

# Phonics and early reading policy

Reading policy

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Ratified:

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## Intent

Phonics (reading and spelling)  
Comprehension

## Implementation

Daily phonics lessons in Reception and Year 1  
Daily Keep-up lessons ensure every child learns to read  
Teaching reading: Reading practice sessions three times a week  
Home reading  
Additional reading support for vulnerable children  
Ensuring consistency and pace of progress  
Ensuring reading for pleasure

## Impact

Assessment  
Assessment for learning  
Summative assessment  
Statutory assessment  
Ongoing assessment for catch-up

The curriculum at Primet Primary school will ensure that all learners leave school as resilient and confident individuals, who lead healthy and happy lives. Our core values of kindness, respect and trust influence the actions and decisions made by the entire school community. Through an enriched and bespoke curriculum that utilises the local and wider community, pupils will be ambitious with high aspirations for themselves and others. Pupils appreciate and celebrate the school's diverse community, demonstrating spiritual, moral and cultural awareness and understanding. They will be well-prepared for the world of work, through the acquisition of the knowledge and skills necessary to become fully literate and numerate. Pupils will be active enquirers, who possess the creativity and ability to think critically to solve problems and make connections in an ever-changing world. With a growth mind set, pupils are prepared to take risks They see mistakes as a learning opportunity and challenge as an enjoyable struggle.

As emotionally intelligent individuals, pupils will understand their own and others' needs, that will equip them to take responsibilities and lead at a local, national and global level.

At Primet Primary, we believe that all our children can become fluent readers and writers. This is why we teach reading through *Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised*, which is a systematic and synthetic phonics programme. We start teaching phonics in Reception and follow the [\*Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised\*](#)



[progression](#), which ensures children build on their growing knowledge of the alphabetic code, mastering phonics to read and spell as they move through school.

As a result, all our children are able to tackle any unfamiliar words as they read. At Primet Primary, we also model the application of the alphabetic code through phonics in shared reading and writing, both inside and outside of the phonics lesson and across the curriculum. We have a strong focus on language development for our children because we know that speaking and listening are crucial skills for reading and writing in all subjects.

### Comprehension

At Primet Primary, we value reading as a crucial life skill. By the time children leave us, they read confidently for meaning and regularly enjoy reading for pleasure. Our readers are equipped with the tools to tackle unfamiliar vocabulary. We encourage our children to see themselves as readers for both pleasure and purpose. Because we believe teaching every child to read is so important, we have a Reading Leader who drives the early reading programme in our school. This person is highly skilled at teaching phonics and reading, and they monitor and support our reading team, so everyone teaches with fidelity to the *Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised* programme.

### Implementation

#### Daily phonics lessons in Reception and Year 1

- We teach phonics for 30 minutes a day. In Reception, we build from 10-minute lessons, with additional daily oral blending games, to the full-length lesson as quickly as possible. Each Friday, we review the week's teaching to help children become fluent readers.
- Children make a strong start in Reception: teaching begins in Week 2 of the Autumn term.
- We follow the [Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised expectations of progress](#):
  - Children in Reception are taught to read and spell words using Phase 2 and 3 GPCs, and words with adjacent consonants (Phase 4) with fluency and accuracy.
  - Children in Year 1 review Phase 3 and 4 and are taught to read and spell words using Phase 5 GPCs with fluency and accuracy.

#### Daily Keep-up lessons ensure every child learns to read

- Any child who needs additional practice has daily Keep-up support, taught by a fully trained adult. Keep-up lessons match the structure of class teaching, and use the same procedures, resources and mantras, but in smaller steps with more repetition, so that every child secures their learning.
- We timetable daily phonics lessons for any child in Year 2 or 3 who is not fully fluent at reading or has not passed the Phonics Screening Check. These children urgently need to catch up, so the gap between themselves and their peers does not widen. We use the *Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised* assessments to identify the gaps in their phonic knowledge and teach to these using the Keep-up resources – at pace.
- If any child in Year 3 to 6 has gaps in their phonic knowledge when reading or writing, we plan phonics 'catch-up' lessons to address specific reading/writing gaps. These short, sharp lessons last 10 minutes and take place at least three times a week.

