Reading Policy

Our Lady and St Joseph Catholic Primary School

Prepared by: Miss M Pinnock
Approved by: Governing Body
Date: February 2026
Review Date:
February 2027

Intent

At Our Lady and St Joseph Catholic Primary School we believe you learn to read, then you read to learn! It is a core skill that all children must master to be successful in life.
Our Principles for Developing Readers:

- We are determined for all children to master reading regardless of background, needs or ability.
- We ensure there is high quality reading across the school.
    - Our youngest readers focus mainly on phonic knowledge, fluency and comprehension skills.
    - As they develop through the school we focus on supporting children to further become fluent, confident, capable readers who have the comprehension skills to access a varied collection of texts.
- All staff members encourage and foster a love of reading throughout the children's learning. They are all experts in reading and use these knowledge and skills to best support the pupils.
- As reading is such a key skill, we always make it a priority to support those children who have not met the age-related expectation.
- We ensure that reading is at the heart of our curriculum and, as such, offer a wide range of books across many different subjects. This supports pupils with developing subject specific vocabulary and subject-based knowledge to further enhance their learning.

Implementation

Reading Curriculum: EYFS
Our reading curriculum is designed to meet the needs of our pupils in context. Most of our children enter Early Years significantly below age related expectation. We have a high proportion of children who are pupil premium and/or special education needs. We follow the ALS Phonics: Letters and Sounds programme which is a DFE validated scheme based on the principals of Letters and Sounds. Progression mapping is used to identify the order in which the sounds are taught and how to recognise when milestones have been achieved. There are regular opportunities to revise, review and assess pupils within the programme with a number of intervention strategies and lesson plans to address the needs of a wide range of learners.

Nursery
From Nursery we develop a love of reading within our children. We foster this through having engaging book corners, core books and regular class reading. Our children are taught daily phonics lessons, which they learn fundamental skills linked to phonics and reading (*Appendix I. Phonics Progression in Reception and Nursery*). These include distinguishing different sounds in the environment, saying different sounds and core skills like rhythm and rhyme. In Nursery we understand the importance of children having strong speaking and listening skills, because of this we also supplement their curriculum with necessary speech and language support. This greatly supports their phonics and reading skills as they move up the school. Children across Early Years have access to quality books in class and at home. We have a Home Core Reading list of books that the children can read at home and in school.

Reception
From the start of Reception many of the core skills from Nursery are developed and embedded. Regular reading for enjoyment, through a whole class story takes place every day along with core books that the children become familiar with. We start phonics from day one with a systematic synthetic approach, which is consistent throughout the school and develops term by term through to year 2 (and beyond should they need it). As children gain fluency, they have books that build on their phonic knowledge. They also have a levelled book to develop a love of reading at home (Appendix IV. Reading Level Bands). Pupils take these books home for a week giving the children an

opportunity to reread the book to develop confidence and fluency. We also offer families access to Bug Club books at home, which supports phonic awareness.

Children engage in 'big book' shared reading sessions. These are designed to support pupil's learning the core skills in reading a book, while also developing their comprehension and knowledge of sight words. Children will read with an adult either individually or in small guided reading groups each week to develop key reading skills and track pupil progress.

Reading and phonics is a high priority within the whole school. In Early Years and Key Stage 1 it is our *core* priority. It is vital the children achieve within this area at this early stage to ensure they can access the wider curriculum throughout their future years.

Key Stage 1- Year 1

Our commitment to reading continues into Year 1. Our reading curriculum consists of whole class phonics lessons, guided reading lessons, shared reading lessons and 1:1 reading with an adult. This is a process where all children are heard reading in small groups with a trained member of staff. This gives them a chance to become familiar with a range of texts that enhances their reading skills and enjoyment.

In Year 1, we also use Shared Reading to support pupil's development of reading skills, especially comprehension and fluency. We introduce the children to Reading Gems (See Appendix III - Reading Gems) as a strategy to answer questions on the texts they read. The books they read are carefully chosen and mapped out across the school to ensure the skills can be taught effectively. Within these sessions they look at a range of text types including non-fiction (linked to their learning across the curriculum) and poetry.

The children continue to read books that are phonically decodable until they have mastered phonics. Each week, they take home; a phonically decodable book to support phonics; a book levelled to their ability to support comprehension and a home reading core book to develop a love of reading for pleasure through shared stories at home and in school. Again, these books are kept for the whole week to develop confidence and fluency. We again offer families access to Bug Club books at home, which supports phonic awareness.

