

Westbury Infant School

Reading Spine

Reception and Key Stage 1 two year entitlement / 2026 onwards

This reading spine identifies the literature, poetry, rhyme and curriculum reading that every child is entitled to encounter at Westbury Infant School. It protects a coherent core while preserving teacher enthusiasm, pupil choice and responsive reading for pleasure.

Intent	Implementation	Impact
Children encounter memorable, high-quality literature that develops vocabulary, knowledge, imagination and a lasting enjoyment of reading. The selection includes traditional and contemporary stories, poetry, rhyme and non-fiction, and reflects a breadth of authors, cultures, families, places and experiences. Texts become increasingly rich in language, structure, ideas and the demands they place on listeners and readers.	Adults read aloud every day and revisit selected key stories so children develop deep familiarity. Reception follows its Focus Text Spine, Nursery Rhyme Repertoire and Poetry Basket. In Key Stage 1, every class completes the agreed Cycle A and Cycle B key-text entitlement; curriculum reading builds knowledge; and Talk Through Stories is selected responsively from the school collection. RWI decodable books remain matched to assessed phonics knowledge and are not replaced by this spine.	Children know and remember a growing body of stories, poems, authors, language and ideas. They retell, predict, infer, compare, discuss and recommend with increasing confidence. They connect new texts with previous reading and wider curriculum knowledge, while developing the fluency, vocabulary, background knowledge and positive reading identity needed for the next stage.

The Westbury Infant School reading entitlement

Element	What is guaranteed
Core literature	Named stories and picture books that every child encounters.
Deep familiarity	A smaller number of key stories reread, retold and remembered particularly well.
Poetry and rhyme	A planned repertoire for hearing, joining in, performing and learning by heart.
Curriculum reading	High-quality non-fiction, images, maps and sources that build subject knowledge.
Choice	Additional books selected by teachers and pupils, including suitable titles from the Talk Through Stories collection.

How to use the spine

The spine is an entitlement, not a limit. Staff teach and revisit the named texts while continuing to read other books chosen for pleasure, current interests, seasonal opportunities and individual classes. A book may serve more than one purpose, but not every book becomes a writing or comprehension task.

Label	Meaning	Expectation
K	Key story	Protected for repeated reading and deep familiarity.
E	English anchor	Read and explored as part of the writing curriculum.
TTS	Talk Through Stories	Selected responsively from the approved school collection.
P	Poetry, rhyme or song	Heard, revisited, performed or learned.
NF	Curriculum non-fiction	Builds accurate knowledge and subject vocabulary.
C	Additional choice	Teacher or pupil selection for pleasure and responsiveness.

Principles for selecting and reviewing books

- Literary or informational quality comes before a superficial topic match.
- The full collection, rather than every individual book, provides breadth of form, representation and perspective.
- Books offer language worth hearing again, memorable ideas and illustrations, and opportunities for response and discussion.
- Children meet familiar patterns before increasingly complex structures, viewpoints, themes and implied meaning.
- Curriculum links are used where they deepen knowledge naturally; subject-specific non-fiction is used when accuracy matters most.
- All pupils, including those still learning to decode, access the same ambitious read-aloud entitlement.
- The spine is reviewed annually. Strong texts are retained; additions are made only when they strengthen quality, progression or inclusion.

Reading aloud and rereading

The first reading should allow children to experience the whole story. Later readings may draw attention to vocabulary, character, sequence, illustrations, patterns or connections. Key stories are revisited often enough for children to join in, retell and refer back to them. Reading aloud remains valuable in its own right and is not routinely followed by written work.

Reception reading spine Autumn

Reception begins with oral language, songs, rhymes, familiar stories and daily systematic phonics. The Focus Text Spine is the planned read-aloud entitlement. Key stories are a smaller protected subset for particularly deep familiarity.

Autumn 1

Focus text entitlement	Key stories for deep familiarity
• The Colour Monster • All Are Welcome • You Choose • Once There Were Giants • The Squirrels Who Squabbled • The Gruffalo	• Once There Were Giants • The Gruffalo

Nursery rhyme repertoire	Poetry Basket
• Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star • Baa, Baa, Black Sheep • Incy Wincy Spider • Humpty Dumpty • Row, Row, Row Your Boat • Five Little Ducks	• Chop Chop • Falling Apples • Leaves Are Falling • Breezy Weather • Wise Old Owl • Who Has Seen the Wind?

