JOHN EMMERSON BATTY PRIMARY SCHOOL

EVIDENCE-INFORMED READING RATIONALE

Achieve • Believe • Challenge

Our ambition is for every child to become a fluent, confident, thoughtful and independent reader.

Our rationale

Reading is fundamental to children's success in school and beyond. At John Emmerson Batty, we believe that every pupil should learn to read accurately and fluently, understand increasingly complex texts, develop a rich vocabulary and, importantly, experience the pleasure and value of reading.

Our approach is informed by the Department for Education's Reading Framework and the Education Endowment Foundation's evidence-informed guidance for the Early Years, Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. These sources emphasise the importance of oral language, systematic synthetic phonics, fluency, vocabulary, comprehension, accurate assessment and a culture that motivates children to read.

This rationale sets out the principles that underpin reading at John Emmerson Batty. It is not a reading scheme. It provides a coherent framework through which leaders and teachers can evaluate, develop and refine provision from Nursery to Year 6.

Our eight principles for reading

1

Reading is fundamental

Reading gives pupils access to the curriculum, supports wider learning and opens opportunities beyond school. We therefore place reading at the heart of our curriculum and aim for every child to leave us able to read confidently and independently.

2

Language provides the foundation for reading

Reading development begins with communication and language. From Nursery onwards, high-quality interaction, storytelling, shared reading, rhyme and deliberate vocabulary development build the language comprehension and knowledge children need to become successful readers.

3

Children are systematically taught to decode

In Reception and Key Stage 1, Read Write Inc. (RWI) provides our systematic synthetic phonics pathway. Teaching is explicit and cumulative, with practice closely matched to pupils' developing phonic knowledge. Pupils who are not yet secure in decoding continue to receive appropriate phonics teaching and additional support for as long as they need it.

4

Fluency is the bridge from decoding to comprehension

Secure decoding is essential, but it is not the end point. Pupils need to develop accuracy, automaticity and appropriate expression so that attention can increasingly be directed towards meaning. We therefore recognise explicit fluency development as an important part of the transition beyond phonics and throughout reading development.

5

Comprehension is explicitly developed

Successful comprehension draws on word reading, fluency, vocabulary, background knowledge, understanding of language and text structures, inference and the ability to monitor understanding. Teachers model and support these processes explicitly, gradually enabling pupils to become increasingly strategic and independent readers.

6

Children encounter rich and increasingly challenging texts

Pupils should experience a broad range of high-quality literature and non-fiction. Extracts can serve a useful teaching purpose, but they should sit within a reading experience that also gives pupils sustained encounters with whole texts, authors, genres, rich vocabulary and increasingly complex ideas.

7

We develop readers, not simply reading skills

Reading for pleasure is integral to our approach. Through reading aloud, book talk, access to appealing texts, libraries and opportunities to choose and recommend books, we aim to build positive reading identities. We want pupils to read because they can and because they want to.

8

Support is precise, timely and matched to need

When a pupil struggles with reading, we seek to identify the specific barrier rather than simply label the pupil as 'below expected'. Assessment should help determine whether support is needed with decoding, fluency, vocabulary, language comprehension, background knowledge or another component of reading. Intervention is then targeted, structured and reviewed for impact.

The John Emmerson Batty reading journey

Our reading curriculum is designed as a connected journey. Each phase builds on the foundations established before it while continuing to develop language, vocabulary, knowledge and positive attitudes towards reading.

NURSERY	**Talk • Stories • Rhyme • Vocabulary • Listening • Love of books**
↓	
RECEPTION	**Language • RWI • Decoding • Stories • Early comprehension • Reading for pleasure**
↓	
KEY STAGE 1	**Phonics • Accurate decoding • Automaticity • Fluency • Vocabulary • Comprehension**
↓	
THE CRITICAL BRIDGE	**Secure decoding → Automatic word recognition → Fluent reading**
↓	
KEY STAGE 2	**Fluency • Vocabulary • Background knowledge • Comprehension • Rich and complex texts**
↓	
BY THE END OF YEAR 6	**Fluent • Confident • Thoughtful • Independent readers**

Running throughout the journey: ORAL LANGUAGE & VOCABULARY • READING FOR PLEASURE • HIGH-QUALITY TEXTS

What this means for practice at John Emmerson Batty

- Early reading is taught through RWI with fidelity, and practice materials are appropriately matched to pupils' phonic knowledge.
- Transition beyond RWI is deliberate: pupils move from secure decoding towards automaticity, fluency and increasingly sophisticated comprehension.
- Fluency is taught and practised where needed; it is not assumed to develop automatically once pupils can decode.
- Vocabulary and background knowledge are deliberately developed through reading, discussion and the wider curriculum.
- Teachers explicitly model the thinking involved in understanding texts and gradually reduce support as pupils become more independent.
- Children encounter a rich range of texts. Extracts may be used purposefully, but do not replace sustained experiences of whole texts.
- Reading for pleasure is cultivated across the school through adult modelling, reading aloud, book talk, choice and access to appealing books.
- Assessment and intervention identify the component of reading causing difficulty so that support is matched precisely to need.
- Reading is supported across the curriculum, recognising that increasingly complex texts are central to acquiring knowledge.

How we will use this rationale

This rationale provides the evidence-informed foundation for the ongoing development of reading at John Emmerson Batty. It will inform curriculum review, staff professional development, intervention, monitoring and evaluation. As leaders develop a clearer understanding of current provision, the rationale will support careful refinement rather than change for change's sake.

In particular, it provides a framework for reviewing the transition beyond RWI, the teaching of fluency, the balance between extracts and whole texts, reading intervention, reading for pleasure and progression from Nursery to Year 6.

Key evidence and guidance

Department for Education (2023). The Reading Framework: teaching the foundations of literacy.
https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-reading-framework-teaching-the-foundations-of-literacy

Education Endowment Foundation (2018). Preparing for Literacy.
https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/guidance-reports/literacy-early-years

Education Endowment Foundation (2020). Improving Literacy in Key Stage 1, Second Edition.
https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/guidance-reports/literacy-ks-1

Education Endowment Foundation (2021). Improving Literacy in Key Stage 2, Second Edition.
https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/education-evidence/guidance-reports/literacy-ks2