At the end of Year 1, children take part in the statutory phonics screening check to assess their phonics knowledge. Children that achieve at least 32/40 pass the phonics screening check. Children who do not pass the phonics screening check continue to have regular phonics support throughout year 2 where they will be given the opportunity to re-sit the test.

Year 2

We aim to develop children into confident, capable and independent readers within Year 2. Phonics is continued, and where necessary, remains throughout the year. The class teacher uses this to supplement their quality first teaching, and ensure all children have the skills needed to further develop as readers. Daily class stories and Guided Reading also continue.

Children who did not pass the phonics screening check will resit the check and will have daily phonics interventions to support their phonic knowledge in passing the check.

Like Year 1, children continue to read books that are phonically decodable until they have fully mastered phonics. As mentioned above, each week they take home; a phonically decodable book to support phonics; a book levelled to their ability to support comprehension and a home reading core book. Again, these books are kept for the whole week to develop confidence and fluency, bug club is continued until children have mastered phonics.

We also introduce the children to Accelerated Reader, when they have mastered phonics and show they are ready for the next step in our home reading offer. This is an online tool used to track pupil's

progress and further develop their reading ability. They self-select books to match their level and continue to improve their reading accuracy. The Accelerated Reader programme helps them gain fluency in reading whilst continuing to develop and check their comprehension skills.

In Year 2 Shared Reading sessions we build on the skills from Year 1 using Reading Gems as a strategy to answer questions on the texts they read. Within these sessions they look at a range of text types including non-fiction (linked to their learning across the curriculum) and poetry.

Key Stage 2

In Key Stage 2 our aim is that all children are confident capable readers. If some children need additional support we offer that through interventions (direct phonics, 1:1 reading and guided Reading. All our members of staff are experts in early reading and understand how children learn to read. We will continue to offer phonic support to these children where needed and regularly assess their progress.

The main way reading skills are developed in key stage 2 is through shared reading. As in KS1, children use Reading Gems to develop their skills around book comprehension. The books they read are carefully chosen to ensure they meet the needs of the pupil's learning.

We also continue with using Accelerated Reader. This is an online tool used to track pupil's progress and further develop their reading ability. They self-select books to match their level and continue to improve their reading accuracy. The Accelerated Reader programme helps them gain fluency in reading whilst continuing to develop and check their comprehension skills.

Where we feel necessary, teachers will also teach children in small groups through guided reading. This ensures children have the necessary reading skills and are given enhanced support to ensure they are fluent and that they can decode and comprehend the texts.

Vocabulary

We develop vocabulary throughout the school day, but make it a key priority in the reading sessions. We introduce "tier 2" words (formal language that is not used in everyday speech) through dual coding where teachers feel appropriate. We have clear strategies in how to work out the meaning of unknown words and it is embedded throughout the school. We ensure children are exposed to a wide range of vocabulary through a variety of core books, displaying key vocabulary in the environment and using drama and storytelling. We use the SEEC model *(Appendix II. SEEC model for Vocabulary)* to teach new words within reading sessions, and in other subjects

Love of Reading

Throughout the school, we aim to develop a love of reading. If they learn and treasure books the skills they develop with us will last them a lifetime. To achieve this, we:

- Make our class libraries engaging with a collection of quality books that are regularly replenished.
- Read stories to the children daily in class story time.
- Celebrate World Book Day.
- Each Year group is exposed to poetry in our writing curriculum termly in order to develop children's knowledge of poetry.
- Celebrate Reading Week – during this week we focus on the love of reading. We have lots of activities to celebrate authors and how we read.
- Have Celebration Assembly awards - we have readers of the week within our Friday assembly.
- Have 'Core Reading books' within the class - our curriculum has been designed with books in mind. They are the core fountain of knowledge and are chosen to be engaging and interesting for all.

- Have ‘Home Core Reading books’ - this offers the children to take the books they love at school home to share and reinforce their learning.
- Each week classes celebrate Accelerated Reader, the class with most children completing their reading win prizes
- Promote reading competitions with our local library and other local schools to encourage a love of reading.
- Promote a love of reading through book fairs and book projects.