Autumn 2

Focus text entitlement	Key stories for deep familiarity
• A Little Glow • Last Stop on Market Street • Emergency! • Kipper's Birthday • The Gingerbread Man • The Christmas Pine • Bunnies in a Sleigh	• The Gingerbread Man • Last Stop on Market Street

Reception reading spine Spring

Songs, rhymes and poems continue cumulatively; the termly allocation indicates when each selection is introduced, not when it stops being used. Talk Through Stories may be introduced later in Reception once story, attention and oral-language routines are secure.

Spring 1

Focus text entitlement	Key stories for deep familiarity
• Old Bear • Not a Box • The Snowy Day • The Snow Fox and the Long, Long Night • The Tiny Seed • Supertato	• Old Bear • The Snowy Day

Nursery rhyme repertoire	Poetry Basket
• The Grand Old Duke of York • Hickory Dickory Dock • One, Two, Buckle My Shoe • Heads, Shoulders, Knees and Toes • Old MacDonald Had a Farm • If You're Happy and You Know It	• I Can Build a Snowman • Popcorn • Pancakes • Spring Wind • Hungry Birdies • Little Seed

Spring 2

Focus text entitlement	Key stories for deep familiarity
• The Little Red Hen • The Three Little Pigs • What the Ladybird Heard • Elephant in My Kitchen! • Eggs!	• The Little Red Hen • The Three Little Pigs

Talk Through Stories and class choice

Teachers select developmentally suitable books from the approved Talk Through Stories collection according to pupils' oral-language needs, interests and previous experience. Children may help choose from the books currently available, but voting is not a curriculum requirement. Talk Through Stories adds depth; it does not replace daily story reading or the Focus Text Spine.

Reception reading spine Summer

Summer 1

Focus text entitlement	Key stories for deep familiarity
• The Very Hungry Caterpillar • The Artist Who Painted a Blue Horse • Me on the Map • The Naughty Bus • We're Going on a Bear Hunt • Mae Among the Stars • The Story Machine	• The Very Hungry Caterpillar • We're Going on a Bear Hunt

Nursery rhyme repertoire	Poetry Basket
• London Bridge Is Falling Down • A Sailor Went to Sea, Sea, Sea • Down in the Jungle • The Wheels on the Bus • She'll Be Coming 'Round the Mountain • One Finger, One Thumb, Keep Moving	• Under a Stone • I Have a Little Frog • A Little Shell • Pitter Patter • Five Little Peas • Dance

Summer 2

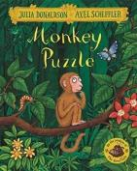
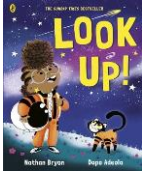
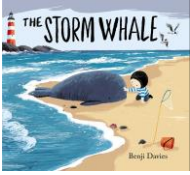
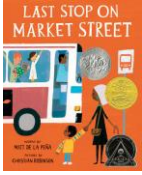
Focus text entitlement	Key stories for deep familiarity
• Bonnies in a Boat • What the Ladybird Heard at the Seaside • Somebody Swallowed Stanley • Commotion in the Ocean • Sharing a Shell • The Journey Home from Grandpa's • The Wonderful Things You Will Be	• Somebody Swallowed Stanley • Sharing a Shell

Reception implementation

Protected entitlement	How it is enacted
Daily read-aloud	A high-quality story, poem or information text is shared every day.
Rereading	Key stories, songs and poems are revisited until children can join in, retell and make connections.
Storytelling	Helicopter Stories, play and oral retelling allow children to recreate and adapt familiar narratives.
Phonics	RWI teaches the alphabetic code; matched decodable books provide independent reading practice.
Later composition	Drawing Club begins in Terms 5 and 6 and draws on the language, story knowledge and transcription built earlier.

