



Weare Academy
C of E First School

Reading Progression

Preschool / EYFS to Year 4

Our reading journey

- Preschool and Reception build phonological awareness and secure early word reading through Unlocking Letters & Sounds.
- Year 1 continues systematic phonics and fully decodable reading while developing comprehension through rich texts and discussion.
- Year 2 is the bridge from secure decoding into increasingly independent comprehension and the Weare whole-class reading approach.
- Years 3 and 4 use the Weare whole-class reading approach to deepen fluency, vocabulary, inference, prediction, explanation, retrieval and summarising.

1. Purpose and curriculum principles

This progression sets out how reading develops from early phonological awareness and decoding into fluent, purposeful and increasingly analytical reading. It should be read alongside Unlocking Letters & Sounds, decodable reading practice, the Year 2 Reading Progression, the Year 3/4 Reading Progression and the Whole-School Oracy Framework.

Principle	What this means at Weare
Systematic word reading	Phonics is the route to decoding in Reception and Year 1, and continues for pupils who need it. Decodable books are closely matched to taught GPCs.
Fluency matters	Accuracy, automaticity, phrasing and prosody are developed through rereading, echo reading, choral reading and supported independent reading.
Comprehension is taught explicitly	Teachers model the thinking readers use: activating prior knowledge, clarifying vocabulary, asking questions, retrieving, inferring, predicting, sequencing/summarising and explaining author choices.
Talk supports reading	Pupils rehearse thinking orally, justify responses and listen to alternative interpretations before recording ideas.
Breadth and pleasure	Pupils encounter a wide range of stories, poetry, non-fiction, traditional tales and increasingly varied text structures.
Progression, not task completion	The same core reading behaviours recur with increasing independence, text complexity, precision and evidence use.

The progression from phonics to whole-class reading

Stage	Reading emphasis
Preschool	Phase 1 foundations: sound discrimination, phonological awareness, rhyme, oral blending and segmenting.
Reception	ULS Phases 2-4: secure GPC knowledge, blending, common exception words, increasingly complex word structures and fully decodable texts.
Year 1	ULS Phase 4 revision and Phase 5: alternative graphemes/pronunciations, accurate blending, common exception words, rereading for fluency and rich teacher-led comprehension.
Year 2	Secure and automatic word reading remains a priority; pupils transition into the Weare comprehension model using vocabulary, inference, prediction, explanation, retrieval and sequencing.
Year 3	Whole-class reading: Y3 introduces the Lower KS2 reading expectations and increases evidence-led inference, summarising and authorial analysis.
Year 4	Whole-class reading: Y4 revisits and embeds Lower KS2 expectations with greater independence, precision and explanation of language, structure and effect.

2. Reading progression: Preschool to Year 4

The statements below describe the curriculum journey. Statutory National Curriculum expectations are incorporated alongside Weare's chosen teaching approach and Unlocking Letters & Sounds sequence.

Word reading and fluency

Strand	Preschool	Reception	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4
Phonological awareness & word reading	- Hear and distinguish environmental and speech sounds. - Develop rhyme and alliteration. - Orally blend and segment words.	- Learn ULS Phase 2-4 GPCs. - Blend to read words and simple sentences matched to phonic knowledge. - Read taught common exception words. - Develop confidence with adjacent consonants and polysyllabic words.	- Apply phonics as the route to decode. - Respond speedily to taught graphemes, including alternatives. - Read words with taught endings and contractions. - Read decodable books accurately and reread them for fluency.	- Continue to apply phonics until decoding is automatic. - Read multisyllabic words, common suffixes and further common exception words. - Read most familiar words quickly and accurately without overt blending.	- Apply knowledge of roots, prefixes and suffixes to decode and understand unfamiliar words. - Read further exception words and notice unusual sound-spelling correspondences.	- Apply morphology and etymology with increasing independence. - Use word structure and context to support accurate reading and meaning. - Word reading is increasingly automatic so attention can focus on comprehension.
Fluency	- Join in with rhymes, songs and repeated refrains. - Develop listening attention and oral language rhythm.	- Blend smoothly across words. - Reread familiar decodable texts to increase confidence and automaticity. - Begin to use phrasing and expression when reading aloud.	- Read accurately at a developing pace. - Reread to build confidence, pace and phrasing. - Notice punctuation when reading aloud.	- Read familiar text with increasing automaticity, appropriate pace and phrasing. - Use echo reading, choral reading, independent read-and-reread and sight-word practice.	- Read with growing pace, accuracy, phrasing and expression. - Use listen-and-follow, echo, choral, paired/group and repeated reading.	- Sustain fluent reading across longer and more complex texts. - Use phrasing, intonation, tone and volume to convey meaning when reading aloud.
Checking meaning / self-correction	- Notice when a spoken sequence does not make sense. - Use pictures, talk and adult modelling to clarify meaning.	- Talk about whether a sentence makes sense. - Use phonic knowledge first when stuck. - Reread with adult support.	- Check that the text makes sense and correct inaccurate reading. - Reread sentences when meaning breaks down.	- Monitor meaning while reading and correct inaccuracies. - Use background knowledge and teacher-provided vocabulary to support understanding.	- Independently notice when meaning breaks down. - Reread, ask questions, use context and dictionaries to repair understanding.	- Select an appropriate strategy independently: reread, use context, morphology, dictionary or prior knowledge. - Explain what caused the misunderstanding and how it was resolved.