Parental Engagement

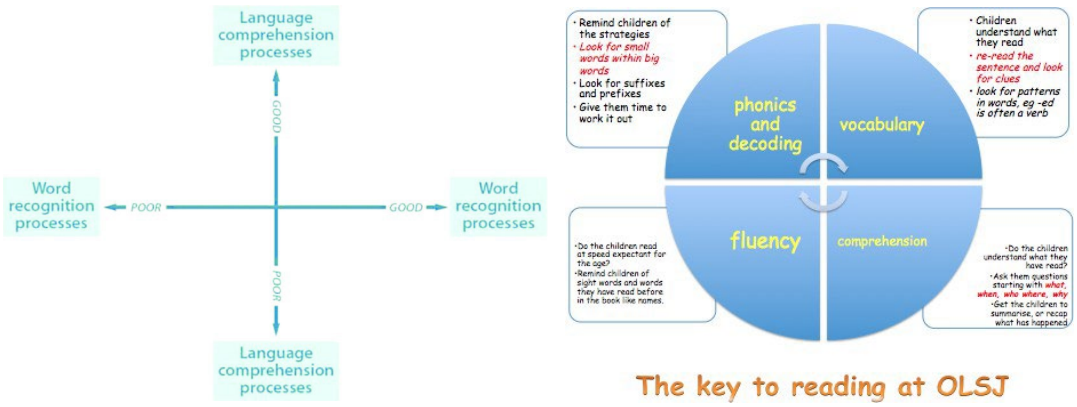
We offer workshops and online support in how parents can support their pupil’s learning and reading skills.

In Early Years and Key Stage 1 they will have: a phonically decodable book; a comprehension book; and a reading for pleasure book. The reading of this is recorded in their ‘Reading Explorer Book’. These books are home-school link books. We ask parents and children to creatively share the books they have read and what they have enjoyed. Support is given on how the book is supposed to be used. The aim is to take away it from being a “record”, but more of a celebration of what they have read and enjoyed. We also send home phonics packs and key vocabulary to support parents when reading with their child at home.

In Key Stage 2, children will have an Accelerated Reader book. We expect the children to read for at least 20 minutes each night. There are no reading records in Key Stage 2 as we track their progress on the amount of quizzes they take. These will vary depending on the length of book they read.

Assessment

- Teachers will continually track and assess the progress of their pupils, thinking about their next steps in learning to improve.
- Teachers record their progress throughout key points in the year.
- Using this data we have pupil progress meetings to track pupil’s progress and delve deeper to ensure all children achieve the best they can.
- Within these meetings teachers will have expert knowledge about their children recalling the children’s strengths and barriers in line with the simple view of reading and the school’s reading quadrant (*Appendix V. Band Development*)
- If necessary interventions are put in place to ensure pupil’s make at least expected progress.



We track progress of phonics through ALS phonics assessments. These assessments are completed regularly at the end of each phonics block and ensure the children are at age related expectation. This assessment informs the teacher’s future planning and supports interventions.

In reading, in Early Years and Key Stage 1, we use teacher assessment against the National Curriculum/ Early Learning Goals. This is also informed by assessments to ensure the children's fluency, comprehension and decoding is strong. When the children reach Year 3 and have mastered phonics we use assessment papers and STAR reading tests. This information informs teacher's future planning.

Inclusion

All children receive the same reading curriculum, but the learning is modified to ensure all can access it. If a child is falling behind, or needs additional support.

Within ALS phonics sessions, teachers adapt practice by:

- Providing additional modelling and repetition
- Using visual supports (sound mats, grapheme charts)
- Pre-teaching sounds or vocabulary where needed
- Different groupings when completing writing
- Providing additional adult scaffolding

Pupils who fall behind in ALS are identified quickly through daily assessment and half-termly reviews.

Support includes:

- Short, targeted small-group intervention within the main teaching session.
- Additional blending and oral rehearsal practice
- 1:1 precision teaching interventions with a member of support staff.

Interventions are directly aligned to the ALS sequence and are monitored for impact.

Inclusion is promoted in shared and guided reading by ensuring that every child can access and engage with texts in meaningful ways.

During guided reading:

- Small groups are used to provide targeted support where they can practice HFW, sentence work, reading in small groups and answering questions

During shared reading:

- Teachers adapt texts and questions to meet different ability levels and learning needs.
- Teachers model reading, fluency and comprehension strategies, creating opportunities for all pupils to engage with using the reading gems skills.
- Adapted activities through discussion, classifying and vocabulary exploration.
- Support by additional staff members in the classroom to ensure the children's needs are met.

