

Reading Policy

The context of our school

At Ebbsfleet Green School, reading sits at the heart of our curriculum and underpins learning across all subjects. Through reading, children access knowledge, explore new worlds, develop language and thinking, and deepen their understanding of themselves and others. We are committed to ensuring that every child becomes a confident, fluent, and enthusiastic reader who reads both for pleasure and for purpose.

Ebbsfleet Green School opened in 2020 and has grown rapidly to meet the needs of our community. We currently have one form of entry in Years 5 and 6, two forms in Years 2, 3, and 4, three forms in Year 1 and Reception, and a Nursery. We also have a Specialist Resource Provision for children with autism.

At present, 16.4% of our pupils have SEND and 13.6% are eligible for pupil premium funding. Attendance sits within expected ranges, and any absence is carefully addressed through planned catch-up learning to ensure that all children continue to make progress.

We are committed to inclusive practice and ensuring that all children, including those in our Specialist Resource Provision, receive a high-quality, ambitious reading curriculum that is carefully adapted to meet their needs.

Intent

Our Vision for Reading

At Ebbsfleet Green School, we aim for all children to become passionate, confident, and fluent readers. Reading enhances children's subject-specific knowledge while widening their understanding of their own and other cultures, strengthening their emotional intelligence, and expanding their imagination. Across the curriculum, children engage with a broad range of texts, media, and genres, which supports motivation, persistence, and enjoyment in reading.

We actively encourage children to read for pleasure, choosing books they enjoy, and for purpose, using reading to learn, explore, and make sense of the world. Both are essential in nurturing curious, thoughtful, and lifelong readers. Our cosy reading areas and enchanting school library provide an inviting environment for children to read widely and often, with books readily available to take home.

The Interconnection of Language and Literacy

Reading, writing, speaking, and listening are deeply interconnected skills. Confident reading depends on strong oral language and listening skills, while writing draws on vocabulary, comprehension, and language knowledge. At Ebbsfleet Green, we design

our reading curriculum to ensure these skills develop together, giving children the tools to decode, understand, and communicate meaning effectively.



FIGURE 1: The interlinkage of speaking, listening, reading and writing

Decoding, Comprehension, and Language Knowledge

We recognise that both decoding (translating written words into the sounds of spoken language) and comprehension (understanding the meaning of the language being read) are essential for competent reading. Neither is sufficient alone. Reading comprehension also depends on children's knowledge of language forms (syntax and morphology), vocabulary (semantics), and context (pragmatics).

Our balanced approach to reading ensures that children develop the following interrelated components:

- Decoding – applying phonics accurately to read words;
- Prosody – reading with expression and phrasing;
- Comprehension – understanding, interpreting, and responding to texts;
- Language form knowledge – understanding sentence structures and grammatical conventions;
- Vocabulary knowledge – accessing word meanings and nuances;
- Context influences – understanding how language varies according to situation, purpose, and audience.

Fluency, including accuracy, pace, and expression, develops through repeated reading and is reinforced across all reading sessions.

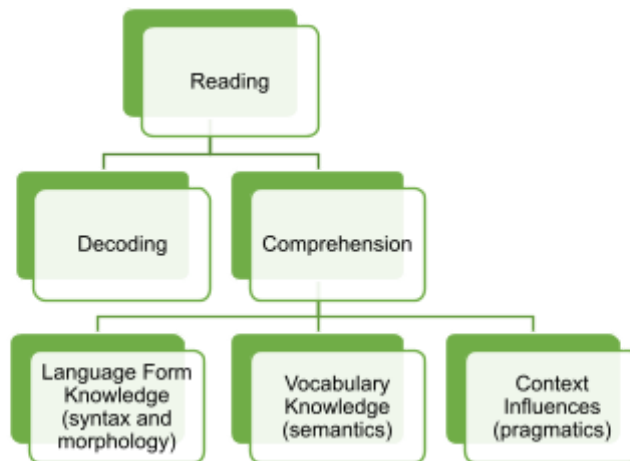


FIGURE 4: A Balanced Approach to Reading

Reading for Pleasure and Purpose

Reading at Ebbfleet Green is intentionally taught to foster both pleasure and purpose. Children experience high-quality literature and repeated reads through our 100 Story Chest, and as they progress, through our Book Spine, ensuring exposure to a diverse and ambitious range of texts. Daily storytime, classroom reading corners, library visits, and shared reading experiences support children's love of books and reinforce the links between decoding, comprehension, and language knowledge.

Our Intent for Every Child

Through this approach, we intend that every child:

- Develops secure decoding skills and reading fluency to focus on meaning;
- Gains strong vocabulary and comprehension abilities across contexts;
- Reads widely across genres, cultures, and media;
- Enjoys reading for both pleasure and purpose;
- Leaves Ebbfleet Green as a confident, capable reader ready for secondary education and lifelong learning.

Implementation

Reading in the Early Years (Nursery and Reception)

In Nursery, we focus on developing early reading behaviours through high-quality stories, poems, rhymes, and songs. Children experience repeated reading of carefully chosen texts that build familiarity, anticipation, and enjoyment. Reading is frequent and purposeful, with adults reading aloud throughout the day to immerse children in story language, rhythm, and rich vocabulary.

