

READING

The impact – why our reading sequence matters

Reading is the gateway to all learning. At Wynndale, we believe every child must first learn to read so they can confidently read to learn. Our reading curriculum builds fluent, accurate readers who understand what they read and develop a lifelong relationship with books. Through a carefully structured sequence, children move from early phonics decoding to confident comprehension. The curriculum prioritises consistency, clarity and cumulative skill development so that no child develops gaps in understanding. Reading is taught explicitly, modelled daily and reinforced across the curriculum.

Our sequence is built around the foundational knowledge of reading:

- phonemic awareness (hearing and manipulating sounds)
- grapheme–phoneme correspondence (linking sounds to letters/patterns)
- blending and segmenting (for reading and spelling)
- automaticity (fast, accurate word reading)
- fluency and prosody (pace, phrasing, expression)
- language comprehension (vocabulary, sentence meaning, text understanding)

These foundations are taught explicitly, practised daily and revisited frequently so that pupils develop secure, transferable reading habits.

Alongside skill development, we deliberately nurture enjoyment. Children experience high-quality texts, daily shared reading and meaningful conversations about books. As a result, pupils leave Wynndale as capable readers who see reading not just as a school skill, but as part of who they are.

The Teaching of Phonics

We teach phonics through a structured, systematic programme using Rocket Phonics. This provides a clear progression of sound-letter relationships, blending, segmenting and high-frequency word recognition.

Daily phonics lessons ensure learning is cumulative and sequential. All staff are trained to deliver the programme consistently so pupils receive the same high-quality instruction across the school.

Teaching focuses on:

- secure phonemic awareness
- accurate letter–sound correspondence
- confident blending for reading
- accurate segmenting for spelling
- recognition of tricky words

Each classroom maintains a growing phonics working display that includes sound charts, letter patterns and tricky words. These visual supports reinforce learning and promote independence.

Alongside Rocket Phonics, pupils are taught foundational reading behaviours and conventions that support accuracy and fluency, including:

- tracking print left to right, top to bottom
- recognising word boundaries and spacing
- using punctuation cues (e.g., full stops, question marks) to support meaning
- developing attention to the “whole word” rather than guessing

Assessment of Phonics

Regular formative assessment is used to monitor progress and quickly identify pupils at risk of falling behind. Assessment informs daily teaching and enables targeted support.

Children requiring additional help receive immediate intervention through small group or 1:1 sessions. Progress is continually monitored and groups are adjusted based on need. For pupils requiring intensive support, smaller and more frequent sessions focus on building confidence, early blending skills and secure foundations.

The Teaching of Reading

Reading instruction progresses from decoding to comprehension through a carefully structured approach. At every stage, we strengthen the foundational knowledge of reading so pupils can move from “working out the words” to “understanding and enjoying the text”.

Foundation Stage and Year 1

Children read with their class teacher 1:1, in small groups and as a class. They learn early reading behaviours and how to make meaning from text. Each child is heard read by a trained adult at least once per week. Phonically decodable books are changed twice weekly to ensure close matching to ability.

Communication with families is recorded in reading diaries so next steps are shared and supported at home.

Alongside decodable reading, children develop the foundations of comprehension through oral work: listening to stories, retelling, sequencing, answering simple questions, and discussing vocabulary. This ensures pupils build meaning-making habits while their decoding becomes secure.

Year 2

At the start of Year 2, children continue to read 1:1 or in small groups. As skills strengthen, group reading develops into Guided Reading. Pupils read a shared text while learning early comprehension strategies and reading behaviours.

As pupils transition, staff explicitly teach the foundational knowledge required for fluent reading: rereading for smoothness, reading in phrases, using punctuation to guide expression, and building stamina. This supports both understanding and confidence.

Key Stage 2 Novel Study

From Spring Term in Year 2 onwards, pupils participate in Novel Study lessons three times per week. These sessions focus on deep comprehension and authorial understanding.

Children are taught to:

- make predictions
- clarify unfamiliar vocabulary
- retrieve information
- infer meaning
- summarise key ideas
- explore vocabulary and its effect on the reader

High-quality core texts are carefully selected, and teachers refer back to earlier books to strengthen connections across the reading curriculum.

Across KS2, foundational reading knowledge continues to be strengthened through explicit teaching and modelling of:

- fluency and prosody to secure meaning
- vocabulary strategies
- sentence-level comprehension
- monitoring meaning

Within these year groups, any child not achieving age-related expectations continues to receive additional 1:1 reading support.

Children in Years 1–4 maintain a reading diary to support communication between school and home.

Assessment of Reading

Phonics assessments ensure pupils access books accurately matched to their decoding ability. Each term, Testbase assessments provide summative information about reading mechanics and comprehension. These are used alongside Sonar Juniper formative statements to arrive at an accurate judgement of attainment.

Assessment is ongoing and informs both classroom teaching and targeted intervention.

Where pupils are not making expected progress, staff identify which element of foundational reading knowledge is the barrier (e.g., decoding accuracy, automaticity, fluency, vocabulary understanding, sentence comprehension, or comprehension strategy use). This ensures interventions are sharply targeted and effective.

Supporting Lower Readers

Assessment information is used to identify pupils who are not meeting age-related expectations. Support is planned collaboratively between the class teacher, Subject Leader and SENCO.

Intervention strategies may include:

- phonics intervention groups
- additional 1:1 reading
- small comprehension groups
- structured parental support

Support focuses on securing the specific foundational knowledge pupils need next. For some, this is phonemic awareness and blending; for others it is tricky word automaticity, fluency, or sentence-level comprehension. Intervention is delivered in short, frequent sessions to ensure rapid progress, with regular review and adjustment.

The aim is rapid response and sustained progress.

A Love of Reading

Alongside skill development, we actively cultivate reading for pleasure. We want every child to see reading as enjoyable, social and meaningful.

STAR Reading Time

Every day at 3:10pm, classes come together for STAR Reading Time (Sit Together and Read). This protected time is dedicated to shared enjoyment of books. Teachers create a calm, inviting environment using soft lighting, gentle music and comfortable seating to signal that this is a special reading space.

The focus rotates weekly to ensure variety:

- STAR Reading – teacher read-aloud for enjoyment
- Chatter Matters – conversations about books and reading identity
- Calm Chapter – quiet independent reading
- Read and Recommend – sharing favourite books
- Books Between Buddies – cross-age reading partnerships
- Curiosity Club – non-fiction exploration

This rotation ensures children experience reading in multiple ways and develop a broad reading identity. It also supports foundational reading habits such as sustained attention, reading stamina, and hearing fluent modelled reading.

Reading Culture

Every classroom contains an inviting reading area stocked with high-quality books. We aim to make reading spaces memorable and exciting.

Wynndale promotes a whole-school reading culture. Adults model reading by displaying their own current books. Whole-school displays, book fairs, seasonal book exchanges and national reading events celebrate literature. Initiatives such as Book Lovers tea parties, Reading Bears and the hidden book scheme extend our reading community beyond the classroom.

By combining explicit teaching of foundational reading knowledge with a strong reading culture, Wynndale children build both the competence and the motivation to read widely and independently. Through these experiences, children leave Wynndale having encountered a wide range of high-quality texts and seeing themselves as lifelong readers.