Monitoring and Training Arrangements

The monitoring of Reading is done by the Reading Lead. They set out the curriculum with the support of the class teachers and pupils.
Over the term they:

- Attend pupil progress meetings
- Moderate assessment expectations
- Visit lessons

- Support in planning and delivering of lessons
- Listen to children read
- Talk to teachers, pupils and support staff.
- Offer extensive training to ensure all staff ensuring they are experts in reading.

Impact

Reading is central to life at Our Lady and St Joseph Catholic Primary School, and this is reflected in the outcomes our pupils achieve. From often low starting points, children make strong progress because phonics is taught daily, systematically and consistently. Early identification and targeted support ensure that pupils who fall behind are quickly supported to catch up.

As pupils move through the school, they develop into fluent, confident readers who can decode accurately and understand what they read. Through shared reading and the consistent use of Reading Gems, children build strong comprehension skills, including vocabulary, inference and retrieval.

Just as importantly, children enjoy reading. They talk confidently about books, engage enthusiastically in story time and reading events, and take pride in their progress. Reading is celebrated across the school and supported strongly at home.

The overall impact of our approach is that pupils leave our school as capable, independent readers with the skills and motivation to continue reading for life.

The Role of The Governors and Head Teacher

The Governors will monitor the effectiveness of this policy and hold the school to account.
There is a link governor who will regularly visit the school and scrutinise the implementation of this policy.
The Head Teacher will also hold the Lead teacher to account to this policy ensuring it is fit for purpose and delivers the most effective provision for our pupils.

Appendix I. OLSJ Phonic Progression

Phase & Year Group	Core Knowledge	Core Skills Developed	Reading Expectations	Assessment
Phase 1 **Nursery**	Focus on environmental sounds, rhyme, alliteration, oral blending and segmenting.	Listening, sound discrimination, oral blending and segmenting.	Children can orally say and recognise sounds in the environment.	Ongoing observation of phonological awareness.
Phase 2 **Reception**	Initial single-letter graphemes (e.g. s, a, t, p, i, n, m, d, g, o, c, k, e, u, r, h, b, f, ff, l, ll, ss).	Blend and segment CVC and CVC words. Begin simple sentence reading. Spell simple CVC words.	Read Phase 2 decodable books containing taught tricky. Begin common exception words.	Phase 1 recapped in Autumn 1 & Phase 2 starts in Autumn 2 Daily formative assessment. End of block assessments.
Phase 3 **Reception**	Remaining single letters and digraphs (e.g. j, v, w, x, y, z, zz, qu; sh, ch, th, ng; ai, ee, igh, oa, oo, ar, or, ur, ow, oi, ear, air, ure, er).	Blend and segment words with digraphs and trigraphs. Read and spell longer CVC/CVCC words.	Read decodable books matched to Phase 3. Continued learning of tricky words matched to phase.	End of block Assessments and Half termly Assessments.
Phase 4 **Reception** **Year 1**	Adjacent consonants- sp, dr, fl, br, bl, st (stop), st (lost), tr, gr, ft cr, pr, sc, fr, sl, tw, sw, xt, nt, lt, mp, nk, nd, cl, nch, sm, lk, sk, lf, sn	Confident blending of longer words. Increased fluency and automaticity. Accurate spelling of adjacent consonants.	Read Phase 4 decodable texts fluently and with growing expression. Continued learning of tricky words matched to phase.	End of block Assessments and Half termly Assessments.
Phase 5 **Year 1** **Year 2**	Alternative graphemes (e.g. ay, ou, ie, ea, oy, ir, ue, aw, wh, ph, ew, oe, au, ey, a-e, e-e, i-e, o-e, u-	Flexible decoding. Apply phonics automatically in reading and spelling.	Read phase 5 decodable books and books matched to phase 5. Continued learning of tricky words matched to phase.	End of block Assessments and Half termly Assessments.
(KS2 direct phonics interventions where needed using the above skills)	e). Alternative pronunciations (e.g. ow, ea).			

