



PIPWORTH COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL



Article 17: I have a right to get information from lots of different sources, as long as it is safe.

Article 28: I have a right to an education.

Article 29: I have a right to be supported to achieve in education.

Article 31: I have a right to relax and play.

PHONICS AND EARLY READING POLICY

At Pipworth Community Primary School we know that reading is the gateway to learning across our curriculum and beyond. It is essential that our approach to teaching phonics and reading is accessible to all learners, regardless of background.

Intent

At Pipworth Community 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 Nursery/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 Pipworth Community 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.

Comprehension

At Pipworth Community Primary School, 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

Foundations for phonics in Nursery

We provide a balance of child-led and adult-led experiences for all children that meet the curriculum expectations for 'Communication and language' and 'Literacy'. These include:

- o sharing high-quality stories and poems
- o learning a range of nursery rhymes and action rhymes
- o activities that develop focused listening and attention, including oral blending
- o attention to high-quality language.
- o

We ensure Nursery children are well prepared to begin learning grapheme-phoneme correspondences (GPCs) and blending in Reception.

Little Wandle Foundations is aligned to the non-statutory guidance on Development Matters and Birth to 5 Matters as well as the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) statutory framework. We use it as part of our wider provision for Communication and Language, and Literacy.

It supports children to:

- o develop their phonological awareness, including rhyme, alliteration, syllables, initial and voice sounds, and oral blending
- o love stories and rhymes, and learn by heart a bank of familiar favourites
- o increase their vocabulary and confidence to talk

- o improve their listening and ability to take part in back-and-forth conversations.

We believe that the priority in Nursery should be to build the foundations for phonics for all children. Research tells us that disadvantaged children start Nursery behind their more fortunate peers. By leaving formal phonics teaching to Reception, Foundations allows us to devote more time to working with children who need extra help to develop the skills and behaviours that underpin successful reading.

Language and nursery rhymes in Reception

Research tells us that nursery rhymes can support children to develop their language, their awareness of sounds within words and even their later reading ([Bryant et al. 1989](#)).

We use the Little Wandle Rhyme time films and accompanying phonological awareness planning to complement and reinforce our Phase 2 teaching.

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:

- o 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.
- o Children in Year 1 review Phases 3 and 4 and are taught to read and spell words using Phase 5 GPCs with fluency and accuracy.

Daily Keep-up and Catch Up lessons ensure every child learns to read

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Any child in Reception and Year 1 who needs additional practice has Daily Keep-up support and is taught by a fully trained adult.

Daily Keep-up lessons follow the Little Wandle progression and use the same procedures, resources and mantras, but in smaller steps with more repetition so that every child secures their learning.

Daily phonics and spelling in Year 2

Year 2 begins by using assessment to ensure that children have completed the Little Wandle Year 1 progression. Any gaps in teaching are addressed through daily phonics lessons until the programme is completed. Corresponding summative assessments are carried out to ensure this content is secure.

Once all the Year 1 content has been taught and assessed, we teach a five-week Phase 5 review. This ensures that children secure the trickier elements of Phase 5 and can apply this alphabetic knowledge in both reading and spelling.

We use the Phase 5 review assessment before teaching in Year 2 to identify any children who may need more support when teaching. We reassess after teaching the Phase 5 review.

Once the Phase 5 review is secure; we teach the Bridge to Spelling before moving to the Spelling units.

Children with larger gaps in their phonic knowledge than their peers have daily phonics teaching and follow the Rapid Catch-up programme.

Children in Year 2 to Year 6: Rapid Catch-up

We timetable daily phonics lessons for any child in Year 2 and above who is not at age-related expectations for 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.

These short, sharp lessons last 15 to 20 minutes daily and have been designed to ensure children quickly catch up to age-related expectations in reading.

We assess children who are new to our school, new to the country or new to English using the Rapid Catch-up assessments to quickly identify their needs.

We use the Rapid Catch-up assessments to identify the gaps in children's phonic knowledge and teach these using the Rapid Catch-up resources - at pace.

We assess children every four weeks using the Rapid Catch-up summative assessments to assess progress and inform teaching.

Teaching reading: Reading practice sessions three times a week

We teach children to read through reading practice sessions three times a week. These:

- o are taught by a fully trained adult to small groups of approximately six children
- o 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'.
- o 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:

- o decoding
- o prosody: teaching children to read with understanding and expression
- o comprehension: teaching children to understand the text.

In Reception, these sessions start in Week 4 of teaching at the latest. Initially, children will read wordless books. In these sessions, children review GPCS and are taught blending using teacher-led blending. Once children can blend, they progress onto decodable books matched to their secure phonic knowledge.

Children read each book three times to develop phonemic awareness, vocabulary and comprehension as well as book behaviours.

In Year 2, we ensure children complete reading the core programme decodable books (up to Phase 5 Set 5). To exit the programme, we complete the final fluency assessment to ensure children can read with adequate speed and accuracy: approximately 60 words per minute with 90%+ accuracy.

Reading in Rapid Catch-up lessons mirrors the core programme. Children following the Rapid Catch-up programme are taught to read using the 7+

fully decodable books. These follow the same progression as the core programme but are more appropriate for older readers.

Teaching reading: Fluency programme

We teach reading to children in Year 2 and above who have exited the core programme using Little Wandle Fluency.

Each Fluency reading lesson is 25 to 30 minutes. The structure of every lesson is the same:

A pre-read to practise reading words and to support vocabulary

Children read aloud for ten minutes and the teacher 'taps in' to hear every child read

Focussed teaching of prosody, repeated reading and comprehension through discussion.

