

## Bowlsh Infant School English Curriculum Design Rationale

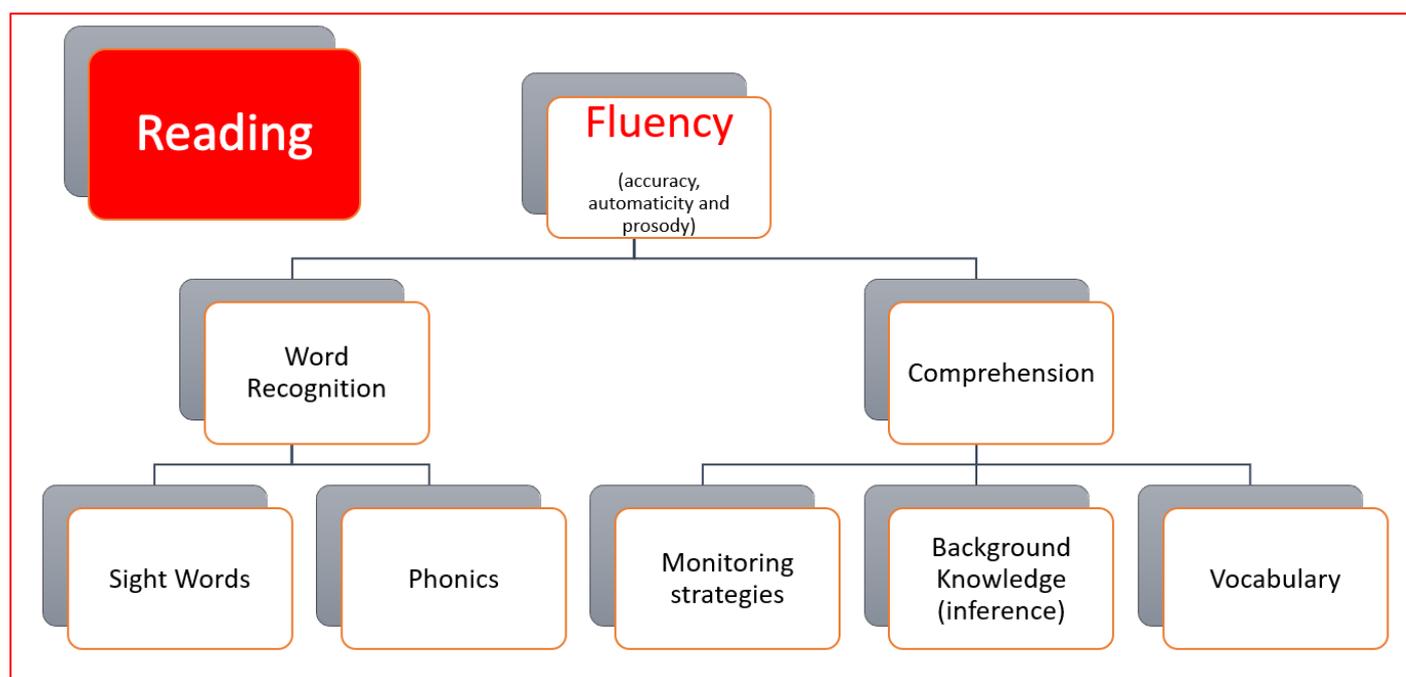
Our English curriculum is carefully designed to develop the foundational knowledge and skills in speaking, listening, reading and writing that enable every child to become a confident, fluent communicator and an enthusiastic, capable learner across the wider curriculum.

As a core subject central to the development of essential foundational skills, English is given high priority within our curriculum, reflected in the significant amount of time allocated to its teaching and learning. Learning is progressive, with key skills explicitly taught, revisited and practised to ensure knowledge builds sequentially over time.

Our curriculum is organised into three key areas of learning—reading, writing and spoken language—and is underpinned by the systematic development of pupils’ understanding of how the English language works, equipping them with the essential knowledge and skills they need to communicate clearly, confidently and effectively.

### Reading at Bowlsh Infant School

Reading in our KS1 curriculum is broken down into key elements that are taught explicitly and systematically, ensuring children build the essential knowledge and skills needed for early reading success. Our overarching aim is for children to be fluent readers, able to use their skills of word recognition and comprehension to read with accuracy, automaticity and prosody. Accuracy refers to a child’s ability to read words correctly, automaticity is the ability to read words quickly and effortlessly, and prosody is reading with expression, intonation and appropriate phrasing to reflect meaning. The diagram below illustrates the building blocks which we consider and develop when teaching reading.



