

# Woodlands Primary School



## PHONICS POLICY & STATEMENT OF INTENT

<b>Status:</b>	Current	
<b>Date Adopted by Governing body:</b>	January 2023	
Created by Maria Turnbull	January 2023	
<b>Review by Curriculum Committee</b>	January 2025	2 years

## Woodlands Primary School Phonics Policy

### Statement of Intent

At Woodlands, we are using a high-quality systematic synthetic phonics programme of proven effectiveness. It is followed with rigour and fidelity and children are taught consistently to use phonics as the route to reading unknown words.

Woodlands has implemented Read Write Inc. as the phonics programme. Read Write Inc. Phonics is a dynamic literacy programme based on the rigorous teaching of synthetic phonics. It is designed to get all children reading and writing quickly and easily. The training and resources have provided us with a cohesive and consistent approach to the teaching of phonics and literacy, and to effective classroom management strategies to ensure success for every child.

### From 'The Fundamentals of Effective Systematic Synthetic Phonics Practise':

#### Teaching to include:

- grapheme/phoneme (letter/sound) correspondences (the alphabetic principle) in a clearly defined, incremental sequence;
- a defined initial group of consonants and vowels, enabling children, early on, to read and spell many simple CVC words.
- highly important skill of blending (synthesising) phonemes, in order, all through a word to read it;
- the application of the skills of segmenting words into their constituent phonemes to spell; and that blending and segmenting are reversible processes.
- the introduction of a defined initial group of consonants and vowels, enabling children, early on, to read and spell many simple CVC words.
- The knowledge that phonemes should be blended, in order, from left to right, 'all through the word' for reading
- demonstrations of how words can be segmented into their constituent phonemes for spelling and that this is the reverse of blending
- Multi-sensory activities. They should be interesting and engaging but firmly focused on intensifying the learning associated with its phonic goal.

#### The programme:

- The programme is begun almost immediately after children enter Reception; with the expectation that they will be fluent readers having secured word recognition skills by the end of key stage one.
- The pace of the programme is maintained.
- Enough time and priority are given to fully implement the programme; teaching of the programme is not necessarily limited to former NLS '20 minutes'.
- Teaching extends beyond 'dedicated time' and is applied and reinforced when appropriate throughout day.
- The programme is carried through until at least the point where children can read almost all words fluently.
- There is no mix-and-match of programmes.
- The programme should not neglect engaging and helpful approaches to the more challenging levels where children have to distinguish between less common grapheme and phoneme variants.

- Children should not be expected to use strategies such as whole-word recognition and/or cues from context, grammar, or pictures.

**All staff involved are fully trained in teaching the programme.**

- Training providers are accredited experts in the programme.
- Senior management are included in the training.
- All grades of teaching assistant are included if they are involved in supporting reading in any way.
- Ongoing refresher training is periodically provided.
- Training is provided for all new staff.
- The reading lead conducts regular CPD meetings with all reading teachers.

**Children practise early reading with fully decodable books that:**

- are matched to phonic knowledge and which do not require use of alternative strategies.' (National Curriculum)
- are closely matched to programme used (often integral)
- are fully decodable at child's current level and do not simply practise phoneme(s) most recently taught
- are not mixed with non-decodable books for independent reading practice
- include a controlled, small number of 'tricky words' the decoding of which has been specifically taught
- are continued in progressive sequence until a child can confidently decode words involving most common grapheme representations of all phonemes.

**A dedicated phonics lead teacher ensures quality, consistency and continuity of teaching**

- This is a teacher with expertise in and direct experience of teaching phonics.
- Responsibilities include monitoring, mentoring and modelling (Could also involve oversight of peer observation and co-development).
- They are given enough dedicated time to fulfil role.
- In consequence quality, consistency and continuity of teaching are all of high quality.
- Effective provision is made for all abilities
- Grouping is appropriate for the school and effective in ensuring success for all abilities
- TAs are deployed and used to optimum effectiveness.
- Progress is continually assessed using a simple but effective system.
- A 'sound tracker' for KS1 is utilised as a working document for all reading teachers to have access to – this enables us to quickly and effectively close gaps in sound knowledge.
- There is particularly close monitoring of children making slowest progress.
- Children in danger of falling behind, or who are working under expected levels (lower 20%), are swiftly identified and enough additional support provided to enable them to keep up.
- Regular progress meetings are held.
- To support and inform parents on how to support their child's reading at home (Including running termly parent workshops).

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- Children in danger of falling behind, or who are working under expected levels (lower 20%), are swiftly identified and enough additional support provided to enable them to keep up.
- Children experiencing significant difficulty are provided with intensive, individual support to reach required standard.
- The Y1 Phonics Screening Check is understood and valued as an assessment tool.
- There is no excessive preparation for the Y1 PSC.
- No pressure is put on children before, during or after the Y1 PSC.
- All 'catch-up' retains an SSP focus.

**A 'can-do' attitude permeates everything with full expectation that all children will attain or exceed expected standards**

- Teacher and school expectations are positive and high for all children regardless of background.
- There is confidence that teaching the programme will ensure success.
- Children are continually praised and encouraged.
- Small-steps success is built in and celebrated.

**Development of word-reading ability is fully balanced by the development of vocabulary, comprehension and a love of books**

- A wide range of high-quality books are read to, and shared with children daily.
- There is frequent discussion of books.
- Children explore books through role-play, art, movement, etc.
- Teachers have extensive knowledge of children's books.
- Teachers practise reading aloud and can do so with enthusiasm and in engaging ways.
- Books have high profile around classrooms and school.
- The development of comprehension is not confused with using guessing strategies for word-reading.