Appendix 2. Reading Progression in OLSJ

OLSJ Reading Progression Map: Nursery – Year 6					
Year Group	**Reading in Class**	**Home Reading**	**Phonics / Decoding**	**Vocabulary & Comprehension**	**Intervention / Support**
Nursery	Daily reading with big books and reading for pleasure.	Core story & reading explorer book Changed weekly – all on the same day.	Daily Phonics lesson	Vocabulary development through shared reading and phonics and classroom environment	Support provided in the environment through high-quality interactions.
Reception	Daily shared reading. 2 guided reading sessions per week: 1 phonetically decodable, 1 non-decodable.	3 home readers/week: 1 phonically decodable, 1 non-decodable, 1 core book.	Tricky words taught and daily phonics lessons.	High quality texts from writing curriculum and shared reading books used to develop vocabulary and reading for pleasure.	Identified children in phase receive interventions reading support with support staff. Small group sight word work if needed.
Year 1	Weekly shared reading and guided reading lessons First 100 HFW practice in lessons.	3 home readers/week: 1 phonically decodable, 1 benchmarked for comprehension, 1 core book.	Daily phonics lessons continue. Sight words practiced daily in phonics/guided reading sessions.	Vocabulary development through shared reading and writing curriculum.	Identified children receive 1:1 reading support with support staff. Small group work if needed.
Year 2	Weekly shared reading and guided reading lessons Next 200 HFW practice in lessons.	3 home readers/week: 1 phonically decodable, 1 benchmarked for comprehension, 1 core book. Accelerated Reader used if children show readiness. Books selected to match ability.	Phase 5 phonics is recapped and taught in Autumn term. Phonics continues for children who are not secure at phase 5.	Comprehension focus increases. Vocabulary continues to develop through guided reading.	1:1 reading support for identified children. Phonics interventions for those not yet secure.
Year 3 – 6 (KS2)	Shared Reading lessons focus on comprehension, fluency, and discussion.	Home reading is monitored via Accelerated Reader (AR). Books selected to match ability.	Phonics 1:1 interventions through direct phonics where required for those below expectations.	Vocabulary, comprehension, inference, and discussion skills emphasized. Exposure to range of genres and classic texts.	Targeted support for struggling readers. AR provides progress tracking; interventions applied as needed.

Appendix 3: SEEC model for Vocabulary

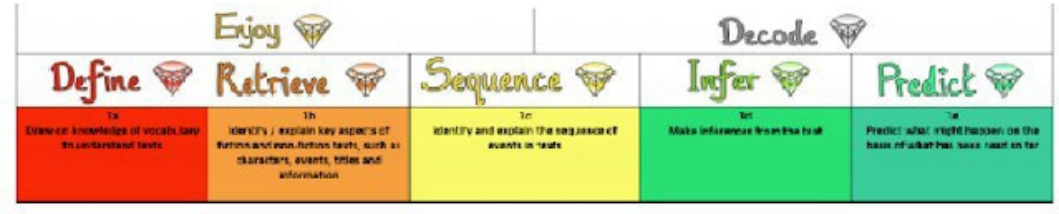


Appendix 4: Reading Gems

Reading Gems is a whole school reading strategy that aims to teach children to take pleasure in reading by themselves, listening to someone else read, and sharing texts with adults and other children. Different and specific key skills are taught explicitly to the children through discussions about texts, teacher modelling and opportunities to answer questions independently or with support where needed. Each new reading skill is allocated a colour-coded 'gem'. Every week, children focus on a certain reading gem and learn strategies to help them develop that particular skill. Phonics is taught separately to ensure the children develop the necessary decoding strategies that underpin all reading.

Reading Gems in the Early Years Foundation Stage

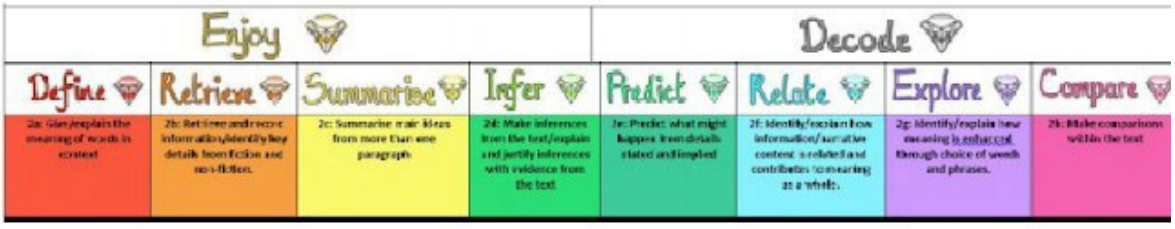
Alongside daily phonics, children in EYFS are immersed in a range of texts on a regular basis. Stories are used as a vehicle to engage children in their weekly topic sessions. Weekly reading sessions involve sharing and discussing texts with an adult in small groups, opportunities to self-select texts and look at them with a buddy or individually, and individual reading with adult support. This encourages children to enjoy a variety of texts and to practise decoding skills regularly. The diagram below shows the key skills taught in EYFS. In addition to the 'enjoy' and 'decode' umbrella skills that are taught implicitly in every reading session, five other key skills are taught:



Reading Gems in Year 1 and Year 2 - In Year 1 Reading Gems follows a similar pattern to EYFS, allowing the children to develop their decoding skills and to develop a love of reading. They continue to develop the five key skills that are introduced in EYFS. Each skill is taught individually to enable children to develop a 'tool-kit' of basic reading skills to aid their understanding of different texts they read.

