

Phonics Policy

Intent.

At Gwladys Street Primary School we want Phonics and the teaching of Phonics to be a consistent and progressive approach, which meets the needs of the National Curriculum and that of a Systematic Synthetic Phonics Programme. As a school, we embed how important the teaching of reading is from a very early age and we aim to teach high quality phonics sessions to ensure that children have the best possible start in reading and writing from a very early age. Pupils at Gwladys Street, learn to read and write effectively using the Read Write Inc (RWI) Phonics Programme which teaches phonics, reading, spelling and writing. Read, Write, Inc phonics is an inclusive literacy programme for all children learning to read. Reading is the key that unlocks the whole curriculum so the ability to efficiently decode is essential. The R.W.I sessions are expected to occur each day with no exceptions, as the continuity and pace of the programme is key to our children beginning to read with confidence, develop a love of reading as well as learning to read with pace and fluency. We want our children regardless of their background, need or ability to be able to read and write all 44 graphemes in the English language, learn specific strategies to help them to remember common exception words and be able to apply their phonics in all areas of the curriculum.

Aims and Objectives.

To teach children to:

- apply the skill of blending phonemes in order to read words.
- segment words into their constituent phonemes in order to spell words.
- learn that blending and segmenting words are reversible processes.
- read high frequency words that do not conform to regular phonic patterns.
- read texts and words that are within their phonic capabilities as early as possible.
- decode texts effortlessly so all their resources can be used to comprehend what they read.
- spell effortlessly so that all their resources can be directed towards composing their writing.

Implementation.

Children are provided with a variety of opportunities where they can develop and extend their phonics skills from Nursery through to Year 2. The RWI programme is discretely taught from EYFS to Year 2 and sessions take place daily. The teaching of phonics is also continued into Key Stage 2 for pupils who do not yet have the phonic knowledge that they need. Phonics is also incorporated into other aspects of the curriculum daily. The RWI teaching approach at Gwladys Street Community Primary and Nursery School is based upon the following Read, Write Inc principles;

- Purpose- every part of the lesson has a specific purpose.
- Passion- This is a very prescriptive programme and requires energy, enthusiasm and passion from teachers to bring it to life.
- Pace- Good pace is essential to the lesson.
- Participation- A strong feature of R.W.I. lessons is partner work and the partners teaching' each other (based on research which states that we learn 70% of what we talk about with our partner and 90% of what we teach).
- Praise- Children learn quickly in a positive environment. Praise effort not progress.

Read Write Inc

Reading.

Read Write Inc Phonics teaches children to read with fluency and accuracy. Children learn to read 44 phonemes and graphemes and they will learn to blend these phonemes and graphemes into words starting with CVC words. As they move throughout the programme, children learn common exception words also known as 'red words.' As children progress through the RWI programme, they become much more fluent and confident within their reading ability. Children read the Read Write Inc storybooks within their daily phonics session and they reinforce what the children have learnt within their phonics lesson at their appropriate reading level. This helps the children to read faster making more progress. As well as reading these storybooks in daily phonics sessions, children take home an RWI Book Bag book and a black and white version of the book they have been reading in their phonics group. These books are matched to children's reading ability through the 6 weekly assessment which is completed on each child.

The order of teaching sounds.

Individual sounds are known as 'speed sounds' because we want children to read them speedily and without effort. Every time children are assessed (every 6 weeks) they are placed accordingly into an appropriate phonics group within their year group. Speed sound chart posters are placed in classrooms and teaching and learning areas around school to support children with the teaching and order of phonemes and graphemes.

Set 1 speed sounds.

Set 1 sounds are the initial letter sounds. They are taught in the following order: m, a, s, d, t, i, n, p, g, o, c, k, u, b, f, e, l, h, sh, r, j, v, y, w, th, z, ch, qu, z, ng, nk.

Set 2 speed sounds.

