READING AT ST NICHOLAS

	Curriculum Intent (What do we want for the children at St Nicholas?)	Curriculum Implementation (How will we achieve this for our pupils?)	Curriculum Impact (How will we know if we have achieved this?)
WHOLE SCHOOL	Our intention is to provide every pupil with a rich and engaging reading curriculum that enables them to make excellent progress from their individual starting points. We aspire for every child to develop confidence as a reader, experience success and understand that reading is both meaningful and enjoyable. We aim to foster positive attitudes towards books from the earliest stages of development, creating opportunities for pupils to explore stories, information texts, poetry and environmental print through experiences that are motivating and relevant. Alongside this, pupils are supported to develop the language and communication skills that underpin successful reading, including listening, attention, vocabulary and comprehension.	Reading is taught through a balanced approach that develops both word recognition and language comprehension. Teaching is carefully adapted to meet the needs of each pathway while maintaining high expectations for all learners. Early reading is prioritised throughout the school. Pupils working within the early stages of reading participate in daily systematic synthetic phonics lessons using Little Wandle phonics programme. Teaching follows a clear sequence that develops pupils' knowledge of phonemes and graphemes while providing regular opportunities to practise blending and segmenting. Pupils read fully decodable books that are closely matched to the sounds they have been taught, allowing them to experience success and build confidence.	We expect pupils to develop as confident readers who enjoy books and make sustained progress from their individual starting points. Success is measured not only by attainment but also by engagement, confidence and increasing independence. As pupils progress through the curriculum, they become more willing to share books with others, sustain attention for longer periods and demonstrate increasing understanding of texts. Those following an early reading pathway develop secure phonics knowledge and apply this confidently when reading unfamiliar words. Pupils working beyond phonics become increasingly fluent readers who are able to discuss texts, answer questions, explain their ideas and use reading to support learning across the curriculum. The impact of the curriculum is reflected in pupils' enjoyment of reading, their

	Where appropriate, pupils are taught to decode using Little Wandle systematic synthetic phonics programme. Those who require additional time within the early stages of reading continue to receive high-quality phonics teaching regardless of their age, ensuring they are able to build secure foundations before progressing to more complex texts. Reading for pleasure is promoted throughout the school, enabling pupils to discover books that reflect their interests, experiences and aspirations while broadening their understanding of the wider world.	Alongside phonics, pupils develop language comprehension through carefully planned opportunities to listen to stories, discuss characters, predict events and explore new vocabulary. Adults model rich language throughout the day and use questioning, repetition and visual supports to extend pupils' understanding. Total Communication approaches, including Makaton, symbols, objects of reference, visual timetables and augmentative and alternative communication systems, enable all pupils to access stories and demonstrate their understanding regardless of their preferred communication method. Reading for pleasure forms an important part of school life. Every class enjoys daily shared reading experiences and has access to a wide range of high-quality fiction, non-fiction and poetry. Pupils are encouraged to choose books that interest them and revisit favourite stories. Staff model enthusiasm for reading and create engaging reading environments where books are valued and celebrated. Reading is embedded across the wider curriculum so that pupils understand its purpose beyond English lessons. They encounter reading in practical contexts through recipes in cooking, instructions in science, maps in geography, historical	developing vocabulary, improved comprehension and their ability to apply reading skills in everyday situations. Progress is monitored through teacher assessment, phonics assessments, reading observations, EHCP outcomes, engagement profiles where appropriate and ongoing collaboration with families.

		accounts, social stories in PSHE and environmental print during community visits. This allows pupils to apply their developing reading skills in meaningful situations and supports greater independence.	
DISCOVERY	The Discovery pathway provides children with the foundations for becoming successful readers by developing early communication, listening, attention and a love of books. Reading is introduced through meaningful play, shared experiences and high-quality adult interactions, recognising that confident readers first become engaged communicators. We aim for every child to understand that books carry meaning, stories can be enjoyed and reading is part of everyday life.	Children experience daily story sessions, nursery rhymes, songs and repetitive texts that encourage participation and enjoyment. Adults model expressive storytelling using props, puppets, sensory resources and Makaton to support understanding and engagement. Opportunities to develop early literacy are embedded throughout continuous provision, enabling children to encounter environmental print, recognise their own names and explore books independently. Early phonological awareness is developed through rhyme, rhythm and listening games before children begin systematic synthetic phonics when they are developmentally ready.	Children develop positive attitudes towards books and demonstrate increasing confidence in sharing stories with others. They sustain attention for longer periods, anticipate familiar events within stories and begin to recognise that print carries meaning. By the end of the pathway, children are ready to begin or continue their early reading journey through phonics while maintaining enthusiasm for books and storytelling.
INVESTIGATE	The Investigate pathway recognises that reading begins with communication, engagement and shared experiences rather than printed words. We aim to develop pupils' awareness of stories, books and communication through sensory exploration, enabling every pupil to participate in reading regardless of their cognitive or physical needs.	Reading experiences are delivered through personalised sensory stories that combine touch, sound, movement, smell and visual stimuli. Adults use Intensive Interaction alongside Objects of Reference, tactile symbols, personalised books and switch-activated resources to encourage shared attention and anticipation. Stories are repeated regularly to provide consistency,	Pupils show increasing awareness of stories, adults and shared reading experiences. They anticipate familiar story events, communicate preferences and demonstrate greater engagement during reading activities. Progress is evident through increased interaction, sustained attention, intentional responses and developing