Understanding what is read

Strand	Preschool	Reception	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4
Vocabulary	- Name objects, actions and feelings. - Learn and reuse new words through stories, rhymes and play.	- Discuss unfamiliar words in stories. - Use illustrations and context to support meaning. - Notice interesting words and phrases.	- Discuss word meanings and link new meanings to known vocabulary. - Talk about favourite words and phrases. - Use context and teacher explanation to build vocabulary.	- Draw on knowledge of vocabulary to understand texts. - Find and copy words with similar meanings. - Explain what a word or phrase tells the reader. - Use definitions and synonyms.	- Find and explain meanings in context. - Use dictionaries where appropriate. - Explore synonyms and "VIP words". - Explain what words suggest about character or setting.	- Explain precise meanings and nuances in context. - Compare possible meanings and justify the best fit using textual evidence. - Explain how vocabulary choices contribute to tone, mood and meaning.
Retrieve	- Recall key details from a familiar story or experience. - Find named objects or characters in pictures.	- Answer simple who/what/where questions about shared texts. - Find a detail in a familiar sentence or page.	- Retrieve simple information from what is read or heard. - Answer literal questions and locate key details.	- Retrieve and record information from fiction and non-fiction. - Skim and scan; use "find and copy". - Identify key features and key points/events.	- Retrieve and record information efficiently. - Locate evidence across a section or text and identify perspective.	- Select the most relevant evidence from across a text. - Distinguish central information from supporting detail and record it concisely.
Sequence / summarise	Retell familiar events in order using pictures, props and oral language.	- Sequence main events from a familiar story. - Retell a story using beginning/middle/end language.	- Retell familiar stories and discuss event order. - Sequence the main events in a text.	- Identify and explain the sequence of events. - Summarise the opening, middle or ending in a sentence. - Explain how items of information are related.	- Identify main ideas from more than one paragraph. - Summarise and sequence the main ideas of a text. - Identify key message or theme with support.	- Summarise across several paragraphs or sections. - Distinguish main ideas from examples/details. - Explain themes or messages concisely and accurately.

Thinking beyond the literal

Strand	Preschool	Reception	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4
Infer	- Talk about how characters might feel using facial expression, pictures and events. - Give simple reasons for ideas.	Infer simple feelings or intentions from pictures, words and actions with adult support.	- Make simple inferences from what is said and done. - Explain a view using a detail from the text or illustration.	- Make inferences from the text. - Explain why a character felt/acted/spoke in a particular way. - Use clues to support an answer.	- Infer feelings, thoughts and motives from actions. - Justify inferences with evidence. - Build an impression from more than one clue.	- Make and justify more developed inferences using evidence from across the text. - Distinguish what is stated from what is implied. - Refine an inference when new evidence emerges.
Predict	Anticipate what might happen next in a familiar routine or story.	- Predict what might happen next using pictures and story knowledge. - Say why they think this.	Predict what might happen on the basis of what has been read so far.	- Predict using what has been read so far. - Use character, setting and previous events to justify predictions.	- Predict from details stated and implied. - Explain predictions using evidence from the text.	- Make plausible predictions drawing on multiple clues and implicit information. - Revisit and evaluate predictions as the text develops.
Explain: author choices, language & structure	Express simple preferences: favourite part, character or rhyme.	- Talk about why they like/dislike parts of a text. - Notice repeated phrases and simple text features.	- Explain and discuss understanding. - Recognise simple recurring literary language. - Discuss favourite words/phrases.	- Explain preferences, thoughts and opinions. - Begin to comment on why an author has used particular words or repeated language. - Recognise different text types and features.	- Begin to explain why an author made choices and the impact. - Identify how language, structure and presentation contribute to meaning. - Identify genre, viewpoint and text features.	- Explain how specific language, structure and presentation shape meaning and reader response. - Discuss author viewpoint/purpose with evidence. - Compare effects of different choices.