There are 12 Set 2 'speed sounds' that are made up of two or three letters, which represent just one sound, e.g. ay as in play, ee as in tree and igh as in high.

When children learn the Set 2 sounds they will learn: the letters that represent a speed sound e.g. ay, a simple picture prompt linked to the 'speed sound' and a short phrase to say e.g. may I play.

Every speed sound has a list of green words linked to it, so the children can 'sound out' and 'sound blend' words containing the new speed sounds they have just learnt, for example s-p-r-ay = spray.

Set 2 speed sounds are taught in the following order: ay, ee, igh, ow, oo, oo, ar, or, air, ir, ou, oy. We call these speed sounds 'special friends.'

Set 3 Speed Sounds.

Once children are confident and familiar with Set 2 speed sounds the children will be taught that there are more ways in which the same sounds are written, e.g. ee as in tree and ea as in tea.

Set 3 speed sounds are taught in the following order: ea, oi, a_e, i_e, o_e, u_e, aw, are, ur, er, ow, ai, oa, ew, ire, ear, ure, tion, tious/cious. We call these speed sounds 'special friends.'

Fred Talk.

Fred the Frog helps the children to read and spell. He can say the sounds in words, but he can't say the whole word, so children have to help him. This is called 'Fred Talk'. To help children read, Fred (the teacher) says the sounds and then children say the word. Example: Fred says c-a-t, children say cat, Fred says 'special friends igh, then l-igh-t, children say light.



Fred Fingers.



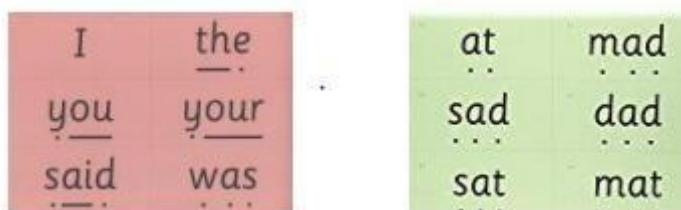
Children are taught to use their fingers to help them write words. Children will say a word out loud and then break it down into its individual sounds using their fingers. For example, if a word has three sounds in like dog, d-o-g or ship, sh-i-p, then the children will hold up three fingers. If the word has four sounds in, the children hold up four fingers. The children then 'pinch' each finger as they say the sounds they need in the word. This supports them when writing words as they write a letter that represents each sound. Sound mats on tables also help the children to write the sounds they need in each word.

Fred in your head.

Once children can sound out a word, we teach them to say the sounds in their heads. We hold up a word card to give children time to mime the sounds in their heads, and then push the green word card forward as a signal to say the word together, until they can say the word straight away. After children have read words in their head, we move onto speedy reading of the words to encourage fluency and to read words at a faster pace.

Red and Green Words.

Red word cards feature common words with an uncommon spelling, e.g. ai in said. Children need to learn these words. Green word cards are used in speed sounds lessons, for children to practice words blending for reading. They are easily decodable and each phonics lesson children learn new green words linked to the new speed sound for that day and they also review green words that have been previously taught.



Alien Words.

These are also known as pseudo words. As children develop their reading skills, we want them to be able to apply their knowledge of sounds and decoding skills to read any unfamiliar words, whether it is real or nonsense. During lessons, children have opportunities to practice their decoding skills by sounding out the letters in 'Alien words'. This shows us that children are using their decoding skills and not relying on existing knowledge of real words. This is an important part of the Phonic Screening Test which children complete at the end of Year 1.



Word Time.

Once the children have learned a few initial sounds, they can begin to blend the sounds together to read real words. This part of the daily phonics session is called 'word time.' Each word time session involves orally blending the sounds that the children have learned and already know. Children have opportunities to practice Fred talking the words until they become able to read them on sight. In word time the children follow special friends, Fred talk and read the word until they become familiar with the words and they can be read in their head.

Read Write Inc Storybooks.