		familiarity and opportunities for pupils to demonstrate increasing understanding through their preferred methods of communication. Reading sessions are carefully paced and responsive to each pupil's engagement, allowing adults to recognise and celebrate small but significant steps in communication and participation.	communication, laying the foundations for lifelong engagement with reading.
ADVENTURE	The Adventure pathway is designed to develop confident, independent readers by combining structured literacy teaching with explicit support for language comprehension and social understanding. We recognise that many autistic pupils develop decoding skills more quickly than comprehension and therefore place equal importance on understanding, interpretation and applying reading within everyday situations.	Reading is delivered through predictable routines using TEACCH principles, visual supports and clearly structured learning environments. Pupils participate in daily phonics teaching where appropriate and read books matched carefully to their reading ability. Adults explicitly teach comprehension strategies including prediction, sequencing, inference and summarising using visual organisers, structured questioning and discussion. Social stories, comic strip conversations and visual supports help pupils understand character motivations, emotions and social situations. Independent workstations provide opportunities for pupils to practise reading skills with increasing independence while maintaining consistency and reducing cognitive load.	Pupils become increasingly confident readers who can decode accurately and understand increasingly complex texts. They develop the ability to answer questions, discuss characters, explain their thinking and apply reading skills across different curriculum areas. Structured teaching supports pupils to generalise their reading skills beyond the classroom, promoting greater independence and confidence.
EXPLORE	The Explore pathway aims to develop early reading through purposeful play, meaningful experiences and language-rich	Reading opportunities are embedded throughout continuous provision and play-based learning. Pupils encounter books,	Pupils become increasingly confident in exploring books independently and using reading within play. They recognise familiar

	interactions. We want pupils to understand that reading has purpose and relevance within their everyday lives while building the communication, vocabulary and early literacy skills needed to become successful readers.	labels, signs, shopping lists, menus and environmental print within familiar contexts. Adults model language, introduce new vocabulary and encourage pupils to retell stories through imaginative play, role play and small world activities. Daily phonics teaching is introduced when appropriate and is supported through practical, engaging activities that reinforce sound recognition, blending and early word reading. High-quality picture books and repetitive stories provide opportunities to develop comprehension, sequencing and oral language alongside early decoding skills.	words and symbols, develop early phonics knowledge and demonstrate growing understanding of stories and vocabulary. Reading becomes purposeful, enjoyable and closely linked to pupils' developing communication and independence.
CHALLENGE	The Challenge pathway prepares pupils to become fluent, thoughtful and independent readers who are able to access the wider curriculum and the world beyond school. We aim to develop reading fluency alongside deep comprehension, critical thinking and a lifelong enjoyment of literature while maintaining appropriate support for individual learning needs.	Pupils participate in daily reading sessions that develop fluency, vocabulary and comprehension through carefully selected high-quality texts. Teachers explicitly model reading strategies, encourage discussion and support pupils to explain their ideas using evidence from the text. Reading is embedded across all curriculum subjects, enabling pupils to apply their skills in meaningful contexts. Pupils explore a broad range of literature including fiction, non-fiction, poetry and digital texts. They participate in guided reading, reciprocal reading, paired discussions and independent reading	Pupils become fluent and engaged readers who read with increasing confidence, accuracy and understanding. They demonstrate secure comprehension skills by predicting, inferring, summarising and evaluating texts while using an expanding vocabulary across the curriculum. Reading supports their independence, prepares them for transition to secondary education and enables them to participate more fully within their communities.

		opportunities that promote confidence, resilience and critical thinking.	