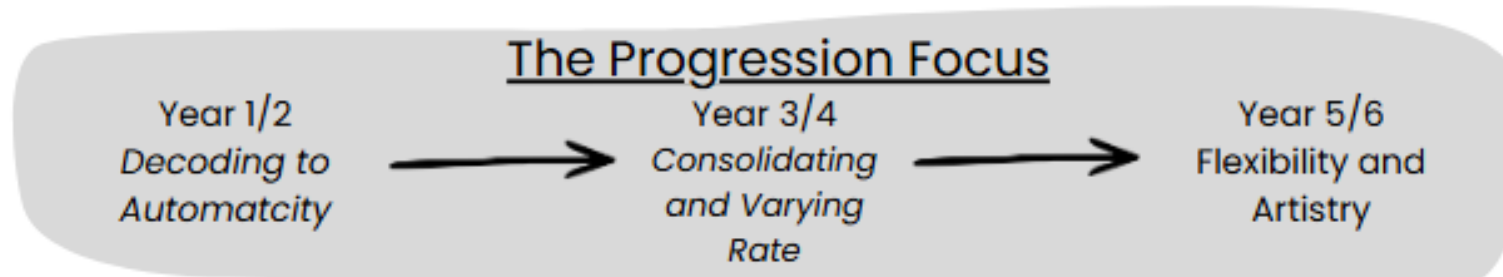


Fluency Progression 26/27



A Note on Fluency vs. Speed: Speed is a byproduct of fluency, not the goal. A student reading at 150 WPM like a robot with zero comprehension is not a fluent reader. True fluency sounds like natural speech.

Key Stage 1: Decoding to Automaticity

In KS1, the primary goal is shifting from conscious decoding to automatic word recognition so that brain power can be freed up for comprehension.

Year 1	Fluency Focus	Curriculum Objectives	Fluency Benchmarks
<i>The foundations of decoding.</i>	Grapheme-Phoneme Correspondences (GPCs) and blending.	• Respond speedily with the correct sound for all 40+ phonemes. • Blend sounds in unfamiliar words. • Read common exception words (tricky words). • Read aloud phonically-decodable books consistent with their developing phonic knowledge.	Accuracy: 90–95% accuracy on decodable texts. Rate: Roughly 30–60 words per minute (WPM) by the end of the year. Expression (Prosody): Minimal. Reading may sound choppy or word-by-word as they focus on decoding.

Year 2	Fluency Focus	Curriculum Objectives	Fluency Benchmarks
<i>Building automaticity and basic phrasing.</i>	Automaticity, self-correction, and basic phrasing.	- Read aloud books closely matched to their improving phonic knowledge, sounding out unfamiliar words accurately, automatically, and without undue hesitation. - Read ahead while reading aloud to anticipate the next word. - Re-read books to build up fluency and confidence.	Accuracy: 95%+ accuracy on age-appropriate texts. Rate: Roughly 60–90 WPM by the end of the year. Expression (Prosody): Beginning to group words into meaningful phrases (e.g., phrasing short sentences instead of reading word-by-word). Starting to recognise full stops and question marks with vocal inflections.

Lower Key Stage 2: Consolidating and Varying Rate

By LKS2, decoding should be mostly automatic. The focus turns to tracking text efficiently and adjusting reading speed depending on the text type.

Year 3	Fluency Focus	Curriculum Objectives	Fluency Benchmarks
<i>The transition to silent reading.</i>	Visual tracking, stamina, and basic expression.	- Apply their growing knowledge of root words, prefixes, and suffixes to read aloud and to understand the meaning of new words they meet. - Read books that are structured in different ways and read for a range of purposes.	Accuracy: 97%+ accuracy. Rate: Roughly 80–110 WPM. Expression (Prosody): Standard punctuation (commas, full stops) dictates pauses. The voice reflects the mood or tone of a sentence.

Year 4	Fluency Focus	Curriculum Objectives	Fluency Benchmarks
<i>Interpretive reading.</i>	Vocabulary integration and character voice.	- Read aloud with appropriate intonation, tone, and volume so that the meaning is clear to an audience. - Understand what they read by checking that the text makes sense to them and discussing their understanding of words.	Accuracy: 97–99% accuracy. Rate: Roughly 90–120 WPM. Expression (Prosody): Dialogue is read with distinct character inflection. The reader uses text cues (like <i>italics</i> or bolding) to emphasise specific words.

Upper Key Stage 2: Flexibility and Artistry

In UKS2, fluency becomes a tool for deep comprehension and performance. Students learn to manipulate their voice to convey subtext and adapt to complex layouts.

Year 5	Fluency Focus	Curriculum Objectives	Fluency Benchmarks
<i>Flexible and strategic reading.</i>	Text layout navigation and structural awareness.	- Apply their growing knowledge of root words, prefixes, and suffixes, both to read aloud and to understand the meaning of new words. - Read a wide range of poetry and plays aloud, using intonation, tone, and volume so that the meaning is clear to an audience.	Accuracy: 99% accuracy. Rate: Roughly 110–130 WPM. Expression (Prosody): Reading adapts effortlessly to complex sentence structures (e.g., relative clauses, parenthetical dashes). The student smoothly navigates non-fiction layouts like infographics or footnotes without losing the thread of the text.

Year 6	Fluency Focus	Curriculum Objectives	Fluency Benchmarks
<i>Performance ready fluency.</i>	Meaning-driven expression and automatic adaptation.	• Confidently skim and scan to locate information quickly, alongside sustained, expressive oral reading. • Deliver dramatic readings of poetry and plays, manipulating pause and emphasis to convey subtle shifts in mood, tension, or character motivation.	Accuracy: 99%+ accuracy on standard age-appropriate text. Rate: Roughly 120–150+ WPM (silent reading rate is typically faster). Expression (Prosody): The reader actively uses volume, pitch, and pacing to control the audience’s engagement. Pacing slows down for complex informational text and speeds up during high-action narrative sequences.