#### Teaching reading: Reading practice sessions three times a week

- We teach children to read through reading practice sessions three times a week. These:
  - are taught by a fully trained adult to small groups of approximately six children
  - use books matched to the children's secure phonic knowledge using the *Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised* assessments and book matching grids on pages 11–20 of ['Application of phonics to reading'](#)
  - are monitored by the class teacher, who rotates and works with each group on a regular basis.
- Each reading practice session has a clear focus, so that the demands of the session do not overload the children's working memory. The reading practice sessions have been designed to focus on three key reading skills:
  - decoding



- prosody: teaching children to read with understanding and expression
- comprehension: teaching children to understand the text.
- In Reception these sessions start in Week 4. Children who are not yet decoding have daily additional blending practice in small groups, so that they quickly learn to blend and can begin to read books.
- 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.

### Home reading

- The decodable reading practice book is taken home to ensure success is shared with the family.
  - Reading for pleasure books also go home for parents to share and read to children.
  - We use the [Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised parents' resources](#) to engage our families and share information about phonics, the benefits of sharing books, how children learn to blend and other aspects of our provision, both online and through workshops.

### Oracy in Phonics

At Primet Primary School, spoken language and communication are at the heart of early reading. Strong oracy skills support children to become confident, fluent readers, and our use of the Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised programme ensures that talk is built naturally and purposefully into every stage of phonics learning.

From the very start of Reception, children take part in daily oral blending and sound-talk activities, which prepare them for early reading. These games develop children's ability to listen carefully, discriminate between sounds and blend orally—skills that are essential for successful phonics learning. Children are encouraged to articulate sounds clearly, rehearse new vocabulary aloud and discuss what they are learning using consistent Little Wandle language and prompts.

Throughout phonics lessons, children have regular opportunities to talk, repeat and practise the sounds, words and sentences they are learning. Teachers model precise pronunciation of phonemes and support children in building confidence with speaking aloud in front of others. Through repeated mantras, shared responses and partner talk, children learn to use accurate phonics terminology and develop their communication skills alongside their reading knowledge.

Oracy is also a key part of our reading practice sessions. As children read their fully decodable books, they are encouraged to read aloud with expression, discuss the meaning of new or unfamiliar words and answer questions that develop comprehension. This helps pupils build confidence not only in reading but also in explaining their thinking, expressing ideas and engaging in collaborative talk.

Across school, we view oracy as an essential foundation for literacy. By strengthening children's spoken language skills through phonics, we support them to become articulate, reflective and confident learners who can communicate clearly and enjoy reading for meaning and pleasure.

### Additional reading support for vulnerable children

- Children in Reception and Year 1 who are receiving additional phonics Keep-up sessions read their reading practice book to an adult daily.

### Ensuring consistency and pace of progress

- Every teacher 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 all have a consistent approach and structure for each lesson.



- The Reading Leader and SLT use the Audit and Prompt cards to regularly monitor and observe teaching; they use the summative data to identify children who need additional support and gaps in learning.

### Ensuring reading for pleasure

*'Reading for pleasure is the single most important indicator of a child's success.'* (OECD 2002)

*'The will influences the skill and vice versa.'* (OECD 2010)

We value reading for pleasure highly and work hard as a school to grow our Reading for Pleasure pedagogy.

- We read to children every day. We choose these books carefully as we want children to experience a wide range of books, including books that reflect the children at Primet Primary and our local community as well as books that open windows into other worlds and cultures.
- Every classroom has an inviting book corner that encourages a love for reading. We curate these books and talk about them to entice children to read a wide range of books.
- In Reception, children have access to the reading corner every day in their free flow time and the books are continually refreshed.
- 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/authors that they have read.
- Each class visits the local library every half term.
- The school library is made available for classes to use at protected times. It must be booked via the school booking system. Children across the school have regular opportunities to engage with a wide range of Reading for Pleasure events (book fairs, author visits and workshops, national events etc).

### Impact

#### Assessment

Assessment is used to monitor progress and 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 *Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised* assessment tracker, to narrow attainment gaps between different groups of children and so that any additional support for teachers can be put into place.

#### Statutory assessment

- Children in Year 1 sit the Phonics Screening Check. Any child not passing the check re-sits it in Year 2.

#### Ongoing assessment for catch-up

- Children in Year 2 to 6 are assessed through their teacher's ongoing formative assessment as well as through the half-termly *Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised* summative assessments.