

## Curriculum Update – ‘A Spotlight on Reading’



Mrs Panteli, KS2 English Lead, and Ms Lykoura, KS1 Teaching and Learning Lead, are continuing to ensure that reading stays at the top of our agenda here at St. Joseph’s. Instilling a love for reading is a key area on our school development plan. This half term, we have really focussed on how we can support our children to develop a love for reading to help enhance their writing skills. Our 'Curriculum Intent' for Reading is to provide children with a literacy-rich environment, high quality texts and inspiring learning opportunities. We want our children to read accurately, fluently and with increased confidence and understanding. We aim to instil in our children, a life-long enjoyment of reading and books.

To ignite a love for reading and books, the junior school began their library visits to Lea bridge Library this half term. Children engaged in a range of reading activities and were issued with their own library card which allowed them to take out their own books. They thoroughly enjoyed their visits as many had not had the opportunity to visit the library for a long time. We are hoping to make this a termly event and extend this to the KS1 children in the spring term. There are a range of activities available on offer at the library for children of all ages.

We are committed to investing in high quality reading resources and staff training to ensure teachers are confident in teaching reading and have the resources to deliver this at a high level. In KS1, we invest heavily in the Read, Write, Inc - a synthetic phonics programme to develop children’s understanding of phonics as the building blocks for reading. Phonics is taught consistently throughout Nursery, Reception and KS1 as whole class lessons, in smaller focus groups or in 1-1 sessions when required. We supplement Read, Write Inc resources with books from other schemes such as Oxford Reading Tree, to ensure children have access to a range of texts to be able to apply their phonics skills. We also incorporate a wide range of picture books, information books, poetry, and short novels to instil in our smallest children a love of books. Last year, Ms Lykoura led a sponsored reading challenge in the infants, and we hope to do the same this year to purchase even more books based on the children’s current interests. In KS2, we are currently in the process of evaluating and replenishing our classroom books and reading corners. We ensure the books we buy are high quality texts that challenge our most able readers as well as support readers at all abilities. We aim to include children’s current interests and topical issues in the books we purchase, and ensure they match the National Curriculum requirements. We want our children to experience the pleasure of opening a new book for the first time and getting lost amongst the pages by engaging in a ‘Sustained Reading Challenge’ led by Mrs Panteli in KS2 later this half term.

Effective collaboration between teaching staff and the leadership team across both schools has resulted in greater consistency across the infant and junior school. KS1 teachers have an increased insight into reading as children grow older, whilst KS2 staff have a greater understanding of phonics as the building blocks to ensuring children become successful readers. The schools invest in similar online reading resources to support the children’s home reading with e-books in ‘Bug Club’ and have established the use of ‘Reading Records’, which class teachers review on a weekly basis to monitor children’s home reading to help and steer them in the right direction. This year, both schools have invested in an online reading resource to develop children’s comprehension skills and ability to answer more detailed questions and achieve greater depth in reading.

Thank you to Mrs Panteli, Ms Lykoura and all the staff for ensuring that reading remains at the heart of our curriculum. In just three months we have already achieved so much.

**Believe, Achieve, and Inspire!**