

## Phonics and Developing Reading

Date	Review Date	Subject Leader	Nominated Governor
December 25	December '25	Andrew Bain and Huw Foulkes	

Phonics is one of the many skills needed to become a reader and writer. We aim to give children the best possible start on their reading/writing journey by teaching them the essential phonological/phonemic skills and knowledge to decode and encode (spell) words independently from the outset. At the point of reading/writing, children will use phonics as their first strategy to read and spell unknown words until it is embedded and automatic for them. We recognise that the development of spoken language and the enjoyment and comprehension of quality literature go hand in hand to develop a lifelong love of reading and aim to nurture and develop these attributes alongside the phonics program.

Our policy sets out the means by which we ensure consistency and a systematic approach to the teaching and learning of synthetic phonics, as the prime method by which children learn to read and spell independently, automatically and confidently in the first years of their schooling. It aims to reinforce our high expectations for pupil progress. We follow the 'Read Write Inc' programme as a way of teaching our children the foundations of reading, writing and spelling. As our children travel through school they will read and understand a wide variety of engaging stories and texts.

### Aims

The aims and objectives of this policy are:

- To ensure a consistent approach, to the teaching of phonics, across the school.
- To ensure that children have direct phonics teaching daily, from Reception to Year 2.
- To ensure the teaching of spelling continues as the children transition into Key Stage 2
- To ensure that children are given opportunities to use and apply their phonics learning.
- To ensure that all children use phonics, as their first approach, when reading and writing.
- To ensure that all children entering KS2 are secure at decoding unfamiliar texts.
- To ensure our children have the skills needed to understand the texts that are read.

### Policy Procedure

The RWI approach is taught considering the 5 P's:

**Praise** – Children learn quickly in a positive climate.

**Pace** – Good pace is essential to the lesson.

**Purpose** – Every part of the lesson has a specific purpose.

**Passion** – This is a very prescriptive programme. It is the energy, enthusiasm and passion that teachers put into the lesson that bring the teaching and learning to life!

**Participation** – A strong feature of R.W.I. lessons is partner work and the partners ‘teaching’ each other (based on research which states that we learn 70% of what we talk about with our partner and 90% of what we teach).

## Curriculum design

At St Theresa’s we begin teaching phonics in Nursery. In Reception we begin a synthetic phonics programme as soon as the children start. As a school we have adopted the Read Write Inc approach to the teaching of phonics and as such the sets or sounds and images are used throughout the school and are displayed in all classrooms throughout the school. This consistent approach gives the children references points, particularly with their writing.

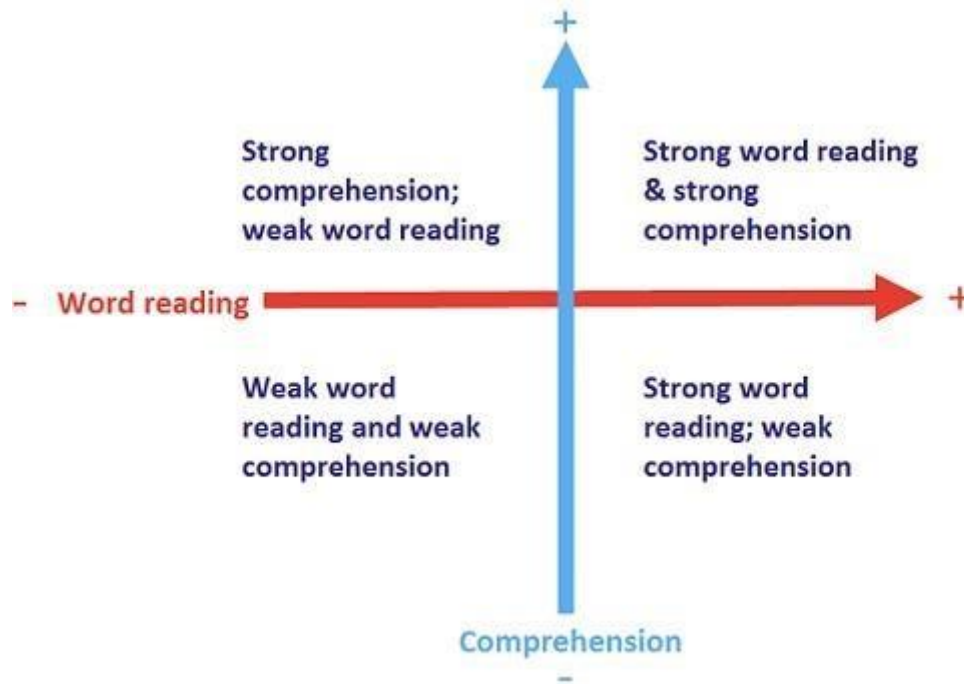
To develop reading all our children meet high quality texts in all areas of the curriculum. The children have the opportunity to read these texts as well as have them read to them. These texts are chosen to engage the children and allow them to comprehend and discuss what is happening within what they have read. Some of these texts help to develop our children’s awareness of different societies within the world. Other texts are used to broaden children’s vocabulary and knowledge around the texts content. Children take part in a weekly guided session. As part of this, children will visit a variety of books or texts and use the skills of prediction, clarification of vocabulary, questioning and summarising. As well as this all children have a weekly comprehension lesson where discreet skills are taught. There is a whole school focus for this skill that changes on a half termly basis.

