



Heatherley Primary School

## Phonics Policy.

Subject Coordinator Gemma Unwin

## The Curriculum Policy for Phonics

### Introduction

All pupils are entitled to a broad and balanced curriculum regardless of race, gender, religion or ability.

This policy outlines the **Intent**, **Implementation** and **Impact** of Phonics here at Heatherley.

The **Implementation** of this policy is the responsibility of all teaching staff. The school policy for Phonics reflects the consensus of opinion of the whole Heatherley Community including teaching staff and Governors.

At Heatherley Primary School, we intend for our children to leave us being confident readers. We recognise the importance of early reading and its impact on learning in future year groups. Our staff provide high quality teaching of Phonics and ensure there is consistency across year groups. We know how essential it is that our approach to teaching phonics and reading is accessible to all learners.

### Intent

#### **Phonics (reading and spelling)**

At Heatherley 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 Foundation 1 and Foundation 2, 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 Heatherley 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 Heatherley 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 phonics 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:
  - sharing high-quality stories and poems
  - learning a range of nursery rhymes and action rhymes
  - activities that develop focused listening and attention, including oral blending
  - attention to high-quality language.
- We ensure nursery children are well prepared to begin learning grapheme-phoneme correspondences (GPCs) and blending ready for Foundation 2.

#### Daily phonics lessons in Foundation 2, Year 1 and Year 2

- We teach phonics for 25-30 minutes a day in Foundation 2(F2) and Year 1. In F2, we build from 10-minute lessons, to the full-length lesson as quickly as possible. Each Friday, we review the week's teaching to help children become fluent readers.
- Year 2 children who did not pass their phonics screening check re-do year 1 phonics.

- Year 2 children receive phase 5 review lesson during the first 5 weeks in Autumn term. After assessment, children still showing gaps receive rapid catchup. Children who are above 80% move on to the bridge to spelling programme provided by Little Wandle.
- Year 2 children who only just passed their phonics screening check or showed significant gaps in the phase 5 review assessment receive year 2 rapid catch up sessions. This is a quicker keep-up programme.
- Children make a strong start in F2: teaching begins in Week 2 of the Autumn term.
- We follow the [Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised expectations of progress](#):
  - Children in F2 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 Year 2 who haven't passed their phonics screening check receive daily phonics sessions.
  - Children in year 2 who are showing signs of significant delay with regard to their phonics will receive our SEND Programme which delivers the alphabetic code at a steadier pace allowing children to explore through images and sounds gradually.
  - Our SEND programme is also available for children in foundation and year 1 who may need an adapted approach to teaching the early reading process.

### Daily keep-up interventions ensure every child learns to read

- Any child in F2 and year 1 who needs additional practise 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 keep up sessions/rapid catchup (year 2) for any child who is not fluent at reading, below expected progress, 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 Key Stage 2 continues to have gaps in their phonic knowledge, 'rapid catch-up' interventions, using the Little Wandle scheme, are implemented. These short, sharp interventions last 10-15 minutes and take place three times a week.
- All children in Key Stage 1 and F2 are assessed every 6 weeks to identify any gaps in learning. Children receiving catch up in year 2 are also assessed at the end of the phase taught. Key Stage 2 rapid catch-up children are also assessed. This is uploaded onto our school Little Wandle assessment tracker for staff and the phonics lead to analyse and identify gaps in learning.

### Teaching reading: Reading practice sessions twice a week

- We teach children to read through reading practice sessions twice 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.
  - are monitored by the class teacher.
- 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 Key Stage 1, these sessions start from week 1 of teaching phonics. Year 2 children who have moved off of the phonics scheme continue to receive reading sessions using the Little Wandle fluency books.
- In F2 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.

### Home reading

- Each child receives a decodable reading practice book to take home to ensure success is shared with the family.

- 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.
- Children also receive their reading practice session book via the Big Cat e-book service. All children have a log in for this which they can access at home.

### *Additional reading support for vulnerable children*

- Children in F2 and Year 1 who are receiving additional phonics keep-up sessions are a priority reader. This means a member of staff will regularly read with this child at school 1:1.
- All SEND, pupil premium children and children who aren't regular readers at home are also read to regularly at school 1:1.
- Pre-teaching of the decodable reading practice session book takes place if necessary.

### *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 phonics leader regularly monitors and observes 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 Heatherley Primary and our local community as well as books that open windows into other worlds and cultures.
- Every classroom has an inviting book corner/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 and Foundation 2, children have access to the reading corner every day in their free flow time and the books are continually refreshed.
- Children also have a home reading record. The parent/carer records comments to share with the adults in 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.

### Extended Curriculum Opportunities

- Parent Workshops

### 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/catch-up support that they need.
  - by phonics leader 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 are assessed through their teacher's ongoing formative assessment as well as through the half-termly *Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised* summative assessments.