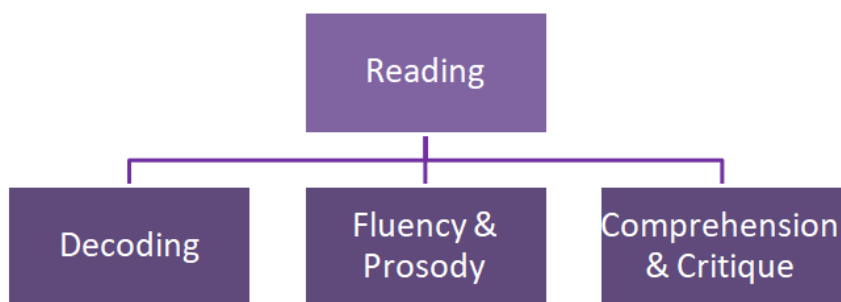




# Key Threads



## Intent:

At Birchfield Primary School, we intend for our children to leave Year 6 as fluent, confident readers who understand the importance of reading on their immediate and future lives. We intend for them to leave having read a rich variety of fiction and non-fiction literature and for them to develop such an enjoyment for reading that they leave as avid readers choosing to read for pleasure and to read to learn.

We intend for our children to leave Birchfield having engaged in an array of quality book related experiences and having acquired the linguistic skills in order to be able to discuss, evaluate, reflect, compare, critique and engage in meaningful conversations about a wide range of literature in order to form an opinion. Our intention is that all children experience a progressive and challenging curriculum built upon a foundation of diverse and carefully selected literature – a curriculum which develops children’s word recognition and language comprehension alongside developing a genuine desire to read for pleasure. It is our intent that every child at Birchfield will connect with a book and has the opportunity to see themselves represented through literature.

As Emily Style states in her article *Curriculum as Window and Mirror*: “All students deserve a curriculum which mirrors their own experience back to them, upon occasion — thus validating it in the public world of the school. But curriculum must also insist upon the fresh air of windows into the experience of others — who also need and deserve the public validation of the school curriculum.”

We believe the world of literature can provide both a window and a mirror. It is our intention that Birchfield is a school which is built on books because we place reading at the heart of everything. We intend that reading will not only strengthen the core knowledge rooted within our writing and wider curriculums but will also play an important role in educating the whole child emotionally, culturally, socially and spiritually.

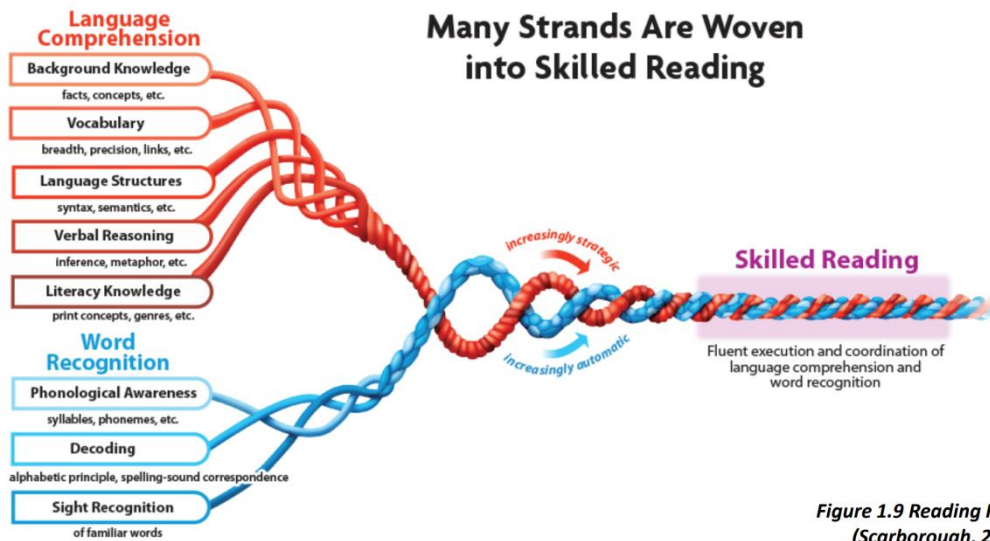
The aim of our reading curriculum is to promote and attain the highest standards of reading whilst equipping the children with a love of literature which they carry with them for life. We aim for our children to become readers with agency and foster a life-long appreciation for reading.

