



Phonics and Reading Policy

Subject Leaders:

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'Through reading in particular, pupils have a chance to develop culturally, emotionally, intellectually, socially and spiritually. Literature, especially, plays a key role in such development. Reading also enables pupils both to acquire knowledge and to build on what they already know. All the skills of language are essential to participating fully as a member of society.'

English Purpose of Study, National Curriculum 2014, DFE

Our school Reading Intentions

- To encourage every child to read widely, promoting and encouraging a lifelong love of the written word.
- To provide opportunity for every child to become a confident and fluent reader.
- To read widely, both fiction and non-fiction, and enhance all areas of the curriculum with new-found knowledge and understanding of the world.
- To provide regular opportunities for children of all ages to be read to, read out loud, and read independently.
- To feed children's imaginations and foster creativity.
- To develop a wide vocabulary which extends beyond their every-day experiences.
- To develop comprehension skills which will support future learning at secondary school and beyond.

Organisation, Implementation and the Planning of Reading

Overview: We teach reading from the beginning of a child's school journey using Read, Write, Inc. phonics. Once children have successfully mastered the ability to decode and comprehend, they move to a progressive system of whole class reading using VIPERS. This policy will explain the process fully.

Early Years Foundation Stage

In the Foundation Stage, an over-arching theme is planned each half term first and foremost to develop 'Communication and Language', whilst offering opportunities for the children to cover a range of objectives, providing engagement, motivation, and purpose for learning. Children are given access to a wide range of reading materials (books, poems, and other written materials) to ignite their interest. We believe that the most effective method of ensuring progress is a balance between adult-led learning and independent learning.

A bespoke curriculum has been developed by the EYFS team, selecting statements from 'Birth to Five Matters 2021' and 'Development Matters revised edition 2023' tailored to the needs of the pupils within our setting. The Early Years Foundation curriculum consists of seven different areas that the children will learn and be assessed on throughout the year.

Children should develop the 3 prime areas first. These are: Communication and language (CL), Personal, social and emotional development (PSED) and Physical development (PD).

These prime areas are those most essential for a child's healthy development and future learning. As children grow, the prime areas will be built upon and support them as they also develop skills in 4 specific areas. These are: Literacy, Mathematics, Understanding the world (UW), Expressive arts and design (EAD).

We use the Read, Write Inc. phonics programme daily from the Summer term of Mighty Oaks (pre-school) to enable children to acquire a good knowledge of phonics before entering Reception where daily phonics continues. The prerequisite to the programme in our Nursery is embedding early language and vocabulary, along with the basis for orally segmenting words.

Read Write Inc. Phonics

The programme is for:

- Pupils in Year R to Year 3 who are learning to read
- Daily 1:1 tuition is available for those pupils from reception to Year 3 who are lower than expected or at risk of falling behind.
- Pupils in Year 4-Year 6 using elements of the RWI programme if applicable e.g story book activities.

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 dictated sentences confidently
- 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.

Where appropriate, 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 may lag behind progress in reading, especially for example, those whose 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. Pupils have frequent practice in reading high frequency words with irregular spellings-common exception words.

We make sure that pupils read books that are 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 dictated 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.

Whole Class Guided Reading

Once children complete the Read Write Inc. (RWI) Phonics programme, they are taught in their year group using the VIPERS model of reading domains underpinned by the National Curriculum. Year 1 or 2 children, who finish the RWI programme, are taught in small groups before moving to KS2. Some KS2 children, with additional needs, may remain on RWI to support their progress at a level that is appropriate to their need.

Our VIPERS lessons integrate reading, writing, thinking, and spoken language in all activities, to ensure the daily development of children's comprehension and wider literacy skills. At the heart of VIPERS, is the enjoyment of and engagement with a variety of carefully chosen whole class texts. We invest in class sets of books to give all children the opportunity to read entire works of literature and authors are carefully chosen across the school to build progression, offer diversity and encourage a love of reading.

Pupils are encouraged to take their own meaning from each text, becoming independent and critical thinkers. Comprehension activities are designed to help children to understand vocabulary, infer, predict, explain, retrieve and summarise a point of view. The children also make connections between texts and their own experiences.

