

## **Phonic Policy 2020**

### **Verwood C of E First School**

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At Verwood C of E First School and Nursery we believe that the teaching of phonics underpins and is intricately linked to early reading and writing in the Foundation stage and Key Stage 1. We aim to provide high quality and systematic synthetic phonic teaching, to equip children with the skills needed to become fluent readers and confident writers. Synthetic phonics introduces phonemes individually in a structured and sequenced way, teaching children the relationship between phonemes and graphemes. Phonics equips children with the tools needed to decode and segment unfamiliar words so that they are able to read, write and spell with understanding, fluency, confidence and accuracy, thus achieving the capabilities of an independent reader.

In our pursuit to ensure all children achieve this, we have adopted the Read Write Inc. phonics scheme of work and will teach the phonics and reading element of this programme.

#### **What is Phonics?**

Phonics is a way of teaching reading and spelling. Children are taught to read letters or groups of letters by saying the sound(s) they represent. They are then taught how to merge the sounds together to read words (the skill of blending) and to spell by splitting the word up into the sounds that make it and recording them in the correct order (skill of segmenting).

#### **School Aims**

- To decode letter-sound correspondences quickly and effortlessly, using their phonic knowledge and skills.
- To encourage pupils to segment and blend.
- To teach pupils specific strategies to help them read common exception words on sight.
- To provide opportunities for children to apply their phonological knowledge in their reading and writing in purposeful contexts.
- To differentiate the phonics taught according to the needs of the children, making effective use of teaching assistants.
- To provide opportunities for children to read aloud with fluency and expression.
- To equip children with strategies whereby they can spell quickly and easily by segmenting the sounds in words.
- To use regular and accurate assessment to gain an understanding of the areas of strength, to track the progression of phonological knowledge and to identify areas of weakness.
- To ensure that those teaching phonics have a secure knowledge and understanding of phonics, including the Read Write Inc. approach to ensure children receive high quality teaching.
- To support letter formation.

## **Teaching**

At Verwood C of E First School we use the Read Write Inc. programme to inform the teaching of phonic skills.

The programme is for pupils in Year R to Year 2 who are learning to read and write and any pupils in Years 3 and 4 who need to catch up rapidly.

In Year R 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. When children recognise sounds and become more confident at blending, they read storybooks that are carefully matched to the sounds they have been taught. 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. Children also learn to build sentences orally using vocabulary they have previously encountered and they start to write simple sentences using these words. Children 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.

The phonic programme is rapid and includes opportunities for consolidation. 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.

In addition, we teach pupils to work effectively with a partner to explain and consolidate what they are learning. This provides teaching staff 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.

## **Expectations and Assessment:**

We assess all pupils following Read Write Inc. Phonics using the Sound and Word Entry Assessment. We use this data to assign them to a Read Write Inc. Phonics group. We record their starting date and entry point on the tracker to monitor the rate at which they are making progress. We do this for all pupils, whenever they join us, so we can track all of them effectively, including those eligible for the pupil premium.

In Read Write Inc. Phonics, the pupils are grouped across the school in terms of their reading ability so they are reading at an appropriate decoding level every day. The homogeneous groups in the Phonic lessons help us to focus the teaching and ensure pupils learn to read quickly.

The programmes' 'cycle of instruction' means that, after direct instruction and guided practice, 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 very effectively in other subjects.

Staff teaching Read Write Inc. Phonics record the results from the Sound and Word Assessments, which take place every eight weeks, on the Assessment Tracker. This data allow us to intervene in different ways. For instance, we quickly move pupils to another group if they are progressing faster than their peers. Those who continue to struggle have regular one-to-one keep up sessions. This is in addition to the on-going use of formative assessment to inform teaching and intervention.

The Read Write Inc. programmes have detailed lesson plans. These give the teaching staff practical day-to-day guidance, but we work hard to build on these plans so that the lessons are matched carefully to the needs of their particular group. Every activity is prepared thoroughly and has a clear purpose. The teacher explains this at the beginning so that the pupils understand, during the activity, what they are learning and why.

Children in year one will undertake the Phonics Screening Check towards the end of the academic year. We expect the vast majority of children to reach the expected standard and to therefor pass this. For children who fail to achieve the expected standard, the reasons for this are considered and additional support is provided and progress more closely monitored in an attempt to ensure the Phonics Screening Check is securely passed during the retake in year two. If children fail to achieve the expected standard in the retake, they will receive intervention in year three to address gaps in their learning.

### **Parental Support**

Parents can gain an understanding of our phonics policy through phonic workshops, held at various points in the year. These workshops focus on developing parents' subject knowledge in the teaching of phonics and on supporting them to work alongside their children in phonics activities. Parents will also be made aware of the phonics being taught through the spellings and books that are sent home. Parents can refer to the phonic support on the school website, which provides advice on how you can help support your child at home. Teachers are willing to provide parents with advice and resources to support their child's learning in phonics at home.

Children will bring home RWI book bag books that match the colour group they are learning in RWI at school. Books will be kept at home for 1 week for children to enjoy reading fluently after the third or fourth read. Children are able to understand the story and able to answer any questions from the book.

### **Role and Responsibility of the Phonic Leader**

To ensure that all members of staff responsible for the teaching of phonics are sufficiently trained to enable the quality and consistency of teaching required to ensure all children becoming fluent and confident readers.

To monitor the progress in phonics throughout Key Stage 1 looking at planning, observations and on-going discussion with class teachers, the literacy subject leader and Headteacher.

To analyse results from phonic screening checks, identifying groups of children who are making the expected standard and those who are failing to do so. This includes close analysis of those with English as an additional language or those who experience special educational needs.

To organising extra support for slower progress children.

To review and edit the phonic policy on an annual basis.