



Reading Policy

Person responsible: Head teacher
Ratified by the governing body: Spring 2023
Date for review: Spring 2026

A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to read 'P. Parmenter', is positioned above the printed name of the Chair of Governors.

Dr Pip Parmenter
Chair of Governors

Why do we teach reading at Messing?

Reading is fundamental to education. Proficiency in reading, writing and spoken language is vital for pupils' success. Through these, they develop communication skills for education and for working with others: in school, in training and at work.

The Reading Framework, DfE July 2023

At Messing, we believe that reading is both fundamental to education and also one of life's great joys. It allows us access, not only to information about the world around us, but also to new worlds, new characters and new ideas – a good book allows the imagination to take flight. Through reading, we develop a richer vocabulary, deeper empathy and wider understanding. We make connections with others and explore similarities and differences. The world is full of good books, books that entertain, inform and enthrall, and every child can be supported to find the books that are right for them. Our intention is to give all pupils access to this treasure trove as quickly and effectively as possible through developing children's decoding skills and their understanding of what they read. We recognise that some children will learn to read more easily than others, but that all children can, and must, learn to read.

How do we teach reading at Messing?

1. Early Reading and Phonics

All children in Foundation Stage and Key Stage One are taught reading and phonics through the Twinkl Phonics Programme, a systematic synthetic phonics programme where children are taught to identify, pronounce and blend together the sounds we use to make words. Children are placed in groups depending on their level of attainment and may be offered additional sessions throughout the day to ensure all children are making progress. Children have a daily phonics and reading lesson lasting up to an hour (though these lessons will be much shorter when children first start in Reception). The phonics lesson consists of teaching oral blending, introducing and revising sounds, decoding words, reading common exception words, decoding 'alien words', spelling words, writing short captions or sentences and reading texts. The sessions use a closely matched book to read and comprehend.

Children's progress in phonics is closely monitored each half term using Phonics Tracker, an online assessment tool. This helps teachers to identify gaps in children's knowledge and those pupils who may need additional support to keep up.

2. Home Reading

Parents who engage their children in books prepare them to become committed and enthusiastic readers: they can transform their attitudes to reading. Their children learn to focus and share the enjoyment of the story; they learn how stories start and finish, and how a plot unravels and is resolved; they learn that books can transport them elsewhere. Without this, as Wolf said, they cannot experience 'the exquisite joys of immersion in the reading life.'

We recognise the importance of parental engagement in supporting children to learn to read and aim to help parents with this through phonics and reading workshops held in school each year.

A decodable reading practice book, closely linked to the sounds children have already learned, is taken home to ensure reading success is shared with the family. We have built up a stock of good quality reading books from different schemes, but teachers in EYFS and Y1 in particular ensure the books they send home are closely matched to the sounds they have taught. Children are encouraged to read the book more than once - firstly, to decode it; secondly, to read for understanding and then to read to develop fluency and expression. Reading for pleasure books may also go home for parents to share and read to children.

As children progress through the school, they continue to take home books that have been levelled to ensure they are appropriately challenging. Adults in class regularly hear children read in order to ensure they are reading appropriate texts. Once children's decoding and understanding skills are sufficiently well-developed, they become 'free readers' and can choose from the wide range of books in the library, with some direction from adults and our Y6 Reading Ambassador to ensure they make good choices.

3. Class Reading

i. EYFS and Key Stage One

In EYFS and Key Stage One, storytime is an essential and regular part of the day and teachers take care to prioritise the reading of good quality texts. Storytime is used as an opportunity to engage pupils in the story and develop their interest in reading, but also as an opportunity to develop their vocabulary and discuss texts in order to improve understanding. Teachers may make links between stories children know, encouraging them to talk about similarities and differences. Many stories, such as *Supertato* by Sue Hendra, *Where's My Hat?* By Jon Klassen and *the Gruffalo* by Julia Donaldson will become class favourites and will be read time and time again, so that children can anticipate and join in with their favourite parts. Nursery rhymes, songs and poems will regularly be shared with the children and they will learn many of them by heart, developing their understanding of rhythm and rhyme.