Whilst the children are still in the very early stages of reading, the reading part of their daily phonics session focuses on oral blending, blending using magnetic letters and then reading sound blending books. As soon as the children are confident blenders, they move onto ditty books and as a school we follow the teaching sequence of 'a ditty a day.' Here children read very simple sentences and practise some red words. They begin to learn how to read words at speed. Once the children are reading whole sentences, children move onto storybooks. These books are the book band colours green to grey and in daily phonics sessions, a 4-day reading cycle is followed. In this cycle, children partner read and also have comprehension questions to answer. Within this sequence, children will read the storybook 4 times. These storybooks are closely matched to their developing phonic knowledge. All storybook consists of story green words and speedy green words linked to the sounds the children have been learning. Red words (words that are not decodable) are also included in each storybook and also challenge words which support the children's developing vocabulary.

How phonics is taught at Gwladys Street.

Nursery.

In Nursery, there is no explicit teaching of Phonics in phonics groups. Children are taught sounds instrumentally, environmentally and through body percussion. Children are taught through rhythm and rhyme and taught how to make sounds with their voices. Sets of initial letter sounds following set 1 sounds from the RWI programme are supported per term through continuous provision in the learning environment and by practitioners. Segmenting and blending takes place by practitioners and development opportunities to apply phonics take place through child-initiated learning and focus activities. Story times are also used to support the development of phonics and RWI freeze frames are displayed within the learning environment.

Reception.

Children work in differentiated groups on a daily basis and are taught through Read Write Inc. Phonics skills are also embedded in writing and reading tasks in Literacy sessions and through continuous provision activities within the learning environment. Regular tracking of children's progress takes place through the Sets to inform planning and is monitored every 6 weeks. Our aim at Gwladys Street is for children to meet ELG for word reading. At ELG for word reading, children will be able to say a sound for each letter of the alphabet and be able to read at least 10 digraphs. They should be able to read words consistent with their phonics knowledge through blending and read aloud simple sentences. Our expectation is that by the end of Reception, children will be reading green and purple RWI storybooks. Children who may struggle recalling and remembering their sounds or who struggle with blending are recognised and placed onto the Fast Track Tutoring intervention which they receive daily.

Year 1 and Year 2.

Children work in differentiated groups on a daily basis for 45 minutes and are taught through Read Write Inc. Phonics skills are also embedded in writing and reading tasks in Literacy sessions. Regular tracking of children's progress takes place through 6 weekly assessments as well as regular practice screening checks throughout the year. Groups range from Group A right through to Grey group. Children will move across the differentiated groups within their year group based on their 6-weekly assessment. Phonics groups are

reviewed every 6 weeks by the Phonics Lead and teachers. Our aim is that children will be secure in Set 1, Set 2 and Set 3 Sounds and will have made a good level of progression in Storybooks. Children will also have plenty of practice in recognising 'Alien words in readiness for the Phonic Screening Check and to give them the confidence to read any word. Children should aim to read and write all the common exception words for Year 1. Targeted support is provided for children identified as under - performers or newly arrived into the country through the fast track tutoring scheme and they are worked with daily by trained tutors.

Key stage 2.

In key stage 2, children still have access to differentiated phonics groups where necessary. These groups are determined by the 6 weekly RWI assessments. Children in key stage 2 who require additional phonics teaching continue with RWI in smaller groups through daily RWI interventions carried out by teachers and fast track tutors. The lowest 30% of readers are also tracked within key stage 2 and readers listened to daily. Once children in key stage 2 no longer require RWI intervention, they access the Accelerated Reader programme as well as daily GPS and comprehension sessions following the Headstart Comprehension Programme.

Staff development and training.

Teachers and Teaching Assistants have access to high quality, up to date training from the Phonics and Early Reading Lead to ensure that provision is of a high quality. This is through 'in house' RWI training sessions led by our Early Phonics and Reading Lead which take place in the form of a weekly practice session. Our reading leader also supports staff teaching RWI through weekly learning walks and coaching sessions. Staff have access to the Ruth Miskin Portal which provides staff with a wealth of training and CPD videos to support them in their subject knowledge and development. Training needs are reviewed on a regular basis as part of our whole school CPD provision and we continue to develop expertise in the teaching on phonics.

