality reading teaching;
- maintain ambitious expectations for all pupils;
- identify pupils falling behind promptly;
- diagnose barriers rather than relying solely on attainment scores;
- adapt teaching appropriately;
- ensure interventions complement classroom teaching;
- monitor the impact of support; and
- communicate relevant information with parents and colleagues.

Teaching Assistants and HLTAs will:

- support rather than replace high-quality teacher instruction;
- use agreed teaching approaches consistently;
- receive appropriate training for interventions they deliver;
- provide teachers with useful information about pupil response and progress; and
- avoid creating unnecessary dependency by encouraging increasing pupil independence.

15. Monitoring and Evaluation

Leaders evaluate the impact of reading provision at Ravenbank through a range of evidence, including:

- assessment and progress information;
- phonics outcomes;
- fluency;
- outcomes for pupils in the lowest 20%;
- outcomes for disadvantaged pupils and pupils with SEND;
- lesson visits;
- pupil discussion;
- book and work scrutiny;
- intervention records;

- teacher feedback;
- reading audits; and
- parent feedback where appropriate.

This policy will be reviewed every two years or before if attainment and progress in reading cause concern.