



ASHLEWORTH CE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Phonics & Reading Policy

Approved by:	Teaching & Learning Committee
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Date of Next Review:	November 2026

The aim of this policy is to ensure that the children at Ashleworth C of E Primary School receive consistent, high quality teaching in phonics and reading. It will provide a framework for monitoring the quality of teaching and learning in phonics and reading; it will help teachers and other adults to evaluate their practice in this subject.

At Ashleworth Primary School 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 Ashleworth Primary School, 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.

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.

Curriculum Aims/Principles:

- To enable children to learn phonic knowledge and skills with the expectation that they will become fluent readers, having secured word building and recognition skills.
- To ensure that the children are taught high frequency words that do not conform to regular phonic patterns.
- To encourage the children to attempt to spell words for themselves by using their phonic skills.
- To help the children to apply the skill of blending phonemes in order to read words.
- To learn that blending and segmenting words are reversible processes.
- Develop the habit of reading widely and often, for both pleasure and information
- Acquire a wide vocabulary and an understanding of grammar.
- Develop speaking and listening skills through group reading sessions-asking and responding to questions and participating in discussions, demonstrating understanding of what they have read.

Implementation: Daily phonics lessons in Reception and KS1

- We teach phonics for approximately 30 minutes a day. Each Friday, we review the week's teaching to ensure the week's learning is secure and embedded.
- 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.
- Children in KS1 have access to the Little Wandle 'sound mats'. These sound mats are differentiated according to the phase the child is working at. The sound mats help children to sound out and write independently. The children are encouraged to use these during our English/cross-curricular writing tasks. These sound mats are kept in the 'knowledge organisers' on the tables. Some children in KS2 also have access to these sound mats (when we feel this is appropriate).

Providing additional support:

- Any child who needs additional practice, has 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. 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.
- Children who are identified as SEN and have a My Plan with a phonics target, may receive extra support in class/out of class.
- Some children working significantly below the expected standard, may not be required to take the Phonics Screening Check. This would be communicated to parents.

Teaching reading: Reading practice sessions (three times a week)

- We teach KS1 children to read through reading practice sessions (three times a week). These:
 - are taught by a fully trained adult to small groups of children
 - use books matched to the children's secure phonic knowledge using the *Little Wandle Letters and Sounds*
- 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 Year 2 and 3, we continue to teach reading in this way for any children who still need to practise reading with decodable books.
- In Reception these sessions start by Week 4. Reception children start their reading sessions with a picture book and then move onto books with words (when they are ready to access these).
- Teachers use the reading comprehension questions at the back of the books to help guide the comprehension reading sessions. We also link the comprehension sessions to the VIPERS. In KS2, the children continue to have group reading sessions and after the lesson, the children have VIPERS questions to answer that are based on the text they have been reading. In KS2, the children help to form the VIPERS questions that the group will then be answering.

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.
- Lesson templates, Prompt cards and How to videos ensure teachers all have a consistent approach and structure for each lesson.
- The Reading Leader and Head Teacher regularly monitor and observe teaching; they use the summative data to identify children who need additional support and gaps in learning.

Home reading/parental support:

The decodable reading practice book is taken home to ensure success is shared with the family. The book is taken home on a Thursday (once the children have had their 3 reading practice sessions in school). In KS1 and lower KS2, parents are encouraged to record in their children's reading records. In upper KS2, children are then encouraged to record in their own reading record and they also select their own reading books to take home. The children are encouraged to read at home as much as possible. Regular reading outside of school is actively encouraged and is recognised/rewarded in school.

Reading for pleasure books also go home for parents to share and read to children.

The parents of Reception children are invited to a 'new intake meeting' with the class teacher before their child starts school. These meetings help the parents to begin to understand how we teach phonics when their child starts school. In the first term of school, the Reception parents are then invited into school to a reading and maths workshop. During this meeting, the parents will be given key information from the Little Wandle programme. They will be informed of the progression, information on how to say the initial sounds, how to form the letters and they will be given ideas on how they can support their child with their phonics/reading at home.

All Year 1 parents will be invited to an information evening before the 'Phonics Screening Check'. During this evening, they are provided with information on how to further support their children at home before their child takes part in the assessment.

Ensuring reading for pleasure

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 and the books are selected from our high quality text list. We want children to experience a wide range of books, including books that reflect the children at Churcham and Ashleworth Primary School 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.
- In Reception, children have access to the reading corner every day in their free flow time and books are also incorporated into the other areas of the EYFS learning environment.
- At Churcham, the children visit the library on a weekly basis and enjoy spending time sharing books with their friends in this area.
- Both schools take part in 'World Book Day' and have 'author' days at school (for example, we have previously held an 'Anthony Browne Day' and a 'Roald Dahl Day'). We have also had a local author (Andy Seed) visit the school. These themed days help to motivate the children to read and broaden the children's reading experiences. Having authors visit the school also inspires the children to want to read/write themselves.
- The children all have a 'reading buddy' and they meet with their reading buddy on a weekly basis and share books with this reading buddy.

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 phonics tracker, to narrow attainment gaps between different groups of children and so that any additional support for teachers can be put into place.
- The *Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised* placement assessment is used:
 - With any child new to the school to quickly identify any gaps in their phonic knowledge and plan provide appropriate extra teaching.

Statutory assessment

Children in Year 1 sit the Phonics screening check. Those who do not reach the expected standard in the phonics screening, are monitored closely and are given appropriate support to help ensure that they are able to meet the expected standard during the retest at the end of Year 2.

Monitoring and Evaluation:

- All teachers are expected to monitor the teaching/learning of phonics within their class and make necessarily changes to the lessons.

- English leader and headteacher undertake lesson observations in phonics lessons and use these observations as an opportunity to give feedback to staff on the teaching/learning of phonics. Teachers/teaching assistants are then provided with 'next steps' so they can improve upon the phonics teaching/learning in their class.
- English leader and headteacher track and monitor the progression being made in phonics.

In all aspects of life at Ashleworth C of E Primary School, the safety and well-being of our children is paramount. We expect all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.