### Comprehension focus

Autumn 1	<p><b>Literal questions</b>  <b>1b) identify/explain key aspects of fiction and non-fiction texts, such as characters, events, titles and information,</b></p> <p><b>2b)- retrieve and record information/ identify key details from fiction and non-fiction</b></p>
Autumn 2	<p><b>Inference questions</b>  <b>1d) make inferences from the text</b></p> <p><b>2d) –makes inferences from the text/ explain and justify inferences with evidence from the text</b></p>
Spring 1	
Spring 2	<p><b>Word meaning</b>  <b>1a) draw on knowledge of vocabulary to understand texts</b></p> <p><b>2a) – give/explain the meaning of words in context.</b></p>
Summer 1	<p><b>Authors choice of words</b></p> <p><b>2g – identify/explain how meaning is enhanced through choice of words and phrases</b></p>

Summer 2	<p>Whole text 1c) identify and explain the sequence of events in texts</p> <p>2f – identify and explain how information/narrative content is related and contributes to meaning as a whole</p> <p>Comparisons 2h – make comparisons within the text</p>
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All children are plotted onto the simple view of reading plan. See below



Decisions about where to place children are based on staff professional judgement. These decisions are aided by listening to children read (one to one or in a group), comprehension lessons and through the termly testing. These results help staff to identify children who need intervention to improve their reading ability.

## CUSP Reading

Alongside daily phonics teaching, the school uses the CUSP Reading programme to support pupils' development in reading comprehension, vocabulary and fluency. CUSP Reading is a structured and carefully sequenced approach that exposes children to high-quality texts and rich language. Lessons are designed to help pupils understand meaning, think deeply about what they read and develop a wide vocabulary.

CUSP Reading places a strong emphasis on discussion, oral language and understanding texts, supporting children to make connections, explain their thinking and develop confidence as readers. As this is a recently introduced programme, it is being carefully monitored to ensure it supports strong progress and complements our phonics teaching effectively. Together, phonics and CUSP Reading ensure children develop the decoding skills and language knowledge they need to become successful readers.

## **Phonics in Nursery**

In nursery the children take part in daily phonics sessions where they recap previous sounds they have learnt and are introduced to a new sound each week. They look at the set 1 sounds they have already learnt and have time in key worker groups to look at each sound in more detail. The children learn the correct letter formation for each letter using the rhyme to help us. They also take part in phonics aerobics each week which helps the children to remember each sound. In the nursery setting we have set 1 sounds up around the room and the staff encourage children to use their knowledge e.g. writing sounds they know in flour, finding items around the room that start with the sound of the week. Nursery also learn about environmental sounds where we develop listening skills and awareness of sounds in the environment through activities such as listening walks. When ready, some children who are more able and confident will go to reception daily to join in with their phonics sessions and some children will take part in interventions to further develop their knowledge.

