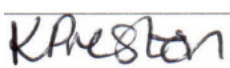


Policy/Procedure Name:	READING POLICY		
Last Update:	July 2025	Next Update Due:	July 2026

Author	Alex Smythe
Signature of Authorised Individual	
Signature of the Director	

1. Introduction

At Willow Park School, we believe that reading is a gateway to communication, imagination, and understanding. Our approach to reading is immersive, sensory-rich, and developmentally appropriate, reflecting the diverse needs of our learners. We aim to foster a love of books and stories through meaningful, engaging experiences that support each child's communication journey.

Please see our Teaching & learning Handbook on the school website at <https://www.willowparkschool.warwickshire.sch.uk/curriculum>

Reading Lead: Joel Baldwin – Teaching and Learning

2. Our Approach to Reading

Reading at Willow Park is not confined to traditional methods. We use a highly immersive and sensory-based approach that prioritises engagement, curiosity, and exploration. Our reading sessions are structured around small, meaningful steps that encourage interaction and celebrate every sign of interest.

3. Book Exploration

Book Exploration is a key strategy used to promote engagement. Books are introduced with excitement and anticipation, often accompanied by sensory elements or familiar objects. Adults model enthusiasm and interaction, encouraging pupils to explore books through touch, sound, and visual stimulation. Learners are free to approach, choose, and interact with books in their own way, fostering autonomy and self-directed learning.

4. Sensory Stories

Sensory stories are used to bring books to life through multi-sensory experiences. These stories incorporate tactile, auditory, visual, and olfactory elements to support understanding and engagement. They are tailored to individual needs and linked

to curriculum themes, helping pupils make connections between language and experience.

5. Monster Phonics Integration

We use the Monster Phonics Nursery programme to support early sound awareness and pre-reading skills. Phase 1 is the primary focus for most pupils, covering environmental sounds, instrumental sounds, body percussion, rhythm and rhyme, alliteration, voice sounds, and oral blending and segmenting. For pupils who are developmentally ready, we introduce Phase 2 and beyond using the colour-coded, character-led Monster Phonics approach.

6. Assessment

Reading progress is assessed through observational methods, Tapestry learning journals, and individual phonics tracking. We use the Engagement Model to track interaction with books and stories, and the Willow Park Roadmap to monitor small-step progress. Staff annotate observations with reference to learning objectives and celebrate all forms of engagement, from sensory exploration to sustained attention and initiation.

7. Family Engagement

We actively involve families in supporting reading at home. Pupils take home carefully selected books that align with their developmental stage and interests. For many, this includes nursery rhyme-based or sensory books that promote shared reading experiences. We provide guidance to families on how to support reading in a way that is enjoyable and accessible, building confidence and consistency between home and school.

8. Conclusion

Our reading policy reflects our commitment to communication, inclusion, and personalised learning. By embedding reading into play, routines, and sensory experiences, we ensure that every child at Willow Park has the opportunity to develop a love of books and stories in a way that is meaningful to them.

9. Equality Statement

At Willow Park School, we actively seek to encourage equity and equality through our teaching and our employment practices. As such, we seek to advance the equality of opportunity between people who share any of the following characteristics:

- age
- disability
- gender reassignment
- being married or in a civil partnership
- being pregnant or on maternity leave
- race including colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin
- religion or belief

- sex
- sexual orientation

The use of stereotypes under any of the above headings will always be challenged.

10. Inclusion

Our school is an inclusive school. We aim to make all pupils feel included in all our activities. We try to make all our teaching fully inclusive. We recognise the entitlement of all pupils to a balanced, broadly-based curriculum. We have systems in place for early identification of barriers to their learning and participation so that they can engage in school activities with all other pupils. We acknowledge the need for high expectations for and of all children.