In daily guided reading lessons, pupils:

- Read carefully chosen quality whole class texts
- Develop a deep understanding of what they read
- Learn to articulate their thoughts and ideas clearly to one another: they learn how to present and debate; to reason and justify their answers

- Learn to explain and write their ideas confidently and independently

Teachers read texts to the class - children hear the expert reader model how to read with meaning and expression and are also given the opportunity to read for themselves and with peers. Pupils are taught to articulate their thoughts and ideas out loud and to communicate what they know and understand. Pupils answer questions with a partner, comment on each other's ideas, clarify each other's thinking, and build upon each other's thoughts and ideas. The teacher asks questions to take their thinking further and clears up any misconceptions. Partner discussion helps teachers assess what and how pupils are learning throughout the lesson.

Teachers also read a wide range of stories, poetry and non-fiction to pupils. Pupils are encouraged to choose books to read at their own interest and comprehension level.

Reading Resources and Library use

Reading corners are set up in all classrooms and are filled with age-appropriate books to support both a love of reading and the wider curriculum - for example with fiction, non-fiction, poetry, dictionaries, thesaurus and reference texts.

We have non-fiction library box resources in school where teachers and children can access further books which support their teaching or to engage pupils.

The corridors are filled with staged reading books - predominantly Oxford Reading Scheme, but we supplement this with other schemes to ensure a wide variety of choice for our pupils. Note: pupils working on RWI will choose additional books clearly labelled 'Share a Story' as these books may not be at the precise phonic stage of the child. The 'Share a Story' books are intended to share with an adult at home to foster a love of reading.

We have our own topic book boxes in school for teachers to access to support the teaching of Science and foundation subjects. In addition, Teachers are encouraged to take their classes to visit the local library in Telford regularly.

Individual and Home Reading

We expect children to read at home every day if possible. The ability to read fluently is the key to all learning and as a school we take this part of children's homework seriously. Reading is celebrated in classrooms using a bronze (three reads), silver (four reads), gold (five reads) and platinum (extra effort) system. Classes have star reader of the week where children's reading is celebrated. In our weekly Achievement Assembly, on alternate weeks, every star reader is entered into a reading raffle, with a winner from KS1 and KS2 choosing a brand-new book to take home.

Other reading celebrations take place each year: children (and teachers) love to dress up as their favourite characters on World Book Day; and we aim to invite an author into school regularly to further promote a love of reading.

Read Write Inc.: We support pupils to select appropriate books to take home. All pupils take home books that they have already read in the Read Write Inc. Phonics lesson. Stories and new vocabulary are explained and discussed so all pupils have access to the books they read. This means that they are confident to read at home, even if their parents cannot read with them. This also ensures practice, over-learning and fluency opportunities are in place for our early readers. Pupils also take home 'Share a story' texts (fiction and non-fiction) that they cannot yet read for themselves but can be read to them by an adult at home.

KS2 readers: We encourage children to read widely and often. Every child has a school reading book to take home each day to read with an adult or independently - this will either be a reading scheme book or a class library book, dependent on children's reading ability. We do encourage all children in KS2 to read a staged reading scheme book. However, those who are confident readers can alternate this with their own choice of book. This will ensure that children are accessing progressive and challenging reading material suited to their level of development.

Home reading diaries: We encourage all children's reading progress at home to be noted in their home reading diary. Parents and children are encouraged to write in this diary and make comments on what has been read. Reading diaries are regularly monitored by teaching assistants and class teachers, to ensure that all children (regardless of age), are reading at home. The reading diary will also be used as a communication book between school and home.

Parents, carers and the wider community

We believe that parents' involvement in their child's learning is invaluable. Parents are actively encouraged to support their children at home. We hold two parents' evenings each year (in the Autumn and Spring term) where parents can look at their children's books and discuss attainment, targets and progress with their class teachers. Half-termly reports are sent home with relevant updates of reading and phonics progress. In addition, we regularly invite parents into school for events such as Stay and Share sessions.

Read, Write, Inc.: We invite parents/carers to sharing assemblies to show how they can help their children read at home. We would like them to help their children, but we also recognise that some are not well-placed to do this. If they do not, their children won't suffer; it is our job to teach their children to read. We ensure that pupils whose parents do not attend keep up with their peers. We check that they make good progress in lessons, we give them extra one-to-one lessons, and we encourage them to read to themselves and to siblings at home.

Each week, we send home phonics videos from the Ruth Miskin portal that are matched to the children's RWI levels. <http://www.ruthmiskin.com/en/parents/>

Governors regularly monitor teaching and learning in school and as part of Curriculum Committee meeting will listen to children read and look at home/school diaries and reading journals.

Volunteer readers help specific children develop their reading skills and are predominantly used to tackle under-achievement, but they may read with all children in a class at the discretion of the class teacher. Volunteer readers work with children to boost their reading skills, comprehension, and enjoyment of books.