Reading is taught consistently and regularly across Key Stage One through a structured and systematic approach. Word recognition is developed through our systematic synthetic phonics programme, following Read, Write Inc.. Children are taught to recognise graphemes and the sounds they represent, both in isolation and within words. They learn alternative graphemes for the same sounds and are supported in applying this knowledge when reading. Alongside this, children are explicitly taught to recognise irregular words by sight to increase reading accuracy and fluency. As children progress and master the phonics programme, they move on to developing their reading skills through the study of different spelling rules, as outlined in the National Curriculum programme of study for spelling. They learn to apply their understanding of these rules when reading.

Our aim is for children to develop strong decoding skills and to orthographically map words, enabling them to read with increasing accuracy and automaticity. This secure foundation supports the development of reading fluency and allows children to focus more fully on understanding and enjoying what they read.

Comprehension skills are developed from the very beginning of each child’s reading journey through listening to, discussing and responding to high-quality texts that are shared with them. As children’s word recognition and decoding become more secure and fluent, they are explicitly taught a range of comprehension strategies to help them understand, interpret and engage more deeply with texts. Vocabulary development is prioritised, with Tier 2 words taught explicitly daily and Tier 3, subject-specific vocabulary introduced through learning in the wider curriculum. Developing a broad and rich vocabulary supports children in making sense of what they read and deepens their understanding of language within different contexts.

Through shared reading, reading for fluency sessions and learning across the curriculum, children also develop their background knowledge, which enables them to make links, draw inferences and better understand what they read. In addition, pupils are taught metacognitive strategies to help them monitor their own understanding, such as recognising when meaning has been lost and applying techniques to clarify or reread as needed.

### Daily Reading Sessions

	Vocabulary	Phonics	Spelling rules for reading	Reading focussed on word recognition	Book Talk	Reading for Fluency
Year 1	5 mins	15 mins		15 mins	20 mins	
Year 2	5 mins	15 mins		15 mins		20 mins

## Our Reading Teaching

<b>Vocabulary</b>	Explicit teaching and revisiting of words to support children's understanding of texts and strengthen their reading, writing and communication skills. In KS1, children learn a new Tier 2 word each day, alongside subject-specific (Tier 3) vocabulary taught through the wider curriculum, with an emphasis on understanding, using and remembering new words.
<b>Phonics</b>	A consistent and systematic approach using Read, Write Inc., enabling children to learn to recognise the sounds that letters and groups of letters make and how to blend them to read words.
<b>Spelling Rules for reading</b>	A consistent and systematic approach to enable children to learn how spelling rules support reading, guided by the National Curriculum programme of study, once the phonics programme has been completed, so that they can confidently read words that follow a range of spelling patterns and conventions.
<b>Reading focussed on word recognition</b>	A reading session which focuses on developing word recognition by building children's accuracy and automaticity, closely linked to the phonics stage they are working at, so that they can read words quickly, securely and with increasing confidence.
<b>Book Talk</b>	Exploration of high quality texts led by an adult. Discussion and focussed activities help to develop comprehension skills such as monitoring, background knowledge and vocabulary.
<b>Reading for Fluency</b>	Exploration of high quality texts initially scaffolded by an adult but then progressed to more independent reading. Discussion and focussed activities help to develop comprehension skills such as monitoring, background knowledge and vocabulary as well as skills in prosody.

## Inclusivity in Reading

In line with the 2025 Ofsted framework, reading at our school is inclusive and rooted in adaptive teaching so that all pupils, including disadvantaged children, access the same ambitious curriculum with appropriate support to succeed. Where quality first teaching is not sufficient to ensure pupils keep up, timely and targeted interventions are implemented, including 5 Minute Box, additional phonics sessions using assisted blending through Read, Write Inc., and ILLI, to remove barriers, secure progress and build confidence in reading. Children receiving interventions in reading are tracked carefully so that progress is monitored and adaptations can be made where necessary.

## Reading for Pleasure

We recognise that reading for pleasure is central to becoming a lifelong reader; however, children can only truly enjoy reading when they are able to read with accuracy and understand what they have read. For this reason, we place equal importance on developing strong decoding skills and secure comprehension alongside promoting enjoyment. As children become more fluent and confident in reading words automatically and accurately, they are better able to focus on meaning, respond emotionally to texts and engage more deeply

with what they read. Through this balance of enjoyment and explicit teaching, we aim to ensure that every child not only learns to read but also chooses to read.

To foster a love of books, every classroom has a well-resourced reading area containing high-quality, age-appropriate and diverse texts, giving children frequent opportunities to explore stories, information books and poetry for pleasure. These spaces are designed to encourage curiosity, independence and enjoyment, supporting children in developing positive attitudes towards reading from an early age. In addition, pupils visit our well-stocked school library regularly so that they can choose books of interest, broaden their reading experiences and develop a sense of ownership as readers. Story time is prioritised within each classroom, providing daily opportunities for children to listen to and enjoy rich, engaging texts read aloud by adults in their class, helping to develop a love of literature.