## Implementation:

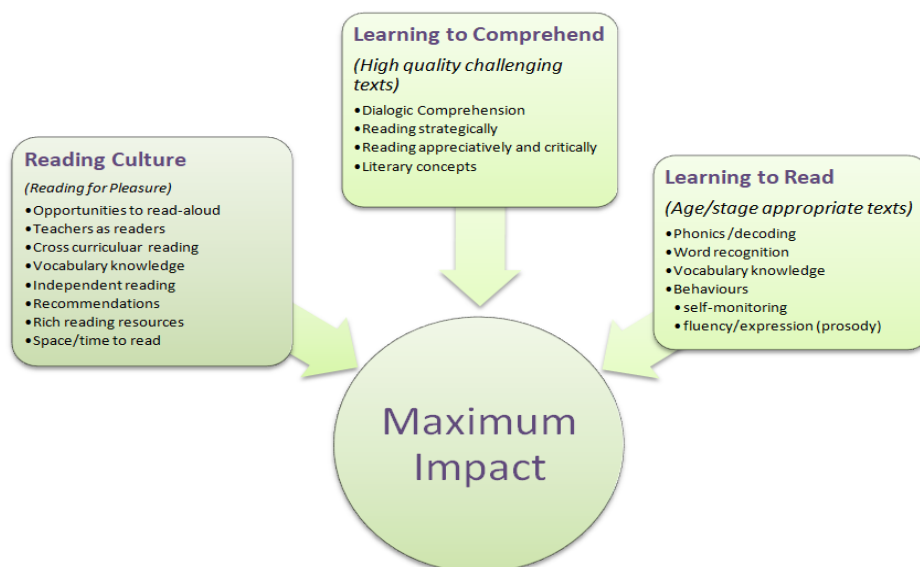
We believe that fluent readers are able to read words accurately and *effortlessly*. They recognise words and phrases instantly on sight. A minimal amount of cognitive energy is expended in decoding



the words. This means, then, that the maximum amount of a reader's cognitive energy can be directed to the all-important task of making sense of the text.



We understand that learning to be a fluent reader can be a complex and lengthy process (in line with Scarborough's, 2001 reading model) as shown above. As such, we have designed our reading curriculum around the two core strands as outlined in the Scarborough Reading Rope: Word Recognition and Language Comprehension in order to teach our children to read. At Birchfield we don't follow a single approach to the teaching and learning of reading— teachers carefully select from a variety of engaging approaches dependent on the level of reading development for individuals, groups of children and the whole class. We have also considered carefully the culture in which reading sits in order to ensure maximum impact which is reflected in our converging radial diagram.



In every year group, the children are given multiple opportunities throughout the week to hear stories and books read aloud and to read with a teacher or teaching assistant. In addition, those



children who require additional reading practice and support are heard read during interventions throughout the week; the focus being on the lowest 20%. We work very hard to ensure each and every child leaves primary school with a great love of reading and strong reading skills to help them in their everyday lives.

In the early years, children are exposed to books and print all throughout the classroom and have daily opportunities to listen to stories, explore books and nursery rhymes and be read with as they develop their phonics knowledge.

In Reception and in Year 1 the children begin daily formal phonics teaching following the government-validated Essential Letters and Sounds SSP (systematic, synthetic phonics) programme, in line with the 2021 DfE's reading framework. All children in Reception and KS1 have daily phonics sessions in a whole class setting with those who are struggling to grasp key elements taught, receiving additional phonics sessions. This is to ensure all pupils receive equal exposure to teaching material for their age group and are given the same opportunity to learn. Children who are unable to achieve the phonics expected standard will proceed to phonics intervention and reading support. Phonics is continued in KS2 for those who need it including application practice with decodable reading books. Daily phonics lessons are supported with at least 2 weekly reading practice sessions in small groups. All reading material is decodable and aligned to the phonics learning that is taking place. In Reception and Key Stage 1, as their phonics skills become more secure, children are asked to read daily at home to a parent or carer as part of their home learning. All children are given multiple opportunities to read with the class teacher or teaching assistant. In Year 2, the children progress beyond phonics to learn spelling rules.

Throughout Key Stage 2, as children become increasingly fluent, reading lessons focus more on comprehension skills and promoting fluency. The children are still asked to read daily at home as part of their home learning and continue to have frequent opportunities to work with their teachers and teaching assistants at school to further develop their reading skills. Reading lessons from year 2 upwards use a variety of approaches, these include:

**Guided reading:** a small-group reading instruction, designed to provide differentiated teaching to pupils in school. It's a chance for pupils who demonstrate similar reading behaviours and can read similar levels of texts.

