



Phonics Policy

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CP/00013	1	6	Alison Shanahan	Approved

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Document history

Issue 1: This is a completely new policy.

1 Statement of Intent

Our pupils learn to read and write effectively and quickly using the *Read Write Inc.* Phonics programme.

2 Read Write Inc. Phonics

The programme is for:

- Pupils in Reception to Year 2 who are learning to read and write.
- Any pupils in Years 2, 3 and 4 who need to catch up rapidly.

In *Read Write Inc.* Phonics pupils:

- Decode letter-sound correspondences quickly and effortlessly, using their phonic knowledge and skills.
- Read common exception words on sight.
- Understand what they read.
- Read aloud with fluency and expression
- Write confidently, with a strong focus on vocabulary and grammar.
- Spell quickly and easily by segmenting the sounds in words.
- Acquire good handwriting

In addition, we teach pupils to work effectively with a partner to explain and consolidate what they are learning. This provides the teacher with opportunities to assess learning and to pick up on difficulties, such as pupils' poor articulation, or problems with blending or alphabetic code knowledge.

We group pupils homogeneously, according to their progress in reading rather than their writing. This is because it is known that pupils' progress in writing will lag behind progress in reading, especially for those who motor skills are less well developed.

In Reception we emphasise the alphabetic code. The pupils rapidly learn sounds and the letter or groups of letters they need to represent them. Simple mnemonics help them to grasp this quickly. This is especially useful for pupils at risk of making slower progress. This learning is consolidated daily (except Thursday). Pupils have frequent practice in reading high frequency words with irregular spellings – common exception words.

We make sure that pupils read books that are closely matched to their increasing knowledge of phonics and the common exception words. This is so that, early on, they experience success and gain confidence that they are readers. Re-reading and discussing these books with the teacher supports their increasingly fluent decoding.

Alongside this, the teachers read a wide range of stories, poetry and non-fiction to pupils; they are soon able to read these texts for themselves.

Embedding the alphabetic code early on means that pupils quickly learn to write simple words and sentences. We encourage them to compose each sentence aloud until they are confident to write independently. We make sure they write every day.

Pupils write at the level of their spelling knowledge. The quality of the vocabulary they use in their writing reflects the language they have heard in the books the teacher has read to them; they have also discussed what the words mean.

Our aim is for pupils to complete the phonics programme as quickly as possible. The sooner they complete it, the sooner they will be able to choose books to read at their own interest and comprehension level.

3 Outcomes for children

3.1 Assessing and tracking progress

We assess all pupils following Read Write Inc. Phonics using the Sound and Word Entry Assessment. We use this data to assign them to the correct phonics group for their ability. This gives us a very good indication of how well they are making progress relative to their starting points. We do this for all pupils on the Read Write Inc. programme each half term, whenever they join us, so we can track all of them effectively, including those eligible for the pupil premium.

We aim for all children to be accurate and speedy readers by the time they enter Key Stage 2.

By the end of Key Stage 1, our pupils are able to read aloud age-appropriate texts accurately and with sufficient speed for comprehension.

3.2 Additional support for lower-attaining pupils learning to read

Pupils in the 'lowest' attaining group have the widest variety of needs. This is therefore the least homogeneous group. In order to give these pupils the same carefully targeted teaching as all the other groups, some of these pupils have daily one-to-one tutoring for 10 to 20 minutes, in addition to their group session in the morning. This tutoring helps us to meet their individual needs.

4 Effectiveness of leadership and management

4.1 Shared vision

The school's shared vision is that every pupil learns to read quickly and continues to read – widely and often.

4.2 Headteacher's role

The Headteacher works with all the staff to ensure that this happens. In particular, she/he works closely with the phonics leader to monitor the quality of teaching and to provide coaching for staff (teachers and teaching assistants).

The role of the phonics leader is critical. Alongside the Headteacher, the phonics leader drives the teaching of *Read Write Inc. Phonics*, ensuring that all pupils make the best progress possible.

The phonics leader's roles include:

- Ensuring that our teaching of reading is of the highest quality and that all our pupils make progress.

- Ensuring pupils in the 'lower progress' group are making good progress and organising one-to-one tutoring for the pupils who need extra support.
- Keeping the groups homogeneous, i.e. at the same reading level.
- Providing further training (through masterclasses, coaching/observation and face-to-face feedback).

4.3 Role of other staff

Teachers/Teaching Assistants alert the phonics leader to any pupil whose progress is faster or slower than the rest of their group.

The phonics team is made up of a team of good teachers and teaching assistants who each teach a group of pupils at the same reading level.

5 Professional development

A key element of *Read Write Inc.* is consistent whole-school practice, underpinned by appropriate professional development. The Headteacher, all the Key Stage 1 teachers and teaching assistants are trained to teach reading. All staff have attended two-day Phonics training provided by Read Write Inc.