Reading Gems in Years 3, 4, 5 & 6

Reading Gems in Years 3, 4, 5 & 6- As they progress into Key Stage 2, children begin to develop further reading skills that will assist their understanding of what they read: sequencing skills are developed more fully into summarising, and children learn to relate, explore and compare texts. Each week children focus on a specific reading gem. Through the weekly treasure chest, children have opportunities to practise all the reading gem skills they have been taught, and teachers are able to assess their progress. Certain reading gem skills are focused on more often, such as defining vocabulary, retrieving information and making inferences from texts. This is because these skills are used more often.



Appendix 5. Reading Banding Levels

Year Group	Phonically Decodable books for home readers		PM Bench mark	Home Reading level / Accelerated Reader		Guided Reading Book Bank Level	Year Group Expectation	Bug Club	Big Cat	ORT
Rec.	Autumn 1 (phase 1)	n/a	1	Ash		Pink	EYFS	Pink		1 / 1+
	Autumn 2 (phase 2 1st 19)	Ants	2	Beech						
	Spring Term (phase 2/3 to *th*)	Bees	3	Cedar		Red		Red		2
	Summer term (mixture of phase 2 and 3 sounds)	Caterpillars	4	Dogwood						
			5	Elm						
Y1	Autumn 1 (phase 3 long vowel and phase 4 1st 15)	Dragonfly	6	Fir		Yellow	1 Beginning	Yellow		3
	Autumn 2 (all of phase 3 and 4)	Firefly	7	Gum						
	Spring (Phase 5 books)	Grasshopper	8	Hazel						
	These books are based on the children's phonic assessments and where they are in relation to our "expected progress" within phonics. A child could be in Y1 and take an ant book if that is where their phonic understanding is. Once a child has passed their phonics screening check, and the teacher feels their phonic understanding is secure they no longer have phonics books. We also use phonics bug club to give children further access to more phonically decodable books at home.		9	Ivy		Blue		Blue		4
			10	Juniper						
			11	Kiwi						
			12	Laurel		Green	Y1 Beginning	Green		5
			13	Maple						
			14	Nutmeg						
Y2			15	Olive		Orange	Y1 Secure	Orange		6
			16	Poplar						
			17	Quince		Turquoise	Y1 Greater Depth	Turquoise		7
			18	Redbud						
			19	Silver Birch		Purple	Y2 Beginning	Purple		8
			20	Teak						
			21	Ugli		Gold	Y2 Beginning/ Secure	Gold		9
			22	Virginia Pine						
			23	Willow		White	Y2 Secure	White		10
			24	Xanthoceras						
			25	Yew		Lime	Y2 Greater Depth / Y3 Beginning	Lime		11
			26	Zelkova						
Y3			27	0.1 – 0.9 1.0-1.9 2.0-2.9 3.0-3.9 4.0-4.9 5.0-5.9 6.0-6.9 6+	**Accelerated Reader** Year 3,4,5 and 6 have a collection of books for their year group. These are set for the year group, there is some overlapping but each library is individual. (Levelled through Star Reading Test)	Topaz	Y3 Secure/ Great Depth Year 4 Beginning	Brown	Copper and Topaz	8-14
Y4			28			Ruby	Year 4 Secure / Greater Depth	Grey	Emerald and Ruby	14-16
Y5			29			Sapphire	Year 5	Blue	Sapphire	16-18
Y6			30				Year 6	Red	Diamond / Pearl	18-20

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Phase 5 **Year 1** **Year 2**	Alternative graphemes (e.g. ay, ou, ie, ea, oy, ir, ue, aw, wh, ph, ew, oe, au, ey, a-e, e-e, i-e, o-e, u-	Flexible decoding. Apply phonics automatically in reading and spelling.	Read phase 5 decodable books and books matched to phase 5. Continued learning of tricky words matched to phase.	End of block Assessments and Half termly Assessments.
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