Cross-curricular Reading Opportunities

Our teachers are enthusiastic about using the Read Write Inc. phonics programme because they can see how well pupils learn from it and the progress they make, not just in English, but across the curriculum.

Wherever possible, teachers provide opportunities for pupils to practise and apply their reading skills by making creative links to enhance learning all the way from the Early year through to year 6.

Outcomes for children: Assessing and tracking progress

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

In Read, Write, Inc., the programmes' 'cycle of instruction' means that, after direct instruction and guided practice, the pupils teach another pupil. In this way they all rehearse and consolidate what they have been learning. This helps the pupils to make their understanding clear to themselves and helps the teacher deal with any misconceptions. 'Partner teaching' is a key assessment tool. We also use this approach very effectively in other subjects.

In Read Write Inc. Phonics, the pupils are grouped across Reception to Year 3 based on their reading ability, they are reading at an appropriate decoding level every day. The homogeneous groups in the Phonic lessons help us to focus the teaching and ensure pupils learn to read quickly. The Phonics specialist for Read Write Inc. assesses the pupils every half term using the RWI online assessments. This data allows us to intervene in different ways. For instance, we quickly move pupils to another group if they are progressing faster than their peers. Those who continue to struggle have one-to-one tutoring so that they keep up via our 1:1 tuition programme, delivered by our phonics specialist.

All pupils across the school are engaged, with a positive impact on their behaviour. They learn to participate fully: we agree with them the rules for working in a group or discussing with a partner. We discourage 'hands up' for answering questions because we believe that all pupils should answer every question. The teacher elects pupils to answer or whole group approaches such as 'word waves' are used so that every child can respond.

The Read Write Inc. programmes have detailed lesson plans. These give the teachers practical day-to-day guidance, but we work hard to build on these plans so that the lessons are matched carefully to the needs of their group. Every activity is prepared thoroughly and has a clear purpose. The teacher explains this at the beginning so that the pupils understand, during the activity, what they are learning and why. The same principle is true for whole class reading sessions.

The headteacher and reading leader monitor pupils' progress together until every child can read. No child is left behind to struggle.

We record lesson observations and any subsequent coaching alongside the 'teacher tracker' so that we can see if there is a correlation between the quality of the teaching and the progress pupils make.

1. The Read Write Inc. 'cycle of instruction' is embedded across the curriculum - MTYT, TTYP. Pupils do not raise their hands to answer questions.
2. Close grouping in Phonics is maintained - pupils are moved on quickly.
3. The purpose of each activity is clear to both teachers and pupils.
4. Planning and marking is thorough in RWI and VIPERS sessions.
5. In Phonics, pupils read books at home that closely match their word reading ability.
6. When pupils are independently reading, there is a wide choice of both age appropriate, classic and contemporary literature to read.
7. Teaching is monitored thoroughly (see Leadership and Management).

Read, Write, Inc. assessment

Data is used effectively to ensure gaps are closing between all groups - in particular those eligible for the pupil premium (Read Write Inc. assessment and tracking, standardised reading tests, phonics screening check).

1. 80-90% of pupils complete Read Write Inc. Phonics by the end of Spring 1 in Year 2.
2. Slower progress pupils and those with specific SEND are taught in small homogeneous teaching groups and receive Read Write Inc. one-to-one tutoring.
3. Our aim is for 90%+ of pupils to meet the standard in the phonics screening check in Year 1 and 100% in Year 2.

We assess all pupils following Read Write Inc. Phonics by using the Entry Assessment. 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, whenever they join us, so we can track all of them effectively, including those eligible for the pupil premium.

For those on the Read Write Inc. Phonics programme, we record their starting date and entry point on the tracker to monitor the rate at which they are making progress. We can also easily identify those who joined the programme later.

We aim for all children to be accurate and speedy readers by the time they enter Key Stage 2 when they can begin studying longer texts in whole class reading sessions.

We have high expectations of our pupils' progress. We attribute the success of our pupils in phonics to the programme and to the expectations it builds in.

Pupils who are making slower progress usually complete the programme by the end of Year 2. We support pupils who have identified special educational needs for however long it takes until they can read. If a child arrives in Key Stage 2 reading below their chronological age or with English as an additional language, they are taught Read Write Inc. Phonics until they too catch up with their peers.

By the end of Key Stage 1, our pupils can read aloud age-appropriate texts accurately and with sufficient speed for comprehension. This means that we can focus on developing their comprehension, preparing them well for transition to Key Stage 2. Their good decoding skills mean that they have a sound strategy for decoding unfamiliar words when they come across them at whatever stage or in any subject, even into secondary school.