Guided reading supports children in developing reading proficiency, with the smaller group dynamic allowing them to be taught in a way that's more focused on their specific needs, which can accelerate their progress.

**Whole class reading:** Teaching sessions that are focused on building understanding and comprehension. This allows for opportunities to model reading prosody to a whole class. It also allows for a focus on specific reading skills such as retrieval or deduction.

**Shared reading:** regularly sharing a book, extract, poetry or piece of non-fiction with children is a core element of our reading approach and helps to develop the all important "love of reading".



In Year 2, 3 and 4 (and in some cases beyond), the children continue to take home reading books matching their book band. Oxford Reading Tree book bands are used to track a child's progress in reading independently. The class teacher decides which book band (or 'book colour') your child is on using their own professional judgment based on hearing your child read and join in discussions during guided reading sessions and any opportunities they have to read with your child 1:1. Once your child is deemed to be fluent and have sufficient comprehension skills using a particular book band, the teacher will assess whether they are ready to be moved up to the next book band using their own assessment. A reminder: while your child may seem to find a certain book band "easy" in terms of the word reading skills it demands, their comprehension skills may still need developing at that level and therefore the class teacher may wait to move them up.

We would expect that from Year 4 upwards, the children are 'free readers' and encouraged to read their own books and ones from school often for pleasure.

At Birchfield, teachers and subject leaders have planned a clear progression of texts linked to learning and the Enquiry, across every year group. In all lessons, teachers exhibit their own love of reading and model reading aloud with expert fluency and prosody, giving life to the stories and encouraging the children to do the same.

In English, lessons are based on high-quality texts to inspire the children in their writing. Teachers and leaders have selected books with the intent to create opportunities to write for a wide variety of purposes and audiences. These books are from a range of authors with diverse backgrounds, both British and from around the world, and cover everything from traditional tales, magical worlds and epic journeys, to intriguing, modern characters reflective of our own cohort facing the challenges of today and tomorrow. Whole-class and guided reading lessons also give children the chance to read and ponder more challenging texts chosen to widen their vocabulary and introduce them to cultures and experiences they may not have had exposure to previously.

Fiction and non-fiction texts linked to units of work and the Enquiry, are also chosen to support the children's learning in science, history, geography, RE, PSHE and all other subjects.

In every classroom, the children can choose books to read from their very own class library. Each carefully curated selection of books will include curriculum-linked books such as those discussed above or high-quality recommended texts appropriate for that year group.

### **School library**

Located at the very heart of our school is our school library. Every class has a weekly library slot, during which time the children may come and choose a special book to take home. Our library catalogue is regularly researched and updated to include books requested by the children and teachers and includes books across a number of fiction genres and non-fiction topics. It is an inviting, comforting place where the children know they can relax, take off their shoes and cosy up with a good book.



# Impact:

By the time the children reach the end of our reading curriculum, they will have experienced a rich variety of the finest literature in order to have moved from learning to read to reading to learn. They will be able to read fluently and understand what they have read well. They will be able to engage in meaningful discussions about literature and through exposure to a wide range of Tier 2/3 vocabulary they will have a vast array of words at their disposal. Reading evidence will be recorded in reading exercise books. The environments will also evidence the positive reading culture and ongoing teaching. At Birchfield we believe that reading is the key to unlock all learning and so the impact of our reading goes beyond the statutory assessments. We give all the children the opportunity to enter the amazing new worlds that a book opens up to them and share texts from a range of cultures or genres to inspire them to question or seek out more for themselves. Reading is the golden thread running through a child's learning journey at Birchfield.

The impact of our reading curriculum will demonstrate that:

- By the time our children leave our school, they are confident, fluent readers
- Our children enjoy their reading lessons and are happy and confident to talk about their learning.
- Children at our school are proud of their reading choices and ability.
- Our children are able to read books and other texts to enhance their knowledge and understanding in all subjects.
- Our children can confidently use a range of strategies for decoding words.
- Staff at all levels promote high standards of language and literacy by equipping pupils with a strong command of the spoken and written language, and to develop their love of literature through widespread reading for enjoyment.
- Children are both independent and reflective readers who can read fluently and for meaning.
- Our children appreciate a rich and varied language developed through exposure to diverse text with global perspectives.
- Children enjoy reading at home and parents know how to support them.
- Attainment in reading is measured using the statutory assessments at the end of Key Stage 1 and 2. These results are measured against the reading attainment of children nationally.
- Children will make at least good progress in reading from their starting point in EYFS.