Reading behaviours, discussion and breadth

Strand	Preschool	Reception	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4
Discussion & response	- Listen and respond in short adult-supported exchanges. - Take turns and share ideas about stories.	- Join in discussion about stories, poems and non-fiction. - Use simple sentence stems to explain ideas. - Retell and role-play.	- Participate in discussion, take turns and listen to others. - Explain ideas about books read aloud and independently.	- Discuss texts in class/group/partner contexts. - Ask and answer questions. - Explain and justify opinions, listening to alternative ideas.	- Use sentence stems to build, challenge and refine ideas. - Discuss texts read to them and independently. - Use evidence when responding to others.	- Lead and sustain discussion more independently. - Build on, challenge and refine interpretations respectfully. - Summarise differing views before giving a conclusion.
Reading range & pleasure	- Enjoy songs, rhymes, stories and information texts. - Choose familiar books and join in repeated language.	- Develop story repertoire through repeated high-quality texts. - Listen to poetry, stories and non-fiction beyond independent reading level.	- Listen to and discuss a wide range of poems, stories and non-fiction beyond independent reading level. - Become familiar with key stories, fairy stories and traditional tales. - Learn and recite rhymes/poems.	- Listen to and discuss contemporary/classic poetry, stories and non-fiction. - Retell a wider range of stories, fairy stories and traditional tales. - Explore non-fiction structured in different ways and build a repertoire of poems.	- Read and discuss fiction, poetry, plays, non-fiction and reference texts. - Become familiar with fairy stories, myths and legends. - Recognise different forms of poetry. - Read for a range of purposes.	- Read increasingly widely and independently across forms and purposes. - Compare themes, conventions and structures across texts. - Recommend and discuss texts with increasing precision.
Independence & reading behaviours	Choose books, handle them appropriately and sustain attention for short periods.	- Use taught phonics rather than guessing. - Reread familiar text and talk about meaning.	- Apply phonics independently when reading unfamiliar words. - Reread to improve accuracy and fluency. - Begin to explain thinking using evidence.	Use a growing toolkit: reread, skim/scan, find and copy, visualise, question, use clues and activate prior knowledge.	Select strategies more independently, including dictionaries, context, synonyms, prior knowledge and evidence gathering.	- Choose efficient strategies independently and adapt them to text type and purpose. - Sustain attention and evidence-led thinking across longer texts.

3. The Weare whole-class reading approach

From Year 2 onwards, whole-class reading increasingly provides the common structure through which pupils rehearse and deepen comprehension. It builds on secure phonics rather than replacing the need for decoding support where this is still required.

Element	What it looks like
Core comprehension domains	Vocabulary • Infer • Predict • Explain • Retrieve • Sequence/Summarise
Teacher modelling	Think aloud while reading; model how readers use clues, prior knowledge, vocabulary and evidence.
Talk and rehearsal	Class, group and partner discussion; sentence stems; pupils explain and justify before recording.
Active reading	Reading with a pen; generate questions (“I see, I think, I wonder”); identify key words/ideas; skim and scan; find and copy.
Meaning making	Visualise; make links to prior learning/background knowledge; clarify words using context, definitions, synonyms and dictionaries.
Evidence use	Locate clues, quote or refer to relevant evidence and explain how the evidence supports the answer.
Fluency practice	Echo reading, choral reading, listen-and-follow, paired/group reading, independent rereading and recorded reading as appropriate.
Increasing independence	Scaffolds reduce over time so pupils select strategies and justify interpretations increasingly independently.

Fluency reference points used in current Weare progression documents

Year	Current school reference range	Use
Year 2	53-111 WPM	A monitoring reference alongside accuracy, phrasing, expression and comprehension.
Year 3	90-149 WPM	A monitoring reference alongside accuracy, phrasing, expression and comprehension.
Year 4	107-162 WPM	A monitoring reference alongside accuracy, phrasing, expression and comprehension.

4. Expected reader profiles

Reception - by the end of EYFS

- Says a sound for each letter of the alphabet and at least 10 digraphs.
- Reads words consistent with phonic knowledge by sound-blending.
- Reads aloud simple sentences and books consistent with phonic knowledge, including some common exception words.
- Talks about characters, events and vocabulary in familiar texts.
- Retells familiar stories and predicts simple next events with support.
- Enjoys and joins in with stories, rhymes and poems.

