

Randlay Primary School
Phonics and Early Reading Policy
Updated January 2022

Aims

At Randlay Primary School and Nursery we aim to give our learners the best possible start on their phonics and reading journey.

We aim to ensure that every child makes speedy progress in phonics and reading, develops and understands a wide range of vocabulary and that all pupils' develop a life-long love of reading.

We recognise that the best way to achieve this is through the use of a systematic, synthetic phonics programme, that teaches the essential skills of phonics and phonological awareness, right from the start of nursery, through a consistent, systematic and engaging approach. This is critical to ensure that our learners become confident and fluent readers.

It is essential to us that our approach is accessible to all learners, regardless of background, including those identified as SEND, EAL or Pupil Premium.

To achieve this, we teach systematic synthetic phonics by following the systematic progression of Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised, starting with pre-reading phonological awareness skills within nursery. We then build on and extend these skills throughout their time in the EYFS and Key Stage 1. Additional support is also available should it be needed in Key Stage 2.

Our Approach

Time Allocation

Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised lessons are time-tabled and take place daily in nursery, reception and year 1. These also continue into year 2 and KS2 until learners are fully secure, up to phase 5.

Outside of this, each child will also take part in three guided reading practice sessions each week, lasting between 20-30 minutes, as well as having time to independently read for pleasure.

Children requiring additional 'Keep-Up' support will also complete additional daily interventions.

Time is also allocated each day to whole-class story, song and rhyme times and there will also be at least five minutes a day spent on oral blending in nursery, reception and year 1.

Organisation and Groupings

We aim to ensure that all children 'Keep Up' not 'Catch Up' and most children will access a daily, whole-class phonics lesson, with Keep-Up interventions used to quickly close any gaps identified. Where pupils are identified as being unable to access the whole-class session, they will be taught phonics at the appropriate phase.

Organisation of the session is carefully planned. Sessions take place in quiet, comfortable spaces, where all pupils are able to access the materials. The teacher/teaching assistant positions themselves and the resources used, to ensure that every child can see. Wherever possible a 'V to see' formation will be used, with the session taught from the corner of the carpet space, creating a 'V' shape. The lowest 20% will be sat in the centre of the V to ensure the best eyeline with the teacher.

The spelling section of the session is completed at tables, in phonics books. Teaching assistants will be used to support identified pupils who may require additional practice with the oral segmentation of the sounds.

Planning

'Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised' discrete weekly phonics lesson plans are used to ensure systematic progression and a consistent approach. These are easily accessible to all members of staff through the Little Wandle website. The progression and approaches must be followed with fidelity, but it is also recognised that the revisit and review of graphemes and words may need to be adapted to ensure additional opportunities to practise previously taught graphemes or words, when required.

Reading Practice Sessions

In reception and year 1 we teach children to read through reading practice sessions. These take place three times a week, with each session having a distinct focus. These sessions are led by a fully trained adult.

- Session 1- Decoding- Pupils first revisit known GPCs and tricky words, to aid fluency and ensure word meanings are understood. Each pupil independently reads the text and the adult moves around the group to hear each pupils read.
- Session 2- Prosody- These sessions focus on reading with expression, rhythm and pausing, taking account of punctuation and supporting the process of emotional engagement through emphasis and reading with feeling.
- Session 3- Comprehension- These sessions explore comprehension skills such as word meanings, retrieval, sequencing, summary and inference skills.

Following the three guided sessions, pupils then take the book home to further develop their fluency.

The text used will always be one that has been linked to the Little Wandle Letters and Sounds progression and follows the progression of the phonics phases.

In Year 2 and 3, we continue to teach reading in this way for any children who still need to practise reading with decodable books.

Reading Journals

In year 2, once pupils are fully secure within phase 5, they will move onto the colour book banding system, as a decodable text, where most words can be recognised automatically or decoded quickly. Reading will then be taught using a 'Reading Journal'

approach to a whole-class text. This text is selected carefully by phase leaders and class teachers to ensure a high-quality, age-appropriate text is selected. To ensure consistency, all classes in the cohort will use the same text. Overtime, these will feature a range of prominent children's authors, including those from other cultures. Each reading session will focus on a discrete reading skill and involve the rereading of sections/ chapters for fluency and understanding. These will include:

- Decoding, vocabulary and word meanings.
- Retrieval
- Sequencing.
- Inference
- Language for effect
- Themes
- Summary

Reading for Pleasure

We value reading for pleasure highly and work hard as a school to grow our Reading for Pleasure pedagogy and recognise that it is the most important influence to a child's success.

Each class has a school library system, where pupils are able to take home a book of their choice to share and rereads as a specific reading for pleasure book. This will be changed once a week and if a child chooses to take a book home they have previously chosen they are able to do this.

We read to children every day. We choose books carefully to ensure that children experience a wide range of books, including those that reflect the children at Randlay Primary School and our local community, as well as books that open windows into other worlds and cultures and enhance curricular themes.

Every classroom, from Nursery to Year 6, has an inviting book corner that promotes a love for reading. These areas are regularly accessed and continually refreshed by swapping across cohorts and also regular book collections from Shropshire Schools Library Service.

Whole School Reading Culture

Children from Reception onwards have a home reading record. The parent/carer records comments to share with the adults in school and the adults will write in this on a regular basis to ensure communication between home and school.

As the children progress through the school, they are encouraged to write their own comments and keep a list of the books that they have read.

Pupils who have read and recorded their responses the required number of times will be entered into the weekly reading raffle to win a their own book to keep.

