



Shelley First School Phonics Policy

Updated June 2024

Introduction

This policy is intended to ensure that there is a consistent and progressive approach to the teaching of phonics throughout the school to meet the requirements of the National Curriculum. This policy should be read in conjunction with the school's Reading and Writing Policy.

Intent

As a school, we teach synthetic phonics as the initial, and most important, approach to the teaching of reading. Our pupils learn to read and write effectively using the Read Write Inc (RWI) Phonics Programme which is a systematic programme for the teaching of phonics, reading, spelling and writing. We want all pupils to begin their journey to read with confidence, develop a love of reading and apply their skills competently to writing.

We aim to ensure that **all** pupils:

- Decode letter-sound correspondences quickly and effortlessly, using their phonic knowledge and skills
- Read common exception 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
- Learn letter formation and handwriting skills.

Implementation

The RWI programme is delivered to:

- Pupils in EYFS to Year 2 who are learning to read and write
- Any pupils in Years 2, 3 and 4 who need to catch up rapidly
- Struggling readers in Years 5 follow Read Write Inc. Fresh Start.

Pupils are taught 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 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 (common exception words).

We make sure that pupils read books that are closely matched to their increasing knowledge of phonics and the common exception 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, teachers regularly read a wide range of stories, poetry and non-fiction to pupils during our daily story time sessions.

Embedding the alphabetic code early on means that pupils quickly learn to write simple words and sentences. We encourage them to compose each sentence aloud until they are confident to write independently. We make sure they write every day.

Pupils write at the level of their spelling knowledge. The quality of the vocabulary they use in their writing reflects the language they have heard in the books the teacher has read to them; they have also discussed what the words mean.

Our aim is for pupils to complete the phonics programme as quickly as possible. The sooner they complete it, the sooner they will be able to choose books to read at their own interest and comprehension level.

Early Years – Reception Class

Children in Early Years are taught daily phonics lessons. In the first four weeks of Early Years, the initial sounds (Set 1 Speed Sounds) are taught in class groups. Children receive daily phonics teaching in these groups using the structured speed sounds lesson plan.

It is our aim that all children leave Early Years at green RWI band to be on track to achieve the expected standard for the Year 1 phonics screening check.

Key Stage 1

Children in Key Stage 1 continue to be taught phonics in smaller groups. They have a daily RWI lessons lasting for 45 minutes. This lesson starts with a 10minute speed sounds lesson which teaches oral blending, new speed sounds and revision of previous speed sounds, oral blending, decoding words, reading common exception words, decoding 'alien' (pseudo) words, and spelling. Children then read and comprehend a book which is carefully matched to their phonics knowledge following a 3 day/5 day plan (depending on the stage).

Children are assessed at least half termly and those who are at risk of falling behind the programme's pace and expectations are identified early and additional 1:1 Fast Track Tutoring is

put in place to ensure that these children keep up and don't have to catch up. The effectiveness of these sessions and the impact on progress is regularly evaluated by the Reading Leader.

Children in Year 1 complete the phonics screening check at the end of the year.

It is our aim that children in Year 2 complete the RWI programme by end of the Autumn term in Year 2.

All classrooms and teaching spaces across the school display the RWI Speed Sounds chart to support children with their reading and spelling.

Key Stage 2

By the time children complete the transition from KS1 to KS2 we intend that they will have completed the RWI phonics programme. Their phonic development will continue to be explicitly taught through the school's spelling programme.

Those children who have not reached the expected level by the time they leave KS1 will continue to access elements of the RWI programme and receive additional targeted intervention to ensure they catch up with their peers.

A small number of children may reach upper KS2 and continue to require support for reading. These children will be assessed and complete a more age-appropriate phonics and reading programme called 'Fresh Start' which, like RWI, will teach the children the reading and comprehension skills required at this development stage in a more age-appropriate way using anthology texts rather than story books. Similarly, to the RWI programme, Fresh start pupils are frequently assessed, and progress is reviewed on a half termly basis.

Assessment and Monitoring

We assess all pupils following Read Write Inc. *Phonics* using the Entry and Assessment tools for the scheme, at least half termly and the Reading Leader rearranges groups accordingly. Regular assessments ensure that children receive targeted teaching quickly according to their needs. Children who are progressing through the programme more quickly than their peers are moved into a different group and those who are at risk of falling behind the programme's pace and expectations are given additional support.

Parents/Carers

We endeavour to involve and train parents/carers in supporting phonics and reading at home through workshops, information sessions, newsletters and online resources. Through the rigorous assessment of pupils through this scheme, we ensure that pupils select appropriate books to take home for reading.

CPD for staff and Parents

A key element of the Read Write Inc Programme is consistent whole-school practise. This is underpinned by continued professional development. The school ensures that all teachers and teaching assistants are trained in this approach to teach reading. All staff receive regular Development Days throughout the school year supported by a consultant from the Ruth Miskin training team; attend phonic CPD sessions where an element of the RWI programme is discussed, taught and practised in a supportive way; receive in lesson coaching for the teaching of the RWI programme from the Reading Leader and have access to training videos and additional support materials via the Ruth Miskin school portal. The Reading Leader ensures that the RWI phonics

programme is taught with consistency and fidelity and consults the RWI consultant where the school has queries and needs further clarification.