Year 1 - by the end of the year

- Uses phonics automatically as the first strategy for unfamiliar words and reads decodable books accurately.
- Reads taught common exception words, suffix endings, multisyllabic words and contractions.
- Rereads to improve fluency, confidence and phrasing.
- Discusses a wide range of stories, poems and non-fiction beyond independent reading level.
- Makes simple inferences and predictions and explains ideas using relevant details.
- Sequences key events and discusses word meanings and favourite words/phrases.

Year 2 - by the end of the year

- Decoding is increasingly automatic; familiar words are read quickly and accurately.
- Reads aloud with developing fluency, pace and expression.
- Uses the Weare domains of vocabulary, inference, prediction, explanation, retrieval and sequencing with increasing independence.
- Retrieves and records information from fiction and non-fiction and explains event order.
- Makes inferences and predictions and supports responses with clues from the text.
- Discusses vocabulary, author choices and opinions, asking and answering questions about what has been read.

Year 3 - by the end of the year

- Uses morphology, context and dictionaries to understand unfamiliar words.
- Reads with developing fluency, phrasing and expression across increasingly demanding texts.
- Makes and justifies inferences with textual evidence and predicts from stated and implied details.
- Identifies main ideas across more than one paragraph and summarises them.
- Begins to explain how language, structure and presentation contribute to meaning.
- Participates confidently in evidence-led discussion about a wide range of fiction, poetry, plays and non-fiction.

Year 4 - by the end of Lower KS2

- Reads a broad range of age-appropriate texts with increasing automaticity, stamina and expression.
- Applies knowledge of roots, prefixes, suffixes and context to new vocabulary and word reading.
- Makes precise, evidence-led inferences and distinguishes stated information from implication.
- Summarises across sections and identifies themes, main ideas and viewpoint.
- Explains how language, structure and presentation shape meaning and reader response.
- Discusses, challenges and refines interpretations with increasing independence, using evidence accurately.

5. Statutory alignment and coverage

This progression incorporates the current statutory English programmes of study for Years 1-4 and the current EYFS Word Reading ELG. The National Curriculum separates reading into word reading and comprehension; this document keeps both visible while also showing Weare's chosen pedagogy.

Phase	Statutory area	Key statutory content	Where it appears here
EYFS	Word Reading ELG	Letter sounds and digraphs; blending; simple phonetically decodable sentences/books; some common exception words.	Reception ULS progression + expected reader profile.
Year 1	Word reading	Phonics route to decoding; 40+ phonemes/GPCs; CEWs; suffixes; multisyllabic words; contractions; decodable books; rereading.	Word reading & fluency table + ULS pathway.
Year 1	Comprehension	Pleasure/motivation; listening to and discussing wide range; familiar stories; vocabulary; checking sense; inference; prediction; poems; discussion.	Vocabulary, inference, prediction, range, discussion and independence strands.
Year 2	Word reading	Continue phonics until automatic; alternative sounds; multisyllabic words; suffixes; CEWs; quick accurate reading; closely matched books; rereading.	Word reading & fluency table + Year 2 bridge.
Year 2	Comprehension	Wide range; sequence; retell; non-fiction structures; literary language; vocabulary; poems; background knowledge; self-correction; inference; questions; prediction; discussion/explanation.	Weare six-domain progression + breadth/discussion strands.
Years 3-4	Word reading	Roots, prefixes, suffixes; further exception words.	Morphology/word reading strand.
Years 3-4	Comprehension	Wide range and purposes; dictionaries; myths/legends; themes/conventions; performance; vocabulary; questions; inference/evidence; prediction; summarise; language/structure/presentation; retrieval; discussion.	Y3 introduce / Y4 revise & embed within whole-class reading progression.

Important curriculum note

Years 3 and 4 form one Lower KS2 programme of study. At Weare, Year 3 introduces and develops these expectations and Year 4 revisits, embeds and increases independence. Pupils who are not yet secure decoders should continue to receive systematic phonics teaching and appropriately matched reading material alongside access to the age-appropriate comprehension curriculum.

Source documents used

- Unlocking Letters & Sounds - Summary Progression (Preschool to Year 2).
- Weare Year 2 Reading Progression.
- Weare Year 3/4 Reading Progression.
- DfE National Curriculum in England: English programmes of study (KS1 and KS2).
- DfE EYFS statutory framework / Word Reading Early Learning Goal (current from September 2026).