We assess reading speed and accuracy every 12 weeks and use these assessments to monitor progress and allocate books.

We also use Assessment for Learning (AfL) and our professional judgement to assess each child's progress in reading, so we can ensure that they have the right books to meet their needs.

We review children's prosody by using the Prosody grid. This gives us a picture of how well the child is reading aloud.

Comprehension is taught through dialogic talk and teachers use their AfL to quickly address misconceptions and develop children's curiosity and engagement with each book.

Home reading

Photocopies of the decodable book pupils are reading in class are available on request. Pupils also have access to fully decodable books from our lending library Read for the Stars, which is open every morning before school begins.

Reading for pleasure books also go home for parents to share and read to children. We share the research behind the importance and impact of sharing quality children's books with parents through workshops, leaflets and the Everybody read! resources.

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.

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 Pipworth Community Primary School and our local community as well as books that open windows into other worlds and cultures.

Every year group has an organised library 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 Nursery/Reception, children have access to the reading corner every day in their free flow time and the books are continually refreshed.

The school libraries are made available for classes to use throughout the week. These libraries are open at playtimes and lunchtimes for pupils to visit and access books. 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).

We use the Everybody read! resources to grow our teachers' knowledge of current books, the most recent research and to grow our own Reading for Pleasure practice.

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:

- o daily within class to identify children needing Keep-up support
- o weekly in the Review lesson to assess gaps, address these immediately and secure fluency of GPCs, words and spellings.

Summative assessment for Reception and Year 1 is used:

- o 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.
- o 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.

Fluency assessments measure children's accuracy and reading speed in short one-minute assessments. They are used:

- o in Year 1, when children are reading the Phase 5 set 3, 4 and 5 books
- o with children following the Rapid Catch-up programme in Years 2 to 6, when they are reading the Phase 5 set 3, 4 and 5 books
- o to assess when children are ready to exit their programme. For Year 1 children, this is when they read the final fluency assessment at 60-70+ words per minute. Older children can exit the Rapid Catch-up programme when they read the final fluency assessment at 90+ words per minute. At these levels, children should have sufficient fluency to tackle any book at age-related expectations. After exiting their programme, children do not need to read any more fully decodable books.

A placement assessment is used:

- o with any child new to the school in Reception and Year 1 to quickly identify any gaps in their phonic knowledge and plan and provide appropriate extra teaching.

The Rapid Catch-up assessment is used:

- o with any child new to the school in Year 2 and above to quickly identify any gaps in their phonic knowledge and plan and provide appropriate extra teaching.

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 Rapid Catch-up in Years 2 to 6

- o Children in Year 2 to 6 are assessed through:
- o the Rapid Catch-up initial assessment to quickly identify any gaps in their phonic knowledge and plan appropriate teaching
- o the Rapid Catch-up summative assessments to assess progress and inform teaching
- o the Rapid Catch-up fluency assessments when children are reading the Phase 5 set 3, 4 and 5 books for age 7+.
- o The fluency assessments measure children's accuracy and reading speed in short
- o one-minute assessments. They also assess when children are ready to exit the Rapid Catch-up programme, which is when they read the final fluency assessment at 90+ words per minute.

Phonics and ICT

At Pipworth we do not rely on ICT to support our daily phonics sessions. We do however access educational websites such as Phonics Play at times. Educational websites are also promoted to parents for pupils to use at home. Lists of suitable websites are distributed to parents at phonics workshops and meetings.

The role of the Phonics and Early Reading Leader

There is a designated Phonics Co-ordinator to oversee the planning and delivery of Phonics within the school.

The coordinator will be responsible for

- Raising standards in Phonics as a national curriculum subject and evaluating the effectiveness of teaching and learning within the subject
 - Facilitating the use of Phonics across the curriculum in collaboration with all subject coordinators as well as liaising and consulting with outside agencies where appropriate
- Acting as a role model for the teaching and learning of phonics
- Developing their own role as subject leader through e.g. research, National College
 - Providing or organising training to keep staff skills and knowledge up to date through up to three staff meeting slots per year
 - Advising colleagues about effective teaching strategies, managing equipment and purchasing resources.
 - Monitoring the delivery of the Phonics curriculum and reporting to the SLT on the current status of the subject.
 - Reporting the current status of the subject to designated School Governors.
 - Action Planning linked to whole school priorities
 - Updating the policy annually

Support from SLT/Curriculum lead will be given to subject leaders in order to further develop their role through:

- Mentoring subject leaders new to role
- Developing the role of subject leaders and providing professional development opportunities
- Guidance for Action planning linked to whole school priorities
- Support for monitoring
- Professional Development Opportunities for subject leaders e.g. National College, NPQ

Homework

Phonics homework is sent home, where appropriate, on a regular basis. Target pupils may also be given suitable phonics homework from after school clubs to support their learning. See homework policy.

Resources

All resources used are LWLS. All classrooms have a range of resources which are used frequently on a day to day basis and children from FS to Year 6 should have access to standard resources within lessons. Decoding

book packs are organised in phases to use alongside the LWLS scheme of work.

Monitoring the Policy

Monitoring the standards of children's work, planning and quality of teaching in phonics and early reading is the responsibility of the subject leaders and the SLT (senior leadership team). Drop in observations are carried out over the academic year to monitor the standard of teaching and learning in phonics and early reading. Individual and whole school feedback is given to staff with targets for improvement included which are revisited at subsequent scrutinies.

This policy represents a statement of a whole-school commitment to the teaching of phonics and early reading and will be reviewed annually.

Policy Review

Updated November 2025

Due to be updated November 2026

Cordy Wales