Inclusion.

All of our children are entitled to access RWI resources and teaching at a level which is appropriate to their needs arising from race, gender, ability or disability. A range of inclusion strategies are embedded in practice and teachers are aware of the special educational needs of the children in their RWI group, as well as those who have English as an additional language. Appropriate scaffolds are used within daily phonics sessions to support these children. Children making accelerated progress will move groups to ensure that an appropriate level of challenge is provided. Children that need additional support to consolidate their phonic knowledge will be taught in smaller groups and through afternoon targeted interventions. Here, they have the opportunity to consolidate their knowledge prior to moving onto the next stage. EAL pupils have access to interventions with a qualified EAL Teacher who works full time within school. It may be appropriate that children with specific learning needs have a phonics-based target on their one-page profile or EHCP to support their phonics progress. Specific arrangements for the provision of children with SEND will be communicated to parents and carers during SEND review meetings and under the direction of the SENCO.

Interventions.

Interventions take place daily across KS1 and KS2 using the Fast Track tutoring programme and Fresh Start tutoring programme which are part of the RWI phonics scheme. Interventions are used to target specific children ensuring that they receive additional exposure to speed sounds, green words and common exception words. These children will have been identified by the most recent assessment. Interventions are completed by both Teachers and Teaching Assistants and these are tracked, recorded and monitored ensuring that they have a maximum impact. Children also have access to the RWI portal which includes a virtual classroom full of videos to support their development of reading.

Impact.

Assessment.

Children are assessed formatively throughout every lesson. Every time partner work is used the teacher assesses the progress of the children within that phonics group. The teacher assesses how children; read the grapheme chart, read the green and red word lists, decode the ditty/story and comprehend the story which they have read within their phonics group. In terms of summative assessment, children are assessed by their class teachers every 6 to 8 weeks using the RWI assessment materials on the RWI portal. The RWI assessment is used to assess grapheme correspondence, applying their phonics knowledge to decode regular words and read common exception words. The assessment is also used to assess how fluent a child is in their reading. Once the assessment is complete the sounds tracker and storybook tracker are automatically updated on the RWI portal and it tracks the child's progress throughout the year and the information is used to inform phonics groupings so that they can be updated regularly. Sound gap analysis grids are generated after each assessment period and passed to class teachers and phonic teachers to inform the next period of teaching and to support addressing gaps in knowledge that children may have. The RWI assessment is also used to inform the correct home reading book that a child may take home in Reception and KS1. Assessment information is also used to inform the lowest 30% of readers for each class. Formal practice phonics screening checks are completed throughout the year in preparation for the Year 1 phonics screening check in June. From this, the Phonics Lead will update phonics tracking sheets and a sound assessment tracker to address gaps in learning and to inform daily interventions. Parents are informed of their child's phonic ability through the end of year reports and parents' evenings.

The Role of the Phonics and Early Reading Lead.

- To ensure high quality teaching takes place daily.
- Ensure that the curriculum is planned effectively from FS1 to KS2.
- Resources are used effectively.
- Standards of learning are improved and that there is achievement for all pupils.
- Promote the importance of the subject and the value which it brings to Gwladys Street.
- Have an excellent understanding of the subject and how it should be delivered.
- Ensure that the phonics curriculum matches the needs of different pupils such as disadvantaged, those with special educational needs or those with English as an additional language.
- Ensure there is an effective system of assessment.
- Ensure staff are supported sufficiently and provide regular training and updates.
- Provide feedback for staff and use coaching and team teaching.
- Monitor teaching and learning assessing how well phonics is delivered across the school.
- Promote safeguarding within the subject area.

Mrs J Quantick
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