### **Developing reading**

Children in nursery develop their reading in several ways. All children have reading diaries that they take home for their parents to write in and their reading books are swapped at the end of each week. The children also take part in a rainbow reading challenge where the more they read at home the quicker they will move on to the next level of the rainbow.

There are a variety of books available in nursery for the children to borrow; including books from the author of the term e.g. Julia Donaldson and children are encouraged to bring their favourite books from home to share with the class. We regularly have story time where a child is chosen to choose a book they love for us to read together as a class. Within the nursery setting children will be read stories relating to the number of the week e.g. '3' Goldilocks and the three bears. 3 times per week the children are split into small groups to take part in a narrative session, this is where they will learn about different aspects of a story, e.g. who, what, where etc. and we will often sing nursery rhymes which are set out as short stories to learn the layout (beginning, middle and end) of a story. 3 times per week the children are split into small groups to take part in a narrative session, this is where they will learn about different aspects of a story, e.g. who, what, where etc. and we will often sing nursery rhymes which are set out as short stories to learn the layout (beginning, middle and end) of a story. Early Talk Boost Assessments identify any children who may need support with their speech and language.

## **Phonics in Reception**

In reception the children take part in a daily Read Write Inc phonics session. From the beginning of Reception, the children are assessed then split into two groups. In the autumn term the two groups are starting to blend CVC words based on the sounds they know. One group is being taught set 1 sounds, whilst the other is revisiting the sounds before moving on to set 2. When they are ready to, some children who are identified as being more able in their phonics learning will join another group in the school for phonics. Children are formally assessed every half term and placed in the group that best suits their needs. The staff in reception make a professional judgement alongside the Read Write Inc assessment about whether children should move groups within reception class.

### **Developing reading**

Each week the children take home two books, a challenge book, which parents are encouraged to read with their child, and a decodable phonics book which matches the level they are working at in phonics. Every child will read with one of the Reception staff through the week, with children being identified to take part in a reading intervention 1:1 with a TA three times a week. Challenge books are changed weekly, and the decodable books are changed once the children are confident with the sounds/words in the book. The children take part in a guided reading session once per week, they will look at the key features of print, answer literal questions and make predictions based on the illustrations. Each half term we have one overarching topic which is supported using high-quality texts as a stimulus for lessons. We read a story at the end of each day where children listen to and make observations about the book we are sharing. We have a reading corner inside which is filled with a variety of books for different abilities and outside a reading shed. Throughout the different areas of provision, we have books linked to the area or topic we are learning about, for example autumn books in the investigation area. We have an author of the term whose books are on display in our reading areas. Staff regularly share books with children in the reading corner and we encourage the children to share their favourite books from home with us, giving reasons for why they like them. We continue the reading rainbow challenge in reception, where children move onto different colours of the rainbow depending on how many books they read. When they reach the pot of gold, they receive a book as a prize for reading so much.

## **Key Stage 1**

In key stage 1 there is a daily phonics lessons taught at 10:15am until 10:45am. Children are grouped according to ability after assessments take place. Our aim is to keep the groups small so that children have the support needed to make rapid progress in their phonics learning. Sessions will involve the speed sounds at the beginning of the session and the introduction of a new sound depending on their group. Most children are working on set 2 and 3 sounds. Children meet the green and red words (tricky words) appropriate for their ability. They will read books that include the sound they are learning plus identified red and green words. The sessions also include elements of comprehension from the book they are

reading and writing. The children are assessed using a RWI assessment each half term and then regrouped depending on their needs. When children have completed the RWI programme they move onto the next programme we offer in school which is called Spelling Mastery.

**Expected standard for end of term.**

The children work through the coloured bands of Read Write Inc and the table below shows where children should be at the end of each term.

Reception	End of autumn term	Set 1 sounds
	End of spring term	Red Ditty or red books
	End of summer term	Green
Year 1	End of autumn term	Pink
	End of spring term	Orange
	End of summer term	Yellow
Year 2	End of autumn term	Blue
	End of spring term	Grey
	End of summer term	Spelling Mastery

Children’s progress between groups is tracked. If children don’t meet these expectations children receive extra support and in some cases one to one teaching from learning support to try and improve their skills. Children identified as SEND might not meet these expectations but targets connected to phonics is built into their daily learning.