It is our belief that teachers play a vital role in modelling **reading for pleasure** and a love of books. As a school, we recognise the importance of children knowing how to browse and choose books, reading widely and often and being able to immerse themselves in the different worlds of the books they read. Through reading, children will be **inspired to aspire** for the future.

**Every effort is made to help parents and carers understand and support the school approach**

- They are helped to know how best to support children in learning sounds.
- The phonics lead runs workshops for parents throughout the year to coach them in supporting their child's reading at home; and to keep them up to date with the routines and structures of ReadWriteInc.
- Appropriate reading at home is strongly promoted; behaviours are modelled.
- Teachers ensure that they understand how to work appropriately (and differently) with decodable books and with shared 'real' books.

**How is this implemented across the school?**

Nursery introduce RWI in early January, focusing on GPC and 'Fred talk' (blending). Children from Reception and Year 1 Children are homogeneously grouped based upon their ability not age. Children are taught the grapheme-phoneme correspondences in a clear sequence from the simple alphabetic code to phonemes with alternative graphemes. For each phoneme, children are taught to 'say it', 'read it', 'write it', using child-friendly mnemonics and visual, auditory and kinesthetic activities. Children learn to decode words by identifying the graphemes and

blending the phonemes, through the word. Reception children learn the relationship between phonemes and grapheme, practice word blending with magnetic letters, moving onto reading the lively, decodable Ditty Books or Storybooks, matched to phonic ability. Year 1+ children review and learn new grapheme-phoneme correspondences and apply their increased phonic knowledge to reading the Storybooks and doing writing activities. Children learn to spell words by segmenting them into phonemes. They learn this is the opposite of blending. Children learn high frequency words from the earliest stages and how to use knowledge of grapheme-phoneme correspondences as a first approach to words which are not completely phonically regular. Three forms of assessment ensure progress is closely monitored.

Children in UKS2 that need support with their reading are taught using Read Write Inc. Phonics and Fresh Start, when appropriate. It is a synthetic phonics intervention programme by Ruth Miskin, to enable pupils in Years 5 and 6 and above to catch up and develop fluent reading and writing skills.

- Pupils are taught the grapheme-phoneme correspondences in a clear sequence from the simple alphabetic code to phonemes with alternative graphemes.
- For each phoneme, pupils are taught to 'say it', 'read it', 'write it', using mnemonics and visual, auditory and kinesthetic activities.
- Pupils learn to decode words by identifying the graphemes and blending the phonemes, through the word.
- Pupils learn the relationship between phonemes and graphemes and apply their increased phonic knowledge to reading the age-appropriate decodable texts and doing spelling and writing activities.
- Pupils learn to spell words by segmenting words into phonemes and that it is the opposite of blending.
- Pupils learn high frequency words from the earliest stages and to use knowledge of grapheme-phoneme correspondences as a first approach to words which are not completely phonically regular.
- Three forms of assessment ensure progress is closely monitored

**CPD:**

- All staff have had training in how to use Read Write Inc. Phonics effectively for whole school improvement. Together with the resources, it has provided Woodlands with a cohesive approach to the teaching of phonics and literacy and effective classroom management strategies to ensure success for every child.
- Fortnightly phonics sessions conducted by the phonics leader; focusing on a particular aspect of teaching.
- Feedback forms to enable the phonics leader to specifically support staff and particular children
- Partner school with Whiteknights English Hub- Support days
- RWI Development Days with Ruth Miskin Training

**Staffing: 5 teachers, 4 HLTAs, 6 TAs**

	R	Y1	Y2	Y3	Y4	Y5	Y6
Phonics	29	25	17	6	6	8	1
1:1 tutoring	8	8	10	4	3	2	1

The whole school is timetabled to teach Reading and Literacy in the morning which portrays the priority of the subject.

## **Assessments**

Each reading teacher informally assesses in every lesson. They indicate excellent progress to the reading leader who continuously assesses children throughout the term and regroups them accordingly. Alongside this, at least every half-term all children are reassessed and grouped appropriately. Equally, if children are showing slow progress, they will be supported with one to one tutoring. The lowest 20% in each class are always highlighted to ensure they always receive support.

## **Phonic Screening Check**

Children are assessed additionally to the usual RWI assessment but as a PSC forecast three times a year; November, February and April. The results, alongside the KS1 'sounds tracker', support the teacher with knowing where the children may need further support. Therefore, to support the children in retaining their phonological knowledge, KS1 have a streamed afternoon sounds lessons. The KS1 teachers will use this time to consolidate prior learning but also cover misconceptions from the mock PSC test and also areas for development.

## **Year 2 → 8 children who did not pass PSC in 21/22**

We have children ranging from Ditties to Blue group. Some children will come off the RWI reading scheme and will follow only speed sound lessons alongside comprehension lessons with their reading teacher.

Y2 stream with Y1 in their afternoon sounds lesson.

## **1:1 tutoring**

RWI supports the lowest 20% of children with reading as they're homogeneously grouped. However, to support children to keep up rather than catch up, certain children receive tutoring in the afternoon. This consists of a 10 minute session specifically focusing on their needs. The reading teachers that support KS1 refer to the 'sounds tracker' to effectively target sound knowledge gaps.

## **Behaviour**

RWI has instilled a fantastic whole school approach to behaviour, enabling teachers to use various strategies such as the team STOP signal, My Turn Your Turn, 1-2-3 (transitioning).

## **Positivity & Pace**

Team cheers and silent praises have supported the pace of lessons. Teachers have positively embraced this and have started to teach with concise instructions and follow a routine.

## **Book bag books**

Children take home RWI phonetically decodable books for their ability. They follow a similar storyline to the one they've read in class. Some change every 3 days, others are weekly.