Key Stage 1 key text entitlement

Every child encounters the following twelve key texts during the two-year mixed-age cycle. These books are revisited sufficiently for children to know them well. The half-term labels support even coverage, but classes may rotate single copies at different points in the term. Completion is required by the end of each cycle, not on the same date in every class.

					
Monkey Puzzle	Look Up!	The Storm Whale	The Secret Sky Garden	Window	Last Stop on Market Street

Cycle A key texts

Half term	Key text	Class record
Autumn 1	Monkey Puzzle	☐
Autumn 2	Look Up!	☐
Spring 1	The Storm Whale	☐
Spring 2	The Secret Sky Garden	☐
Summer 1	Window	☐
Summer 2	Last Stop on Market Street	☐

Cycle B key texts

Half term	Key text and creator	Class record
Autumn 1	Wanda – Sihle Nontshokweni and Mathabo Tlali	☐
Autumn 2	Rosie Revere Engineer – Andrea Beaty and David Roberts	☐
Spring 1	Lost and Found – Oliver Jeffers	☐
Spring 2	The Suitcase – Chris Naylor-Ballesteros	☐
Summer 1	The Tin Forest – Helen Ward and Wayne Anderson	☐
Summer 2	The Bear and the Piano – David Litchfield	☐

The class record is completed once the key text has been read, discussed and revisited. English anchor texts may also be taught through writing; this does not remove their place in the shared reading entitlement.

Key Stage 1 Year A reading spine Autumn

The two mixed-age year groups share the same ambitious literature. Teaching, talk and response are adapted so Year 1 and Year 2 pupils work from the same text at an age-appropriate level. The English anchors and Cycle A key texts are guaranteed; additional reading remains responsive to each class.

Autumn 1

English literary core	Cycle A key text
Drawing Club collection and familiar stories	Monkey Puzzle

Curriculum reading	What develops
Animal classification, human body and seasonal-change texts; portrait images and short artist information.	Oral storytelling, pattern, character and complete sentences.

Autumn 2

English literary core	Cycle A key text
Look Up!; The Most Magnificent Thing; Christmas and winter poetry	Look Up!

Curriculum reading	What develops
Age-appropriate Brunel biography, bridge photographs and diagrams, maps and design/mechanism texts.	Problem solving, perseverance, explanation, wonder and seasonal poetry.

Key Stage 1 Year A reading spine Spring

Spring 1

English literary core	Cycle A key text
The Storm Whale; The Comet	The Storm Whale

Curriculum reading	What develops
UK maps, atlases, photographs and information about the four countries, capitals, weather and food traditions.	Setting, belonging, sequence, viewpoint and connections between place and experience.

Spring 2

English literary core	Cycle A key text
The Secret Sky Garden; Luna Loves Art	The Secret Sky Garden

Curriculum reading	What develops
Plant and local-habitat information; high-quality reproductions and child-accessible information about Georgia O'Keeffe; accurate texts and images for Sanatani symbols.	Transformation, art, community, vocabulary, reason and purposeful response.

Using curriculum connections well

Curriculum reading builds accurate background knowledge and subject vocabulary. A topic connection does not make a book part of the literary core automatically. Where factual accuracy is the priority, teachers use strong non-fiction, maps, photographs, diagrams, artworks and sources rather than forcing a fictional link.

Key Stage 1 Year A reading spine Summer

Summer 1

English literary core	Cycle A key text
Window; The Promise; local-walk recount	Window

Curriculum reading	What develops
Local maps, photographs, simple archive sources and information about Westbury, seasonal change and community.	Visual literacy, environmental change, community, evidence and persuasion.

Summer 2

English literary core	Cycle A key text
Last Stop on Market Street; The Bear and the Piano; poetry performance	Last Stop on Market Street

Curriculum reading	What develops
Materials information and investigations; maps, images, timelines and suitable historical sources for the Great Fire of London; texts and images supporting knowledge of Shabbat.	Journey, belonging, return, independent response and poetry performance.

Poetry entitlement in Key Stage 1

Children hear and discuss poetry across the year. Autumn 2 includes a focused Christmas or winter poetry sequence with composition and performance. At least one further poem is rehearsed or learned, and Summer 2 revisits performance. Teachers also share short poems, rhymes and word play as part of regular reading aloud; poetry is not restricted to the focused units.

