Amy Everitt



Review Cycle: 3 years

Date Agreed by Local Governing Body:

Signed Principal:

Signed Chair of Governing Body:

Teaching of early reading (Phonics) Policy

March 2019

**Policy for the systematic phonics approach to the teaching of early reading**

Ourpupils learn to read and write effectively and quickly using aspects of the *Read Write Inc. Phonic*s programme.

**The *Read Write Inc.* Phonic programme**

The programme is for:

* pupils in Year R to Year 1 who are learning to read and write
* any pupils in Years 2 and 3 who need to catch up rapidly.

We teach pupils to:

* decode letter-sound correspondences quickly and effortlessly, using their phonic knowledge and skills
* read tricky (red) words on sight
* understand what they read
* read aloud with fluency and expression
* write confidently, with a strong focus on vocabulary and grammar
* spell quickly and easily by segmenting the sounds in words
* acquire good handwriting.

In addition, we teach pupils to work effectively with a partner to explain and consolidate what they are learning. This provides the teacher with opportunities to assess learning and to pick up on difficulties, such as pupils’ poor articulation, or problems with blending or alphabetic code knowledge.

We group pupils homogeneously, according to their progress in reading rather than their writing. This is because it is known that pupils’ progress in writing will lag behind progress in reading, especially for those whose motor skills are less well developed.

In Nursery and Reception we emphasise the alphabetic code. The pupils rapidly learn sounds and the letter or groups of letters they need to represent them. Simple mnemonics help them to grasp this quickly. This is especially useful for pupils at risk of making slower progress. This learning is consolidated daily. Pupils have frequent practice in reading high frequency words with irregular spellings – ‘red words’.

We make sure that pupils read books that are closely matched to their increasing knowledge of phonics and the ‘red words’. This is so that, early on, they experience success and gain confidence that they are readers. Re-reading and discussing these books with the teacher supports their increasingly fluent decoding.

Alongside this, the teachers read a wide range of stories, poetry and non-fiction to pupils; they are soon able to read these texts for themselves.

Children also learn reading skills in guided reading sessions each week with their teacher.

Our aim is for pupils to complete the phonics Read Write Inc. programme by the end of year 1. By this time they will be able to choose books to read at their own interest and comprehension level.

**Achievement in our school**

**Assessing and tracking progress**

We assess all pupils from Year N to Year 1 on the *Read Write Inc.* Sound and Word Entry Assessment and we use this data to assign them to either a *Read Write Inc.* Phonics group. Any children who need the programme from years 2 and 3 are also assessed within these groups. This gives us a very good indication of how well they are making progress relative to their starting points. We do this for all pupils, whenever they join us, so we can track all of them effectively.

By the end of Key Stage 1, we aim for our pupils to be able to read aloud age-appropriate texts accurately and with sufficient speed. This means that we can focus on developing their comprehension, preparing them well for transition to Key Stage 2. Their good decoding skills mean that they have a sound strategy for decoding unfamiliar words when they come across them at whatever stage or in any subject.

Pupils who are making slower progress usually complete the programme by the end of Year 2. We support pupils who have identified special educational needs as well as pupil premium children to give extra intervention for learning sounds and sound blending green and red words.

**Phonic screening check**

We have high expectations of our pupils’ progress. For three consecutive years (2016-2018), our phonics screening results have been in line or above the National figure. We attribute this to the programme and to the expectations it builds in.

**Impact across the curriculum**

Our teachers are enthusiastic about using the *Read Write Inc.* programme because they can see how well pupils learn from it and the progress they make, not just in English but across the curriculum.

**Quality of teaching in our school**

We use some of the programme’s strategies for teaching. After direct instruction and guided practice during the speed sounds session the pupils teach another pupil. In this way they all rehearse and consolidate what they have been learning. This helps the pupils to make their understanding clear to themselves and helps the teacher deal with any misconceptions. ‘Partner teaching’ is a key assessment tool. We also use this approach effectively in other subjects.

Assessment is a critical element of our programme. The teachers assess:

* pupils’ phonic knowledge
* the speed at which pupils are able to read the text
* their understanding of the stories they read.

We move pupils to another group if they are progressing faster than their peers or are struggling to keep up. Those who continue to struggle have one-to-one tutoring so that they keep up.

The homogeneous groupings allow the teachers to focus on all pupils for the whole lesson. This means that all the pupils are engaged, with a positive impact on their behaviour.

The *Read Write Inc.* programme has detailed lesson plans. These give the teachers practical day-to-day guidance, but we have worked hard to build on these plans and adapt the RWI strategies to better suit our children and our school.

Simple teaching strategies and a lively pace ensure that all the pupils participate fully– there is no chance for them to lose concentration and miss key elements. In addition, because the pupils are grouped in terms of their reading ability, they are reading at an appropriate decoding level every day.

**Leadership and management in our school**

**Shared vision**

The school’s shared vision is that every pupil learns to read quickly and continues to read – widely and often. The Principal works with all the staff to ensure that this happens. In particular, she works closely with the reading leader to monitor the quality of teaching and to provide coaching for staff who need it (teachers and teaching assistants).

The role of the reading leader is critical. Alongside the headteacher, the reading leader drives the teaching of *Read Write Inc.* Phonics, ensuring it is taught with fidelity so that all the pupils complete the programme as quickly as possible.

The reading leader’s roles include:

* ensuring pupils in the ‘lower progress’ group are making good progress and organising one-to-one tutoring for the pupils who need extra support.
* keeping the groups homogeneous, i.e. at the same reading level
* providing further training (through demonstration, coaching, monitoring and feedback)
* ensuring that the teaching of reading is of the highest quality and that all our pupils make progress.

Teachers alert the reading leader to any pupil whose progress is faster or slower than the rest of their group.

**Parents and carers**

We invite parents/carers to an initial meeting and we hold workshops to show how they can help their children read at home. We send home the sounds they have learnt so that this can be supported at home. Children also bring home a reading book which is decodable at their level.