



Intent

At CELT, our mission is to provide 100% exceptional educational experiences for all learners. Reading is fundamental to this ambition because it is both a gateway to the curriculum and a gateway to lives of choice and opportunity. Our intent is that every learner, regardless of starting point or additional need, becomes an accurate, fluent, thoughtful and independent reader who can engage with increasingly complex texts with understanding, confidence and enjoyment.

We want pupils not only to learn to read, but to develop the knowledge, habits, confidence and motivation to read to learn and to read for pleasure. Reading therefore sits at the heart of our educational entitlement: securing the strong foundations pupils need to access learning while opening doors to knowledge, stories, perspectives, cultures and experiences beyond their own.

A research-informed reading curriculum

Our reading curriculum has been deliberately designed using research evidence alongside expert professional knowledge. Prior to implementation, staff received high-quality professional development from Trust leaders and national experts, including Chris Such. Curriculum and pedagogical decisions have been informed by meta-analysis and the strongest available evidence, enabling us to make considered decisions about what pupils need to learn about reading and how reading is most effectively taught.

Our approach to reading begins with phonological awareness in our nurseries and reception settings, alongside daily phonics instruction from day one of reception. This builds securely on our approach to early language development, assessment, intervention and provision across our Nursery and Reception classes. WellComm is used to identify language needs early and inform responsive provision, alongside a range of high-quality, talk-based approaches and interventions. Our SHREC approach further supports adults to create high-quality interactions that develop pupils' communication, vocabulary and oral language. Together, these foundations support pupils to develop the language knowledge and skills needed for later reading comprehension. Beyond phonics, our aligned primary reading curriculum follows the principles of Chris Such's *Primary Reading Simplified*. We provide a carefully balanced reading diet of fluency, extended reading and close reading: fluency develops accuracy, automaticity and prosody; extended reading builds stamina, knowledge and comprehension; and close reading develops deeper analysis of meaning, language and authorial choices.

We recognise that strong reading begins with secure decoding. Through Read Write Inc. (RWI), pupils are explicitly taught the alphabetic code and develop accurate and increasingly automatic word reading. Phonics, fluency and comprehension are treated as interconnected foundations of successful reading, with early identification and timely keep-up and catch-up support where these foundations are insecure.

An entitlement to exceptional texts

We believe that an exceptional reading education depends not only on how reading is taught, but on what children are given the opportunity to read. Text selection is therefore a deliberate act of curriculum design and forms a part of our curriculum intent.

Our texts are selected against CELT's Guiding Principles for Text Selection, which ensure that pupils encounter a broad, ambitious and carefully considered literary diet. These principles are:

Joy of Reading • Themes • Windows & Mirrors • Character Values • Curricular Links • Literary Heritage & Themes • Local Heritage • Author & Protagonist Range • Career Links • Text Type • The Five Plagues • The Seven Basic Plots.

This means pupils encounter texts chosen simply because they are excellent literature, alongside texts which explore important human themes and character values; reflect pupils' own experiences as mirrors and offer windows into lives different from their own; connect to curriculum knowledge; represent literary and Cornish heritage; expose pupils to a diverse range of authors and protagonists; broaden understanding of careers and possible futures; and provide experience of a wide range of fiction, non-fiction, poetry, picture books, wordless texts and graphic novels.

We also deliberately expose pupils to the forms of textual complexity identified within the Five Plagues of Reading – including archaic language, non-linear time sequences, narratively complex texts, figurative or symbolic texts and resistant texts – so that pupils gradually develop the knowledge and experience needed to navigate increasingly demanding literature.

Our reading curriculum consequently makes an important contribution to our wider Personal Development offer. Through carefully selected texts and discussion, pupils encounter different cultures, identities, families, experiences and perspectives. Texts provide meaningful opportunities to explore protected characteristics, British values, character and values, cultural capital, diversity and belonging, alongside the deliberate use of windows and mirrors. Reading therefore supports pupils in understanding both themselves and the diverse world in which they live.

Beyond our reading curriculum, which explicitly teaches pupils how to read with accuracy, fluency, understanding and enjoyment, reading is deliberately embedded as a tool for learning across the wider curriculum. Our Teaching and Learning Framework, 'The CELT Chronicles', includes an explicit 'Read to Learn' strand. This supports teachers to draw on research-informed 'best bets' when using texts across subjects, ensuring that reading is not confined to English lessons but is used purposefully to build knowledge, vocabulary and understanding across the curriculum. Through this framework, teachers are equipped with effective approaches for supporting pupils to access, comprehend and learn from increasingly complex texts, strengthening both their reading expertise and their ability to use reading independently as a means of acquiring new knowledge across the subject disciplines.