Once children have begun to learn some sounds, group reading sessions using decodable texts allows them to use those skills effectively and group reading sessions take place after the phonics lesson three times a week. The same text is used all week – in the first session, children become confident decoding the book (or part of the book if it is a longer text). In the second session, they develop their understanding of the text through reading it again and asking and answering questions. In the third session, they practice reading for prosody – that is, reading with expression, reading at an appropriate speed and making use of punctuation to aid meaning.

ii. Key Stage Two

In Key Stage Two, children further develop these skills. Children who need further practice with phonics will receive intervention support to ensure they make progress as quickly as possible. Others will continue to develop their understanding of etymology, and develop their vocabulary, through GPS sessions (Grammar, Punctuation and Spelling) and other areas of the curriculum. Adults in class listen to children read throughout the week and ensure they are reading appropriately challenging texts.

Each half term, the class reads a key text together, often linked to their topic. At times, the key text will be read to them in class story times which take place daily. The aim of these sessions is pure enjoyment and allowing children to become immersed in the text. In teaching sessions, extracts from the key text may also be used to develop decoding skills, comprehension skills and reading prosody. Children will be given opportunities to discuss the text and to make links with other texts they have read. As well as using the key text, extracts from other texts, poems and short stories will also be used to develop these skills.

4. Reading for Enjoyment

In effect, pupils who are reading regularly for enjoyment give themselves unofficial reading lessons, supporting their reading comprehension.

Multiple studies suggest that enjoyment is associated with higher reading performance. Wide recreational reading expands pupils' knowledge about the world and about language... Such knowledge eases their access to the whole curriculum. Further, pupils who read regularly report heightened levels of social and emotional wellbeing. For many, reading is a form of relaxation, a place to escape everyday challenges, a source of entertainment. Reading allows readers to adopt new perspectives, develop empathy and become more socially conscious.

The Reading Framework, DfE July 2023

To support children's enjoyment of learning, each classroom at Messing will have a comfortable, inviting reading area. Class book corners and our school library will recommend different books and authors to children, some of which will be linked to our key texts by theme or author.

Children will be given opportunities each day to read fiction or non-fiction books, magazines and newspapers. These sessions will be timetabled and every effort will be made to ensure they are prioritized. Strategies such as shared reading, hook-a-book weeks and book fayres will be used to support children's engagement in reading and reading ambassadors and peer recommendations will help them to make good choices.

5. Comprehension

The simple view of reading, upon which the national curriculum for reading is based, divides reading into two elements – decoding and comprehension. Good decoding skills and good comprehension are the keystones of becoming a reader, as they allow children to enjoy reading and to feel confident in themselves as readers. However, comprehension does not begin with reading alone – it is based on children's understanding of language in general. On arrival in Reception, or where there are concerns for older children, we use the Wellcomm Speech and Language assessment tool to identify those children who may need additional support with their use, and understanding, of spoken language. Talkboost intervention groups are then used to close this gap.

6. Assessment

We assess children's progress in reading in a number of ways. Teachers assess during lessons and reading sessions, by listening to children and asking questions. In EYFS and Year One, Phonics Tracker is used to assess progress in phonics, with additional support put in place for children who are in danger of falling behind. Wellcomm Speech and Language Tool is used to identify pupils whose receptive or expressive language is below age related expectations. In Key Stage Two, Accelerated Reader assessment is used each term to ensure children's reading age and

comprehension age is at least in line with their chronological age. Children with reading or comprehension ages below their chronological age receive additional support. Target tracker is used by teachers each half term to ensure children are developing reading skills at an age-appropriate level.

For further information on the basis of this policy and the research underpinning it, please see the DfE's reading framework -

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-reading-framework-teaching-the-foundations-of-literacy>

