



## Approaches to Phonics & Reading

### **What approach to phonics does your school take? When is it introduced and how soon does phonics teaching start?**

At Pioneer Federation schools, we believe that all our children can become fluent readers and writers. This is why we teach reading through Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised, which is a systematic and synthetic phonics programme. We start teaching phonics in Nursery/Reception and follow the Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised progression, which ensures children build on their growing knowledge of the alphabetic code, mastering phonics to read and spell as they move through school.

- We teach phonics for 20-30 minutes a day. In Reception, we build from 10-minute lessons, with additional daily oral blending games, to the full-length lesson as quickly as possible. Each Friday, we review the week's teaching to help children become fluent readers.
- During Reception children are also exposed to Phonics provision in the classroom on a daily basis.
- Children make a strong start in Reception: teaching begins in Week 3 of the Autumn term.
- We follow the Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised expectations of progress:
  - Children in Reception are taught to read and spell words using Phase 2 and 3 GPCs, and words with adjacent consonants (Phase 4) with fluency and accuracy.
  - Children in Year 1 review Phase 3 and 4 and are taught to read and spell words using Phase 5 GPCs with fluency and accuracy.

### **Daily Keep-up lessons ensure every child learns to read**

- Any child who needs additional practice has daily Keep-up support. Keep-up lessons match the structure of class teaching, and use the same procedures, resources and mantras, but in smaller steps with more repetition, so that every child secures their learning.

As a result children are able to tackle unfamiliar words as they read. At Pioneer Federation schools, we also model the application of the alphabetic code through phonics in shared reading and writing, both inside and outside of the phonics lesson and across the curriculum. We have a strong focus on language development for our children because we know that speaking and listening are crucial skills for reading and writing in all subjects.

### **Teaching reading: Reading practice sessions three times a week**

- We teach children to read through reading practice sessions three times a week. These:
  - are taught by a fully trained adult to small groups of approximately six children
  - use books matched to the children's secure phonic knowledge using the Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised assessments and book matching grids on pages 11–20 of 'Application of phonics to reading'
  - are monitored by the class teacher, who rotates and works with each group on a regular basis.

### **What happens to those who don't meet the screen requirements in Year 2 as they go into Year 3?**

For the children who do not receive the required pass mark when they re-take the test in Year 2 continue to receive Phonics intervention in Year 3. This could be through 1:1 Phonics sessions, group intervention or independent tasks. These children continue to be tracked on phonics tracker to identify the sounds for which they need to focus. This will continue until the children are able to identify all sounds. For some of the Year 3

children who passed the Phonics screening that they took in the Autumn term continue to receive Phonics intervention. As there were still sounds identified that these children need to focus on.

- We timetable phonics lessons for any child in Year 2 or 3 who is not fully fluent at reading or has not passed the Phonics screening check. We use the Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised assessments to identify the gaps in their phonic knowledge and teach to these using the Keep-up resources.
- If any child in Year 3 to 6 has gaps in their phonic knowledge when reading or writing, we plan phonics 'catch-up' lessons to address specific reading/writing gaps. These will be delivered by either the class teacher or teaching assistant.

#### **How do the reading books meet both the phonics development as well as skills of comprehension?**

- In Reception and KS1 each reading practice session has a clear focus, so that the demands of the session do not overload the children's working memory. The reading practice sessions have been designed to focus on three key reading skills:
  - decoding
  - prosody: teaching children to read with understanding and expression
  - comprehension: teaching children to understand the text.
- In Reception these sessions start in Term 1 Week 4. Children who are not yet decoding have daily additional blending practice in small groups, so that they quickly learn to blend and can begin to read books.
- In Year 2 and 3, we continue to teach reading in this way for any children who still need to practise reading with decodable books

#### **Does your school have a reading scheme for the teaching of reading? Is this a whole school approach?**

In Reception and KS1 Little Wandle books are used in reading sessions at school. The decodable reading practice book is taken home to ensure success is shared with the family.

Once children have moved beyond Phase 5 children choose their books from the correct level of challenge. Once children have completed Phase 5 in phonics they move onto colour coded books. They move through the book band levels: Purple, Gold, White, and Lime. Children reading these books are consolidating their fluency and reading skills. Children can take home multiple books for the week.

When children are confident with these reading skills they move into our 'free reader' section. These are progressive longer/chapter like books and are grouped into 'Gems' moving from Pearl, Sapphire, Emerald Diamond and Ruby. Children can choose any book in the gem band they are in. Diamond and Ruby books are allocated only to Year 5 and 6 readers due to the content.

Movement through reading bands is closely monitored by teachers who record their progress throughout the year from Reception to Year 6.

Cohort reading tracking documents are at the front of each class reading folder to show the progression of reading levels through the school.

#### **How does your school ensure consistency in the teaching of reading?**

All staff members of KS1 have had the appropriate Little Wandle Training. This ensures that all children receive high quality teaching of phonics and reading across the key stage. Other staff members are aware of the practices used. Staff meetings are used to ensure other staff are fully aware of the resources that are available for them to use for children still requiring phonic input.

Guided reading sessions from Year 2 onwards ensure that children read age-related texts and have the opportunities to discuss their responses to them. We also use V.I.P.E.R.S (Vocabulary, Inference, Predict, Explain, Retrieve and Summarise / Sequence) questions as our method to explicitly teach each skill. These whole class or group reading comprehension sessions are used as a powerful tool to allow all children to make progress in reading.

**Do all staff have an understanding of the whole school approach and how it develops from Early Years to Year 6?**

Reading is high priority across the school and monitoring is completed by SLT and reading lead. Staff receive ongoing training throughout the year on Reading across the Pioneer Federation. This will include staff meetings, INSET training (as appropriate) and in Cohort Meetings where reading and progression are discussed. All staff are aware of the Pioneer Reading Road Map and of the Reading Policy.

Cohort reading tracking documents are at the front of each class reading folder to show the progression of reading levels through the school.

**How do you know all children in your school have the opportunity to develop a love of reading?**

Through shared reading experiences in class which include: being read to by the class teacher, guided reading sessions where the books/ selected passages are selected for engagement as well as a sufficient level of challenge, independent reading and shared/ paired reading with their peers. Pupil voice allows children to reflect on reading experiences at school. We encourage parents and children to read at home from Reception to Year 6 through the setting of reading homework which encourages a dialogue between school and home.

**How are the lowest 20% supported with reading?**

These children are monitored through extra provision in their reading diet either in 1:1 sessions with an adult or within a small group setting that targets questions to their area of need. Additionally, children may have separate reading targets within their APDOR file and will receive additional INA support to support their progress.