Feedback and marking

We emphasise constructive feedback. For example, we praise pupils for how hard they work together to ensure that their learning is successful.

We have clear systems for marking pupils' work. Pupils know their teacher's expectations for each activity. We mark short activities with the pupils in the lesson. Extended pieces are marked afterwards. We discuss the outcomes with the group and individuals so that the marking is genuinely used to take forward pupils' learning.

See Guidance for marking writing in Read Write Inc. Phonics lessons

<http://www.ruthmiskin.com/en/resources/guidance-for-marking-writing-in-read-write-inc-phonics-lessons/>

KS2 assessments

Continuous verbal feedback is given in class sessions. We also operate a system of Close the Gap marking to develop children's written work. As well as written comments for developments, teachers use a yellow highlighter to indicate successful work, and a 'green for growth' highlighter will indicate that the child has a 'wish' which could relate to spelling, grammar, or the understanding of the work itself. Refer to the marking policy for more information.

In KS1 and KS2, children's reading attainment and progress is formally monitored on a termly basis. Tasks completed by children assess ability in relation to National Curriculum standards for reading.

The outcomes are used to inform planning and next steps for children's achievement. Assessment information feeds into pupil progress meetings and is used to identify children who require specific teaching input or intervention from teaching assistants and/or class teachers. In addition to statutory end of Key Stage testing, children will also undertake formal testing in Years 3, 4 and 5 (using NFER assessments).

We frequently hold moderation meetings to ensure the consistency of attainment and progress of children. These take place between year groups, in phases and across the whole school. This ensures that all staff have a good understanding of our assessment system and reading progression across the primary years.

Equal Opportunity

As a school, we strive to teach Reading within contexts that are meaningful and engaging for all learners, regardless of race, religion, gender, or socio-economic background.

We challenge all children regardless of ability to reach their potential. We meet the needs of SEND children, by providing targeted, focused support with areas of the curriculum which they are finding challenging. We quickly identify pupils who are under-achieving and put intervention strategies into place to support progress and attainment. These interventions are carried out by both class teachers and our dedicated team of teaching assistants.

We also meet the needs of our more able children, by providing deeper challenge to enrich, deepen, broaden, and accelerate their learning, and reach their full potential.

Additional support for lower-attaining pupils learning to read using Read, Write, Inc

Pupils in the 'lowest' attaining phonics 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. Once these pupils have learnt to read they will receive additional support when learning to spell.

Narrowing the gap-and the pupil premium

The RWI programme as a whole has been very effective for our pupils in narrowing performance gaps between different groups, both within our school and nationally. The programme has also been effective in terms of the standards of reading and writing at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2.

We know from our tracking that our pupils who are eligible for the pupil premium have made progress in line with that of our other pupils or are catching up quickly.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Pupils have very positive attitudes in all lessons. Their good behaviour and the virtual absence of low-level disruption in lessons contribute to the progress they make. We support this behaviour by using silent signals for gaining their attention, for setting up partner routines, and for managing the way pupils move around the classroom. Everyone uses the same signals including in assembly. The teachers are encouraged to use these strategies in other lessons, too, so that the approach to behaviour is consistent throughout the day. We believe that the partner work and the homogeneous groupings organised to teach Read Write Inc. Phonics, help the pupils learn to work together. Effective partner work has the benefit of helping pupils to work closely with others - especially those who are not their best friends. Quick bonding activities help new partners to get to know one another. Boys and girls, first and second language learners, assertive and reticent pupils, and pupils of different ages learn to get on together. Potential bullying is explored and discussed so pupils know how this can develop and how to deal with it if it does.

Pupils are taught the manners and behaviour that are necessary to work with adults and other pupils. Adults are expected to demonstrate positive attitudes and good manners, and to act as role models for pupils. Praise for hard work and good behaviour is fundamental to pupils' progress. The values of courtesy, consideration and kindness are at the heart of every lesson, taught through the programme and embedded in other lessons. All the staff use the same positive strategies for behaviour management across the school. Working well together, as part of a team, is at the core of the school's work-for staff and pupils.

Attendance

The Read, Write, Inc. phonics programme is intensive and cumulative, so poor attendance severely disrupts the progress of any pupils who are absent, for however short a time. With the support of the head teacher and the pastoral team, we encourage regular attendance and ensure any child who is absent catches up quickly.

