

# The Rationale behind Durham Lane's Reading Curriculum



At Durham Lane Primary School, we believe reading is a quest for meaning which requires the reader to be an active participant. A love of books and reading contributes not just to language and literacy development, but is also of immense personal and social value: in fact, we believe that reading is the most vital skill needed in order to improve children's life chances. We want our pupils to enjoy reading for pleasure as well as using it to acquire knowledge; for these reasons, we see mastery of reading as a key priority in Durham Lane Primary School. Indeed, in our school, reading is prioritised to allow pupils to access the full curriculum offer.

We have worked hard to devise a bespoke reading curriculum that meets the needs of pupils at our school and we have achieved this by introducing and implementing a host of approaches (including providing children with a language rich environment) which are outlined below:

## **Phonics Sessions:**

In Early Years and Year 1, staff use Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised to teach phonics in a systematic and consistent manner. Teachers and Teaching Assistants have received training and are able to use consistent mantras and resources to deliver a robust phonics curriculum and books are closely linked to the phonics which the children know and can apply. Phonics sessions take place daily and are delivered to the whole class, in groups as well as in Keep Up sessions. 'Tricky words' are also taught systematically, following our Letters and sounds programme.

Phonics and spelling patterns are taught daily in Y2-Y6 and staff follow our spelling scheme which can be found on our website. Any children who have not fully mastered the phonics taught in EY/Y1, are given keep up sessions to ensure they do not fall behind their peers in reading.

## **Guided Reading**

We believe that it is of fundamental importance that we teach, promote and enable pupils to apply core reading skills and we do this in a variety of ways, but primarily through Guided Reading sessions, which usually occur daily.

In each session, teachers work with groups of children of approximately the same ability on a range of skills e.g. retrieval, prediction, inference and authorial intent. We have a progression of skills map (see website) which outlines the skills and knowledge pupils should have acquired by the end of each year group which teachers use to plan and deliver high quality lessons with a clear focus on developing reading skills. Staff are confident in selecting skills which should be taught and learned at various points across the academic year and use quality texts, matched to children's reading abilities (as well as their interests), which, as well as being a vehicle in developing the necessary reading skills, also promote a love of reading which is of paramount importance in our school.

Pupils know which skills are being taught as teachers overtly explain this to them during their Guided Reading session using 'The Pawsome Gang' whereby reading skills are assigned to a character e.g. vocabulary Victor. Pictures of these characters are displayed in every classroom and around school to remind children of the skills they need to have acquired to be a good reader. Parents are also informed (through home-school reading records) about the skills their children have been taught so that they can reinforce this at home. Parents are also regularly informed about their children's progress in reading as well as being offered advice about how they can help support reading.

## **Reading Across the Curriculum**

Reading is at the centre of our curriculum as we recognise that reading skills are at the core of every subject that we teach; therefore, we use texts relating to our cross-curricular topics at every given opportunity. Whether it be reading myths and legends when studying the *Ancient Greeks*, studying *George's Marvellous Medicine* whilst learning about materials in science or sharing an age-appropriate version of *The Secret Garden* whilst learning about growth in KS1, children are encouraged to see reading as an integral vehicle for their learning and to understand that having the necessary reading skills is essential for gaining knowledge in all areas of the curriculum.

## **Word Power**

All staff attended training with Literacy Consultant, Kelly Ashley, where they explored a range of techniques to support and enhance children's understanding of vocabulary. As a result of this, staff deliver interesting and motivating lessons which encourage children to explore the meaning of words and the impact vocabulary can have on readers. Children are encouraged to develop a curiosity about word meanings and etymology, resulting in vocabulary rich classrooms. Examples of Word Power activities which are used throughout school, can be found in a document entitled 'Ideas to Support Inference and Word Power Throughout School' and can be found on our website.

## **Inference Training**

We use some of the principles advocated in Leicester City Council's Inference Training Programme to help our KS2 pupils to acquire meaning and enjoyment from their reading. The Literacy Leader reminds staff each year of the techniques promoted in the inference training pack and teachers use these to deliver exciting and focused lessons which promote the skills of prediction, comparing and contrasting texts, retrieval, understanding of vocabulary and inference. Children are encouraged to: make links between what they read and their own lives; ask questions as they are reading and after they have finished reading; recognise when they have misread a word and correct it; pinpoint and question interesting vocabulary; use retrieval and inference skills to further their comprehension of the text; and become fluent readers.

**All of these approaches provide a cohesive and consistent approach to our reading curriculum and work in unison to achieve our desired outcomes for reading: for children to have a real love of books and to have attained all the necessary skills to use books and other written material to acquire knowledge.**