In Reception, children continue to experience daily story time alongside structured phonics teaching through Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised. Repeated reads and shared storytelling remain central, ensuring that children encounter texts well beyond their independent reading level.

Across Nursery and Reception, we draw from our 100 Story Chest — a carefully curated collection of core texts that are read and re-read to children. These repeated reads expose children to a rich diet of vocabulary, rhythm, rhyme, linguistic structures, and story characters beyond their independent reading level. They build familiarity, anticipation, and a deep love of story.

Every class takes part in a daily collective cuddle, where an adult reads aloud to the whole class. This time is protected and valued, strengthening children's listening skills, enjoyment, and engagement with books.

Key Stage 1 Reading (Years 1 and 2)

In Key Stage 1, reading builds on the strong foundations established in the Early Years. Children continue to develop decoding and fluency through structured phonics and reading practice sessions, using books carefully matched to their secure phonics knowledge.

Children participate in regular reading practice sessions that focus on:

1. Decoding – teaching children to use phonics knowledge to read words accurately;
2. Prosody – teaching children to read with expression and phrasing;
3. Comprehension – helping children to understand, discuss, and respond to the text.

Fluency, encompassing accuracy, pace, and expression, is developed across these sessions through repeated reading and consistent practice.

In Year 2, children who are secure in phonics move into Little Wandle Fluency, which supports the transition from learning to read to reading with increasing fluency and understanding.

Children continue to access texts from the 100 Story Chest, ensuring rich language exposure alongside their independent reading.

Lower Key Stage 2 (Years 2 and 3): Little Wandle Fluency

In Years 2 and 3, children who have exited the core phonics programme are taught using Little Wandle Fluency. These daily sessions focus on:

- Reading aloud with increasing accuracy and pace;
- Developing prosody and expression;
- Deepening vocabulary and comprehension through structured discussion.

Alongside this, children continue to read their fluency-levelled chapter books, which are sent home to support regular reading practice, over three-week periods. Teachers assess fluency levels approximately every six weeks to ensure children are reading books well matched to their needs.

Upper Key Stage 2 (Years 4–6): Steps to Read (Literacy Counts)

From Year 4 onwards, children receive daily whole-class reading lessons through Steps to Read. This programme explicitly teaches reading comprehension skills and strategies using high-quality, age-appropriate texts.

Steps to Read:

- Provides a clear progression of reading skills across KS2;
- Develops vocabulary, inference, and critical thinking;
- Ensures all children engage with ambitious texts as part of a shared reading experience.

Fluency and Independent Reading (Years 4–6)

Alongside Steps to Read, children continue to develop reading fluency through:

- A structured fluency programme;
- Collins fluency-levelled books, which children take home to read regularly;
- Six-weekly fluency assessments to monitor accuracy, speed, and expression.

Reading Plus (Years 4–6)

From Year 4, children also access Reading Plus, an adaptive, online reading programme that supports:

- Silent reading fluency;
- Vocabulary development;
- Reading stamina and comprehension.

Reading Plus is personalised to each child's reading ability and complements whole-class reading instruction by addressing individual needs.

Reading for Pleasure and the Book Spine

Reading for pleasure is explicitly taught, modelled, and prioritised across the school. Every classroom has a carefully curated reading area that reflects a wide range of authors, genres, cultures and voices.

From Year 2 upwards, children are introduced to the Book Spine — a collection of 100 books that children will have read by the time they leave Ebbfleet Green in Year 6. These texts are revisited, discussed and celebrated throughout the school, ensuring that every child experiences a broad and diverse literary canon.

Children visit the school library regularly, and reading is enriched through author visits, book fairs, reading events, and participation in national reading initiatives.

Impact

Assessment and Monitoring

Assessment is used to monitor progress, identify gaps, and ensure timely support. This includes:

- Ongoing formative assessment within lessons;
- Regular fluency assessments (approximately every six weeks);
- Monitoring of home reading and engagement;
- Use of Reading Plus data to inform personalised support.

Assessment information is used by teachers, Reading Leaders, and SLT to evaluate the effectiveness of provision, target interventions, and ensure all children make strong progress in reading.

Children in Year 1 complete the Phonics Screening Check, with re-screening in Year 2 where required, to ensure all children meet age-related expectations in phonics.

In Key Stage 2 (Years 6), children complete the SATs Reading Assessment. This statutory assessment measures children's ability to:

- Decode and read age-appropriate texts accurately;
- Demonstrate comprehension through retrieval, inference, and understanding of vocabulary;
- Apply their reading skills across a range of text types.

End-of-Key Stage assessments, alongside ongoing teacher judgments, are used to inform transition, future teaching, and targeted reading support across the school.

Ensuring Lifelong Reading

This policy ensures that reading at Ebbsfleet Green School is taught systematically, inclusively, and with a clear progression in skills from Nursery to Year 6 so that every child can become a lifelong reader.