1. All staff use the RWI management signals consistently in and out of lessons.
2. Partner work is modelled and practised until pupils work willingly and supportively with pupils who are not their friends.
3. Praise is fundamental in helping pupils make progress and behave courteously.
4. Staff are consistently kind, considerate to each other and to pupils.
5. Pupils attend every day, unless poorly.

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Shared vision

The school's shared vision is that every pupil learns to read quickly and continues to read: widely and often. The headteacher works with all the staff to ensure that this happens. In particular, she works closely with the reading leader to monitor the quality of teaching and to provide coaching for staff (teachers and teaching assistants). Alongside the headteacher, the reading leader drives the teaching of Read Write Inc. Phonics, ensuring that all pupils that are off the RWI Programme follow the whole class VIPERS programme at the start of Spring 2 in Year 2. The reading 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 where appropriate
- providing further training (through masterclasses, coaching/ observation and face-to-face feedback).

The Read, Write Inc. reading team is made up of the reading leader, a dedicated HLTA and a team of teachers and teaching assistants who teach a group of pupils at the same level. The HLTA supports the reading leader with preparing resources, assessment, grouping, interventions and training pathways. Teachers alert the reading leader to any pupil whose progress is faster or slower than the rest of their group.

The reading leader is also responsible for raising the standards of teaching and learning in Reading across the school. Data is analysed to identify strengths and areas for improvement. From this analysis, the School Development Plan each year will focus on any key issues which need to be implemented, monitored, and evaluated. Some of the following monitoring strategies may be used:

- Scrutinising pupil work
- Monitoring Literacy planning
- Lesson observations
- Planning CPD opportunities for staff
- Delivering training and staff meetings to teachers and teaching assistants
- Phonics / spelling observations
- Learning walks
- Pupil voice
- Listening to pupils read

- Attending relevant courses from our school advisor
- Keeping up to date with important developments in Literacy
- Communicating regularly with Governors
- Purchasing new resources

Professional development

A key element of our school ethos is consistent whole-school practice, underpinned by appropriate professional development. Regular training for RWI and the teaching of reading further through the school are priority. The headteacher, all the teachers and teaching assistants are trained to teach reading. All staff attend regular training with the phonics specialist. We have one Development Day every year with a RWI consultant to ensure we are aware of up-to-date practice. In addition, the Reading leader supports and develops the rest of the teaching staff in VIPERS, or other up to date pedagogical training.

1. All staff are trained and the school books an annual RWI development day with a RWI consultant.
2. The phonics specialist coaches and observes reading teachers in order to maintain high standards. The phonics specialist maintains a record of this coaching.
3. The phonics specialist supports the reading team every other week for a 20-minute training session focusing on one activity identified during coaching.
4. The phonics specialist organises regular communication with parents by sending weekly phonics videos. The phonics specialist also sends home phonics resources to those children who require additional support and practise at home.

Appendix 1 – Expectation of progress in RWI

Progression through the scheme

The chart below shows the expectations for the *lowest 20% of children*. Other children should be *well in advance* of this.

All children should achieve these expectations if they have followed the programme from Reception.

Expectations of progress

| | YR children can: | Y1 children can: | Y2 children can: |
|---------------------------|--|--|--|
| End of Autumn 1 | Read 16 single-letter Set 1 sounds | Read 47 sounds (all Set 1 and Set 2 sounds) Read Purple Storybooks | Read Blue Storybooks with increasing fluency and comprehension |
| End of Autumn term | Read all 25 Set 1 single-letter sounds Blend sounds into words orally | Read 52 sounds (first 5 Set 3 sounds) Read Pink Storybooks | Read Grey Storybooks |
| End of Spring 1 | Read all 25 Set 1 single-letter sounds Blend sounds to read words Read short Ditty stories | Read 58 sounds (11 Set 3 sounds) Read Orange Storybooks | Read Grey Storybooks with fluency and comprehension |
| End of Spring term | Read 31 sounds (Set 1 Special Friends) Read Red Storybooks | Read 64 sounds (17 Set 3 sounds) Read Yellow Storybooks | Access RWI Comprehension and Spelling programmes |
| End of Summer 1 | Read 35 sounds (4 double consonants) Read Green Storybooks | Read 69 sounds (22 Set 3 sounds) Read Yellow Storybooks | Access RWI Comprehension and Spelling programmes |
| End of Summer term | Read 41 sounds (first 6 Set 2 sounds) Read Green Storybooks | Read 75 sounds (all Set 3 sounds and additional graphemes) Read Blue Storybooks | Access RWI Comprehension and Spelling programmes |