



Phonics and Early Reading Policy
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Fellside Community Primary School

Ensuring every member of our school community is inspired to fulfil their potential and is prepared effectively for their future.

FELLSIDE COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL

PHONICS AND EARLY READING POLICY

Mission Statement

Ensuring every member of our school community is inspired to fulfil their potential and is prepared effectively for their future.

Equal Opportunities

Fellside Community Primary School supports the principles of Equal Opportunity as embodied in current legislation. We aim to provide an environment in which individual potential can be maximised irrespective of race, gender, age, ability or social circumstances. This policy extends to both staff and pupils. We believe that every pupil is of equal value and has the right to equal educational opportunities. To that end, positive action will be taken to ensure that all available human resources, talents and skills are utilised to the full and that every possible step will be taken to ensure that all individuals are treated equally and fairly.

Intent

Phonics and Spelling

At Fellside Community Primary School, we believe that all children can become fluent readers and writers. This is why we teach reading through Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised, our chosen (validated) Systematic Synthetic Phonics (SSP) programme. We begin to teach phonics in Nursery 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 aim for all of our children to be able to tackle any unfamiliar word as they read. At Fellside, we also model the application of the alphabetic code through phonics in shared reading and writing, both inside and outside 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.

Comprehension

At Fellside, we value reading as a crucial life skill. By the time children leave us, they read confidently for meaning and regularly enjoy reading for pleasure. Our readers are equipped with the tools to tackle unfamiliar vocabulary, and we encourage children to see themselves as readers for both pleasure and purpose.

Because we believe that teaching every child to read is so important, we have a Reading Leader who drives the early reading programme in our school. Our Reading Leader is highly skilled at teaching phonics and reading, and takes a role in supporting staff (teachers and teaching assistants) to ensure consistency across school, including the achievement of fidelity to Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised, our chosen SPP programme.

Implementation

Foundations for Phonics in Nursery

We provide a balance of child-led and adult-led experiences for all children that meet the curriculum expectations for the 'Communication and Language' and 'Literacy' strands of the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum. These include:

- Sharing high-quality stories and poems;
- Learning a range of nursery rhymes and action rhymes;
- Activities that develop focused listening and attention, including oral blending;
- Attention to high-quality language.

We ensure our Nursery children are well prepared to begin learning grapheme-phoneme correspondences (GPCs) and blending in Reception.

Daily Phonics Lessons in Reception and Year 1

We teach phonics for 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 to become fluent readers.

Children make a strong start in Reception: teaching begins by 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

Our overwhelming aim is that all children learn to read well. Any child who need additional practice has daily keep-up support, taught by a fully trained adult. 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.

We timetable daily 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. These children urgently need to catch-up so the gap between themselves and their peers does not widen. We use the Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised assessments to identify the gaps in their phonic knowledge and teach these using the keep-up resources – at pace.

Teaching Reading: Reading Practice Sessions Twice per Week

We teach children to read through reading practice sessions twice per 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 (see 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.

Each reading practice session has a clear focus, so that the demands of 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 the children to understand the text.

In Reception, these sessions commence after autumn half-term. Children who are not yet decoding have additional blending practice in small groups, so that they quickly learn to blend and can begin to read books.

Home Reading

The decodable reading practice book is taken home to ensure success is shared with parents.

- A reading for pleasure book also goes home for parents to share and read to children;
- We use the Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised parents' resources to engage our families and share information about phonics, the benefit of sharing books, how children learn to blend and other aspects of our provision, both online and planned workshops.

Additional Reading Support for Vulnerable Children

Children in Reception and Year 1 who are receiving additional phonics keep-up sessions read their reading practice book to an adult daily.

Ensuring Consistency and Pace of Progress

- Every teaching member of staff in our school has been trained to teach reading, so we all have the same expectations of progress. We all use the same language, routines and resources to read so that we lower children's cognitive load.
- Weekly content grids map each element of new learning to each day, week and term for the duration of the programme.
- Lesson templates, prompt cards and 'How to' videos ensure teachers all have a consistent approach and structure for each lesson.
- The Reading Leader and members of SLT regularly monitor and observe teaching; they use the summative data to identify children who need additional support and gaps in learning.

Ensuring Reading for Pleasure

'Reading for pleasure is the single most important indicator of a child's success'

(Organisation for Co-operation and Economic Development – OECD – 2002)

'The will influences the skill and vice versa' (OECD 2010)

We value reading for pleasure highly and work hard as a school to grow our Reading for Pleasure pedagogy.

- We read to children every day. We choose these books carefully as we want children to experience a wide range of books, including those that reflect the children at Fellside Primary School and our local community, as well as books that open windows into other worlds and other cultures.

- Every classroom has an inviting book corner that encourages a love for reading. We curate these books and talk about them to entice children to read a wide range of books.
- In Early Years, children have access to the reading corner every day in their free flow time, and the books are continually refreshed to reflect interests and themes.
- Children from Reception onwards have a home reading record. The parent/carer records comments to share with the adults in school (and vice versa) to ensure an ongoing dialogue between home and school to support children's learning.
- As the children progress through school, they are encouraged to write their own comments and keep a list of the books/authors they have read.
- The school library is made available for classes to use at protected times each week. Children are encouraged to select a book to take home to share with their parents and other family members.
- Children have regular opportunities to engage in a wide range of Reading for Pleasure events (book fairs, author visits and participation in national events like World Book Day and National Poetry Day).

Impact

Assessment

Assessment is used to monitor progress and to identify any child needing additional support as soon as they need it.

Assessment for Learning is used:

- Daily within class to identify children needing keep-up support;
- Weekly in the review lesson (Fridays) to assess gaps, addressing these immediately, and to secure fluency of GPCs, words and spellings.

Summative Assessment is used:

- Every six weeks to assess progress, to identify gaps in learning that need to be addressed, to identify any children needing additional support and to plan the keep-up support that they need;
- By SLT and scrutinised through the Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised assessment tracker, to narrow attainment gaps between different groups of children and so that any additional support for teachers can be put into place.

Statutory Assessment

- Children in Year 1 sit the Phonics Screening Check. Any child not passing the check resits it in Year 2.

Ongoing Assessment for Catch-up

- Children requiring ongoing phonics support in Years 2 to 6 are assessed through their teacher's ongoing formative assessment as well as through the half-termly Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised summative assessments.

Policy Implementation and Review

Implementation date: September 2021. The policy will be reviewed annually.