Children across the school have regular opportunities to engage with a wide range of Reading for Pleasure events, including book fairs, author visits and workshops, national events such as World Book Day and competitions such as Reading Undercover, Book in a Box and 'Golden Tickets.'

Spelling

The progression of Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised covers the systematic teaching of how to segment words into sounds for spelling and the graphemes that are used to represent these sounds. These build up sequentially as part of the 'Grow the Code' charts which display all of the phoneme-grapheme correspondences used to spell a specific phoneme. Pupils are taught to recognise patterns of these as part of specific 'Grow the Code' sessions and these charts are always on display in classrooms and table mats are used to support all writing.

In addition to this, tricky word spellings are also discretely taught during phonics sessions and are regularly revisited and referred to.

There is a spelling element to every Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised lesson and so spelling is taught daily.

Spelling is taught in this way until pupils are secure with phase 5.

Following this, from year 2 onwards, spelling is taught through the coverage and progression set out by the National Curriculum and is planned for and taught by class teachers through discrete spelling sessions, English lessons and through different curriculum areas, where appropriate.

Handwriting

Handwriting is taught discretely, outside of the phonics lesson.

In reception, the Little Wandle formation phrases are used as part of phonics teaching to emphasize the correct letter formation. All letters in reception are in a non-cursive font.

From year 1, cursive formation is introduced for handwriting. All font/ text to be read should not be displayed in a cursive print. Spelling and modelled writing will be modelled in cursive.

Resources

We recognise the importance of a consistent approach to the use of resources throughout the school.

All classes, intervention groups and display areas use the same Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised resources. These are:

- Letter friezes (EYFS)
- Grow the Code display charts
- Grow the Code table mats.
- Flashcards
- Picture cards
- Word cards.

All resources are prepared and organised in advance of each lesson, so that the flow of the lesson is not disrupted by finding or preparing a resource. Care is also taken in handling resources to ensure good, rapid card control.

Key Strategies

To ensure consistency and pace of progress:

- Every teacher and teaching assistant in our school has been trained to teach reading, so we have the same expectations of progress. We all use the same language, routines and resources to teach children to read so that we lower children's cognitive load.

- Weekly content grids map each element of new learning to each day, week and term for the duration of the programme.
- Lesson templates, Prompt cards and How to videos ensure teachers and teaching assistants all have a consistent approach and structure for each lesson.
- The Reading Leader and SLT regularly monitor and observe teaching; they use the summative data to identify children who need additional support and gaps in learning.

Supporting the Lower 20%

Each class teacher identifies the lower 20% of readers within their class. These pupils receive additional support through:

- Targeting during the phonics session- seating position, monitoring, questioning.
- Planned, daily Keep-Up interventions.
- Additional reading practice of their decodable book and reading for pleasure texts.
- Vulnerable children who may not be engaging with reading at home will have additional opportunities to read with an adult, for pleasure and their decodable text, within the school day.

Staff Subject Knowledge and Training.

All staff have been trained using the Little Wandle Letters and Sounds training materials. This training is completed on induction to the school and all staff are encouraged to regularly access the 'How to' support videos to ensure they are using the required approach. Feedback will be provided following this.

For staff requiring additional support the Reading Leader regularly completes lesson monitoring, coaching and support to ECTs or as and when support is requested or needed.

SEND

Attainment and progress across all phases and stages is continually monitored and where learners are developing gaps in their knowledge of sounds, are having difficulties with specific skills such as blending or segmenting or any other issue that creates a barrier to learning then specific Keep-Up interventions are put into place immediately.

The lowest 20% in reading are always identified in each class and receive additional support.

These may include:

- Keep- Up Interventions
- Precision teaching
- Additional 1:1 or group reading sessions.
- Use of additional resources
- Use of coloured backgrounds or overlays.
- Group intervention lessons.
- Taking sounds home to learn.
- Any specific recommendations from outside agencies.

Assessment and Tracking

Statutory Assessment

In the summer term in Year 1 children undertake the statutory phonics screening check. Learners that are unable to access this will be identified and disapplied in agreement with the class teacher, headteacher and their parents.

Learners who do not reach the expected standard will receive additional intervention and retake the check at the end of year 2.

Monitoring and tracking

The Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised programme includes an assessment period to identify any child needing additional support as soon as they need it.

Assessment for learning is used:

- daily within class to identify children needing Keep-up support
- weekly in the Review lesson to assess gaps, address these immediately and secure fluency of GPCs, words and spellings.

Summative assessment is used:

- every six weeks to assess progress, to identify gaps in learning that need to be addressed, to identify any children needing additional support and to plan the Keep-up support that they need.

- by SLT and scrutinised through the *Phonics Tracker* assessment tracker, to narrow attainment gaps between different groups of children and so that any additional support for teachers can be put into place.

New arrivals

Any new arrivals to the school in reception, year 1 or year 2 will complete an initial Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised assessment to determine their phonics phase on entry. This may also be used in KS2 if additional phonics support will be required.

The Role of Parents and Carers

We highly value the role of our parents and carers as their child's first educator and we aim to keep them up to date with our systems and their child's progress.

We encourage parents to be actively involved in their child's learning journey and ask that they share books with their child and listen to them read from the start of reception.

We have a continual daily dialogue with parents at the start and end points of the school day and reading diaries are used for ongoing written communication.

Induction meetings are held for parents of children prior to starting school and information sessions linked to phonics, reading and the phonics screening check are regularly held when possible.

Letters are used to inform parents about any updates and reading events and the winners of the weekly reading raffle are always given on the newsletter.

Every effort is taken to engage parents in their child's reading progress and where a child may not be reading at home, the class teacher will promote a dialogue with parents to see if there is any support that can be provided from school to help with this.