Progression through the reading spine

Aspect	Reception foundations	Key Stage 1 development
Story knowledge	Repeated, patterned and traditional stories; familiar characters and connected events.	More developed plots, changes in viewpoint, transformation, journey, belonging and return.
Language and vocabulary	Rhyme, refrain, story language, naming, description and recently introduced vocabulary.	Increasingly precise, literary and curriculum vocabulary; explanation of words in context and reuse in discussion.
Comprehension	Joining in, recalling, sequencing, simple prediction and connections to experience.	Retrieval, evidence-led inference, comparison, summarising, viewpoint and author or illustrator choice.
Literary knowledge	Story, character, event, author, illustrator, rhyme and poem.	Narrative pattern, setting, viewpoint, theme, visual narrative, poetic language and information organisation.
Poetry and performance	A cumulative repertoire of nursery rhymes and Poetry Basket poems.	Wider contemporary and traditional poetry; rehearsal, learning by heart, composition and expressive performance.
Non-fiction and knowledge	Information books linked to first-hand experience, animals, growth, place and change.	Increasingly purposeful use of maps, diagrams, sources, biographies and subject information.
Reading identity	Favourite stories, repeated requests, participation and book handling.	Choice, recommendation, comparison, sustained listening and increasing independent reading.

Breadth and representation review

Leaders review the collection as a whole rather than expecting every text to meet every criterion. The annual review considers the balance of traditional and contemporary literature; fiction, poetry and non-fiction; UK and global settings; varied families, cultures, identities and experiences; male and female protagonists; creators from a range of backgrounds; humour, imagination and emotional depth; and a progression in vocabulary, syntax, structure and ideas.

Access and inclusion

The read-aloud entitlement is not reduced for pupils with SEND, pupils learning English as an additional language or pupils who are not yet fluent decoders. Adults use objects, images, gesture, drama, rereading, concise explanation and carefully selected vocabulary support so all pupils can participate. Additional phonics or fluency teaching is provided without removing access to ambitious stories and discussion.

Implementation and review

Responsibility	What happens
Teachers	Teach the agreed entitlement, protect daily read-aloud, revisit key stories, offer genuine choice and complete the cycle record.
Reception team	Maintain the Nursery Rhyme Repertoire and Poetry Basket cumulatively and introduce TTS later in the year when oral foundations are secure.
KS1 team	Complete the Cycle A or Cycle B key-text entitlement, teach the current English anchors, use curriculum reading deliberately and select suitable TTS books as available.
English lead	Audit coverage, progression, representation, book condition and implementation; review selections annually with staff and pupil voice.
Subject leaders	Identify accurate, high-quality texts and sources that build knowledge in their subjects without displacing the literary entitlement.
All adults	Model enjoyment, know the books well, read expressively and avoid turning every read-aloud into an assessment activity.

Using Talk Through Stories

Principle	Agreed practice
Selection	Teachers choose from the approved collection according to oral-language priorities, pupils' interests, previous experience and book availability.
Availability	Classes do not need to use the same title simultaneously. Single copies circulate across the school and may be used in different terms.
Pupil choice	Children may vote from suitable books currently available.
Record	Staff note titles taught so repeated selections can be avoided and leaders can review breadth over time.
Purpose	TTS develops vocabulary and talk. It supplements, rather than defines, the statutory reading curriculum and key-text entitlement.

Relationship with other curriculum documents

Reading and Phonics Progression: how reading knowledge and skills develop from Reception to Year 2.

RWI progression and Storybook route: the alphabetic code and matched decodable reading.

English Writing LTP: the literature and purposes used for explicit composition teaching.

Reception LTP: the full Reception Focus Text Spine and wider curriculum encounters.

This reading spine: the guaranteed literature, poetry, curriculum reading and structured choice.

Reference points

Department for Education, The Reading Framework (updated 2023) and National Curriculum English Programmes of Study; Education Endowment Foundation, Improving Literacy in Key Stage 1; Ofsted, Telling the Story (2024).