**Developing reading**

Children meet a variety of texts through their literacy and phonics lessons and these are stimulus for their learning. Within the phonics lesson, the children read books that are decodable and use the sound they are learning. This allows them to practise their phonics they are currently learning but also revisit past learning. During literacy lessons, children develop their knowledge of characters and the actions the characters do. Children begin to develop their inference skills using pictures and texts from the books they are reading as a class. The year 1 and 2 classroom both have a reading area that the children use and these have a variety of age appropriate books for them. Story time is a regular event in our key stage 1 classrooms. Our year 1 teacher meets with parents to discuss the phonics they will be learning and to show them how they can help at home. The teacher also explains what the phonics screening check is. As children develop as readers we want to encourage our

parents to develop their skills at home. Two reading books are sent home with the children and these are changed weekly. One is a decodable book (RWI book bag book) that matches the phonics learning for that week and the second is a book banded text. We use Oxford Reading Tree for this which is aimed to help them develop their sight reading and comprehension. Within these texts, they meet the common exception words as well as using their past knowledge to use and apply their phonics learning. These books are at the correct reading level for the child and are checked at least on a termly basis using a running record. Some children are identified as needing extra support with reading and they have one to one reading sessions. During the week all children take part in a guided/reciprocal read which is a teacher led session. The children will read a book/text that is at the appropriate level and work through the four stages.

1. Predict
2. Clarification of vocabulary
3. Questions (mixture of types asked)
4. Summary (relating to the text or characters)

## Key Stage 2

Children in Key stage 2 follow the Spelling Mastery programme. This takes place 5 times a week. At the beginning of the year children undertake a placement test. This usually results in the class being split into two groups for their sessions. Within these sessions children learn about the morphology of words and how words are split into morphographs. These morphographs can be combined together to spells words. Children learn about the meaning of prefixes and suffixes.

Year group	Expected spelling mastery stage	Working towards spelling mastery stage
2	B	
3	C	B
4	C (Complete C before moving to D)	B (Complete B before moving to C)
5	D	C
6	E	D

### Developing reading

Throughout Key stage 2 children meet a variety of texts including novels, picture books, poetry and non-fiction texts. We aim to give our children this variety so they can start to make choices as readers and develop their skills. Our literacy lessons are all based around a

book which the children read together and develop their knowledge about. We, as staff, take the time to read to our children so they have the opportunity to listen to the text as well as read it themselves. Aside from the class texts all KS2 children take part in a teacher led reciprocal read which includes the four stages similar to KS1.

1. Predict
2. Clarification of vocabulary
3. Questions (mixture of types asked)
4. Summary (relating to the text or characters)

Within each classroom there is a reading area. In those areas there are a variety of age appropriate books or reading material. As well as a variety of books we have other publications like National Geographic kids for older children to read. Every child has a reading book, we assess the children termly to see their reading book is at the appropriate level for them. As the children progress through KS2 some children become free readers where they can chose their own reading material. We have developed our reading areas to include challenging texts for these children for example the classics or books with a higher reading age. We keep our parents up to date with reading. A reading meeting takes place for the year 6 parents. The year 6 teacher meets with parents to show them the skills their children need to reach the expected standard.

We try to support all children, both teachers and learning support staff listen to children reading their reading books. We offer a range of Dyslexia friendly books for children who would like to access these. For some of our year 6 children we offer the inference intervention programme to improve the understanding of their reading. Some children are identified as needing further support, in this case we use IDL programme that allows the children to practise reading skills as well as developing their spelling. We also run an intervention for one to one reading. Children will spend time with a member of the learning support team. They will use flashcards to encourage quick recall of key vocabulary. These flashcards will also be personal to each child and have words they personally need to recall from previously read text. Staff also use images and emojis to help the children understand what they read. Techniques like echo reading also take place within these sessions to help the fluency skills. improve.