

*"If you don't like to read, you haven't found the right book.."* J.K. Rowling (Harry Potter)

### Reading for Pleasure

We are passionate about reading and books because we enjoy books ourselves! Many of the staff at Saint John's are readers and it isn't unusual to walk into a room and find people talking about a book they have been reading. Our aim is to help the children to see how much books can provide a place of rest and relaxation – beyond those demanding devices – and a time of discovery and wonder. We want to tempt children to try genres they might not easily choose and celebrate the different styles and content that is read by the whole school community.

In school, the curriculum is planned to ensure that there are new, diverse and engaging books available to the children: non-fiction, fiction, plays and poetry. Our learning revolves around books, with connections made between reading and all subjects; this means that children can experience the joy of reading in every context of their school experience. We have arrangements so that children share books with others: paired reading within the class first thing in the morning perhaps; across classes when children read to each other – we love seeing the care that the older children show for the younger ones; with sixth-form or adult volunteers who come in each day or with our reading dog!

Each day, every day, there is a story reading time set aside when the class book is read, usually by the teacher but sometimes by some of the stronger readers. With heads on tables for relaxation or sitting in a favourite place in the classroom, children and adult share a book together. We want poetry to have a high profile too, so poems are being read each week.

Every Friday, there is time for each child to read quietly in class, to share comments about characters and to present book reviews to each other, using those persuasive skills so important for convincing someone else of the choice that has been made! Conversations around favourite plots and settings ensue as well as predictions around how a book might end.

Each classroom has a reading areas where story books, graphic novels, classical literature, research books, magazines and newspapers are on offer. Displays raise the profile of new books and some classes have "secret" wrapped-up books which are chosen by the children: they cannot see the cover but they can read the blurb!

Our library has been moved downstairs into the middle of the school, making it easy to access and at the heart of our children's experience. Being beside the head's office means that you will often find the head teacher sitting quietly with a child. Finally, in our front entrance, books are on display to encourage visitors to look at reading material if they are waiting and we aim to develop this into a book swap for our school community.

*"Any book that helps children to form a habit of reading, to make reading one of their deep and continuing needs, is good for them.."* Maya Angelou (Poet)

### Reading at Home

Working with our families is key to the children's reading as we know that children could not make the progress they do without support on home. We work closely with parents to ensure they understand how to pronounce the phonics correctly and have strategies to develop their child's reading skills. The books that we send home ensure our children's fluency and comprehension develop accordingly. Children have their books changed once a week and are given three to four books to read. Reading diaries help home/school communication, as well as contact via Dojo/Tapestry.

We hold information evenings and signpost parents to specific parental help guides where appropriate, using our website as an easy place for parents to access information. We also have a parent librarian who has been brilliant, making suggestions for our library and sharing her expertise.

### Challenge

*We are challenged and supported to achieve success.*

### Caring

*We care for and value each other and ourselves.*

### Community

*We work together to build respectful relationships in all communities.*

### Curriculum

*We learn new and amazing things!*

### Citizenship

*We learn how to stand firm as citizens of the world around us and beyond.*



## Saint John's CE Primary School Curriculum Design

*where we all flourish*

*We are 'like a tree, flourishing in God's unfailing love' Psalm 52:8*

*From diverse beginnings and building on our Christian values, we grow together to reach up and reach out.*

### Reading in our local community

Special events always help children to see how exciting books and reading can be. Each year, we take groups to the Cheltenham Literature Festival, enjoying the short walk and engaging in the informal activities as well as the booked sessions.

We are able to take advantage of our closeness to the centre of Cheltenham, building a close relationship with the Waterstones bookshop staff and the public library with its dedicated Children's Library. Setting up regular visits will encourage families to use these two places to increase their engagement with books and reading.

World Book Day involves dressing up, bringing in the book of our chosen character and experiencing an author or illustrator speaking to us about reading and writing. Sometimes, we use an author to launch a particular topic or event, such as Andy Seed, a local author, coming to speak to each class or visits to hear Robin Stevens.

*"Reading is important. If you know how to read, then the whole world opens up to you."*

Barak Obama (previous President of America)

### Learning to Read and Reading to Learn

Our structured approach to reading is designed to ensure that our children learn to read and read to learn. Reading is an end to itself, but also guarantees other learning. At Saint John's, we begin our reading journey with the fundamentals of singing songs, chanting rhymes and engaging with sounds. We focus on phonics where children learn a new sound every other day, through whole class teaching and a mixture of adult-directed and independent activities. The scheme of work that we use to teach phonics is 'Floppy Phonics', reinforced through songs and interactive activities. Initially, children begin with non-worded books; this develops their questioning and prediction skills. As their segmenting and blending progress, children are given books to suit the sounds they have been taught. We have classified our reading books so that each next step is clear, ensuring we are both supporting and challenging children's reading. As the children move into KS1, phonics learning remains a high priority and is taught daily in Year 1 and at the start of Year 2, always taking into account the needs of each child. Children read frequently with an adult in school, working through the school reading system. Our aim is for children to become "free readers" whilst also ensuring that their reading material continues to be matched to their level. Having said that, we are delighted to spot a child reading an "adult" book because they want to, perhaps enjoying the pictures or diagrams! We never want to restrict our children's choices; they need to reach up and out! Reading diaries encourage the children to record their reading and give the opportunity for parents to make a note of any progress or possible concerns. As reading progresses, we continue to develop vocabulary and comprehension skills through structured whole-class reading sessions using Fred's Teaching resources which use "real" books to engage the children in their VIPERS questions and answers. The week is time-tabled to focus on different elements of comprehension and reading stamina is also developed as children progress through the school.

Texts are carefully chosen to support the curriculum: we know the importance of providing high-quality texts with subject-specific vocabulary and increasingly sophisticated concepts. The "Talk for Writing" framework is our basis, alongside a focus on diversity and inclusion. Throughout the reading journey, assessment is used to identify progression and next steps for children. This may take the form of daily observations and informal check-ins as well as more structured reading assessments. Targeted interventions are used to help children stay on track with age related expectations and their progress is monitored by class teachers and senior leaders.

*"You can never get a cup of tea large enough or a book long enough to suit me."* C.S. Lewis (Narnia)