Ultimately, our intent is to create capable, curious and independent readers for life: pupils with the strong foundations to access their education, the knowledge and strategies to understand increasingly complex texts, and the confidence and desire to choose reading for themselves.

Implementation

Strong foundations and systematic phonics

Reading begins with systematic, explicit phonics teaching through RWI from Day 1 of reception (and earlier for children in our Nursery provision who have secured phonological awareness and are ready for Nursery RWI in the summer term before they start school). Pupils are taught to decode accurately and develop increasing automaticity. Once this is secure, our phonics programme also begins to develop skills in reading fluency. Half-termly assessment, as well as additional assessment at point of need, is used responsively to identify pupils at risk of falling behind, with additional practice, tutoring and intervention provided so that difficulties are addressed quickly and a keep-up not catch-up approach is followed.

Where pupils continue to experience difficulties, we identify what the barrier is and the most appropriate intervention to respond with. Our three-part reading assessment model has been deliberately crafted to enable this. Pupils with insecure decoding require a different response from pupils who can decode accurately but have not yet developed fluency. Our assessment and intervention pathways are therefore designed to prevent pupils remaining on provision which is not addressing their underlying need.

Explicit teaching through a balanced reading diet

Once pupils have secured the decoding knowledge required to access whole-class reading through RWI, they experience an explicitly taught curriculum based around a carefully balanced diet of fluency, extended reading and close reading through the trust's aligned Reading Curriculum, built in collaboration with Chris Such. This begins in Y2 for children who have completed RWI, with RWI 'more texts' but using the Reading Curriculum approach and structure for KS2 so that it acts as a bridge between decoding and fluency. Later in the Y2 programme, picture books and then short chapter books are introduced to enable gradual progression in text complexity alongside consistent teaching strategies in order to manage cognitive load.

The balance develops as pupils become more proficient. There is greater emphasis on fluency earlier in pupils' reading journeys, while increasingly fluent readers experience more opportunities for close reading and sophisticated analysis. Additionally, this balance can be adapted based on cohort needs to secure the strong foundations quickly.

Explicit instruction and expert modelling sit at the heart of teaching. Teachers make the processes used by proficient readers visible using metacognition and 'thinking out loud'. Depending on the purpose of the lesson, pupils experience teacher modelling, repeated reading, echo and choral reading, paired reading, explicit vocabulary instruction, structured discussion and modelling of comprehension strategies.

Fluency teaching prioritises accuracy before speed and develops automaticity, expression, rhythm, phrasing and intonation through repeated, accurate practice. As pupils become increasingly proficient, they learn to analyse language and authorial choices, consider layers of meaning, justify interpretations with evidence and recognise that readers may bring different experiences to their interpretation of a text. We are aware that learners can learn as much about a text through discussing it as writing about it and therefore our approach balances written responses with oracy approaches that enable deeper discussion and probing questions to develop thinking.

Intellectual preparation and responsive teaching

Teachers are trained to use intellectual preparation to understand the purpose, content and demands of the curriculum before teaching it. Aligned and centrally created curriculum materials, designed with a view of 'inclusion first' and produced by Reading experts provide a clear entitlement and sequence, but they are not treated as scripts.

Through intellectual preparation, teachers anticipate potential misconceptions and barriers, consider the vocabulary and background knowledge pupils will need, understand the demands of the text and identify where adaptations and adjustments are necessary for their learners through faded scaffolding. This enables teachers to maintain ambitious curriculum goals while responding appropriately to pupils' starting points and additional needs.

Reading culture and independence

Explicit teaching sits alongside a deliberate culture of reading. Daily story time ensures that every pupil regularly hears high-quality literature read aloud by an expert reader. Beyond this, weekly book talk in addition to regular exposure to knowledge of authors, author visits, library experiences and recommendations from adults and peers broaden pupils' reading horizons.

Our IPICK approach teaches pupils, once they have progressed past phonics and early reading, explicitly how to choose books for themselves by considering Purpose, Interest, Comprehension and Knowledge of the words. Rather than creating dependence on an adult or a narrow book level, we progressively develop pupils' ability to make informed choices about texts that interest, challenge and engage them.

Regular library experiences give pupils time to browse, discuss, share and recommend books, request texts and receive guidance from adults and peers. Our aim is to develop readers who choose to read, not simply pupils who can read.

Reading across the curriculum

Reading is not confined to English. Story enriches our wider curriculum, building background knowledge and vocabulary while developing curiosity and empathy. This is particularly true of our humanities offer. Vocabulary and narrative are key tenets of our wider curriculum offer.

