



Phonics policy

Mission Statement:

With Christ, we live, love, learn and grow.

Rationale

Every child deserves success from the start. Evidence shows that the earlier children learn to read, the greater their long-term academic success. Reading is at the heart of all we do, and to support early literacy, we use the Read Write Inc. (RWI) phonics programme. Research indicates that fidelity to a structured and systematic phonics scheme is the most effective way for children to learn to decode. RWI also supports the development of high-frequency and common exception word recognition and equips children with comprehension skills including vocabulary, fluency, inference, and deduction.

This approach aligns with the DfE validated Systematic Synthetic Phonics (SSP) guidance and ensures all children, including those with SEND and EAL, have access to high-quality early reading instruction.

Intent

Our aim is for children to decode words effortlessly so they can focus on understanding and enjoying texts. We want every child to develop a love of reading through engaging books matched to their reading level. Phonics instruction also supports spelling and writing fluency. Through Read Write Inc., children will:

- Learn the 44 phonemes and corresponding graphemes using picture prompts (speed sounds)
- Read words using 'Fred Talk' and progress to 'Fred in your head' for silent decoding
- Read stories containing previously learned words
- Demonstrate comprehension through discussion and questions
- Write graphemes representing 70+ sounds
- Spell words through segmenting
- Compose simple and complex sentences

Implementation

RWI lessons are based on the five core principles (the 5 Ps):

1. **Pace:** Maintain brisk lesson tempo to engage all learners
2. **Praise/Positive Teaching:** Create a supportive, positive environment
3. **Purpose:** Each activity has a specific learning goal
4. **Participation:** Partner work and discussion account for 70% of learning
5. **Passion:** Enthusiasm from staff energizes and motivates learners

Lesson Structure and Delivery

- Early readers participate in daily 25-minute RWI group lessons.
- Lessons continue until children confidently decode all sounds, including real and nonsense words, with speed (approx. one word per second).
- Adult-to-pupil ratios ensure personalised support.

Grouping and Progression

EYFS: - Nursery: Focus on 7 aspects of early phonics (environmental sounds, instrumental sounds, body percussion, rhythm & rhyme, alliteration, voice sounds, oral blending & segmenting)

Pre-school children within Nursery are introduced to RWI Set 1 Speed Sounds in the Summer term; oral blending and segmenting games begin.

Reception: Small group lessons in Autumn term continue the RWI journey, focusing on consolidation of Set 1 sounds, blending to read and segmenting to spell. The first set of 'special friends' sh, th, ch, ck, ng, nk, ss, ff, ll, zz are taught when children are ready.

KS1: - Small ability-based groups across Years 1–2 (and Year 3 if required) ensure individualised progression within Set 2 and Set 3 sounds.

Ongoing half-termly assessments by the phonics lead guide group placement.

Targeted intervention for children needing extra support. Pupils are tutored in a 1:1 session in an afternoon, focussing on their gaps in learning.

Year 1 Phonics Screening Check administered in summer term; Year 2 retake if required.

Adaptive Teaching: Lessons are responsive to the needs of all learners. Teachers and group leaders adjust pace, support, and challenge based on ongoing assessment, ensuring children with SEND, EAL, or varying developmental stages can access and progress in phonics successfully in smaller steps.

Parental Involvement

- Early Autumn term parent meeting held to introduce RWI and home support strategies to Reception families.
- Weekly phonics homework is shared via Tapestry (EYFS) or Class Dojo (Y1+).
- Reception: Sound blending books begin at Group 1C; Ditty group and beyond take home reading books.
- Recommended reading strategy: read each book three times focusing on word reading, fluency, and comprehension.

Impact:

- Children become confident, fluent readers able to decode independently.
- Disadvantaged pupils and those with SEND make accelerated progress.
- Majority of pupils pass the Year 1 Phonics Screening Check; targeted support ensures all learners meet expected standards.

- Completion of RWI equips children for guided and independent reading, supporting vocabulary growth, inference, and comprehension.

Roles & Responsibilities

- **Phonics Lead:** Oversees RWI delivery, conducts assessments, tracks progress, monitors quality, reports to SLT.
- **Group Leaders (class teachers and TAs):** Deliver lessons, track progress, provide interventions.
- **Teaching Assistants:** Support group work and individual learners in class.
- **Headteacher:** Ensures fidelity to the programme, monitors overall effectiveness.

Monitoring & Review

- Regular lesson observations and learning walks
- Half-termly assessments and data reviews
- Half-termly review of grouping and interventions
- Annual policy review to ensure alignment with current research and DfE guidance

Date of policy; November 2025

Review date: November 2026

N. Cahalin