Teachers consider the reading demands pupils encounter across subjects and make appropriate adaptations where reading could otherwise prevent a pupil from accessing curriculum knowledge. These might include explicit vocabulary teaching, pre-reading, adult-read texts, partner reading, echo reading or choral reading. Pupils therefore continue to develop as readers while being enabled to participate successfully in an ambitious wider curriculum.

Assessment that leads to action

Assessment is designed to answer three questions:

What can this learner do? What is getting in the way? What do we need to do next?

Beyond RWI, CELT uses a three-part model of reading assessment: Professional Listening and Informed Adaptation; Diagnostic Assessment and Progress Tracking; and Standardised Outcomes and Test Familiarity.

Teachers listen to every pupil read at the beginning of the academic year as part of our 'Professional Listening Assessment', considering automaticity, prosody, fluency and reading behaviours and using this knowledge to inform adaptations across the curriculum. They record word count per minute and fluency assessments. Following this, where required multi-dimensional fluency scale assessments are completed. Pupils who are identified as having gaps in their fluency are referred to the SEND team via Teacher Focus forms and intervention is immediately implemented. Pupils at risk of not achieving the expected standard continue to be listened to regularly.

In addition to this Professional Listening assessment, once pupils have completed phonics, twice a year, NGRT provides our core diagnostic and progress-tracking assessment. It provides standardised information alongside diagnostic indicators relating to decoding and comprehension. This never replaces teacher knowledge: assessment information is considered alongside professional listening, classroom evidence, fluency observations and day-to-day performance. However, this data is used by class teachers, the SEND team, SLT and trust leaders to identify where additional support or further diagnostic assessment, using FFT, may be required.

Standardised PIRA assessments in Years 3–5 are used annually to provide learners with gradual exposure to standardised testing ahead of SATs without making this the focus of daily teacher or routine assessment.

Our assessment cycle is therefore:

Assess → identify the barrier → adapt or intervene → monitor impact → reassess.

Impact

The impact we seek is that every learner becomes an increasingly successful and independent reader. Pupils secure the strong foundations of decoding and fluency, comprehend increasingly complex texts, acquire a rich vocabulary and body of background knowledge, and develop the confidence to discuss, analyse and respond to what they read. They encounter a broad and ambitious literary diet and increasingly make purposeful, independent choices about their own reading. Our aim is that every child leaves primary school with the reading skills they need to be successful in their secondary education and beyond. We therefore pay careful consideration to success in statutory assessments and aim to improve these year on year. Our trust average for PSC from 22-26 has been between 89% and 90% consistently. This has been consistently 7-10% above national averages. Reading at KS2 has also been consistently above national averages ranging from 76-79% from 22-26.

However, we do not judge the success of our curriculum through outcomes alone. We evaluate the impact of both the curriculum and its implementation, asking not simply *what did pupils achieve?* but *what are pupils learning, remembering and able to do, and how consistently is our intended curriculum being enacted?*

At classroom and school level, leaders build a rounded picture through lesson visits, book looks, pupil voice, professional listening and analysis of assessment information. These enable leaders to consider the quality and consistency of curriculum implementation, what pupils know and remember, how they experience reading, whether adaptations are effective and whether all groups of learners are successfully accessing their reading entitlement.

Professional development is continuous rather than confined to initial implementation. Steplab coaching is used to translate shared curriculum and pedagogical principles into classroom practice. Coaching, modelling, deliberate practice and feedback enable teachers to refine specific aspects of reading instruction and provide leaders with information about where further professional development may be required.

At both school and Trust level, leaders carefully analyse data following statutory and Trust summative assessments. Data is considered alongside wider evidence rather than in isolation to identify strengths, patterns, variation between groups and areas where curriculum, teaching or provision may require adaptation.

Implementation Review Boards provide a structured opportunity to interrogate this evidence, monitor improvement and share effective practice between schools. Insight Days provide further opportunities to evaluate the quality of teaching and curriculum implementation in context, drawing together evidence from classrooms, pupils' work, pupil voice, assessment and discussions with leaders and teachers.

At Trust level, this creates an ongoing process of curriculum evaluation and refinement. Trust leaders analyse patterns across schools to identify what is working well, where implementation varies and where particular aspects of the curriculum may need strengthening. This evidence informs revisions to curriculum materials and guidance and enables support, coaching and CPD to be targeted precisely where they are most needed.

Impact is therefore understood as an ongoing cycle rather than an endpoint:

Curriculum design → high-quality CPD → implementation → assessment and monitoring → coaching and support → evaluation → refinement.

Through this cycle, we seek to ensure that our reading curriculum remains research-informed, responsive and ambitious, and that its implementation continually moves us closer to our mission of providing 100% exceptional educational experiences for all learners and enabling every CELT learner to lead a life of choice.

CELT PRIMARY OUR READING OFFER

EXCEPTIONAL EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCES

