



Primaryes Phonics Policy

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1. Intent

a) Curriculum Vision

'Being able to read accurately by age 6 has a strong correlation with future academic success. So, getting phonics teaching right is essential.' (*Getting All Pupils Reading* - Lee Owston, Ofsted's National Director, Education. August 2023).

At West Norfolk Academies Trust we strive to ensure that all children become successful, fluent readers by the end of Key Stage One. We believe this is achievable through a combination of strong, high quality, discrete phonics teaching combined with opportunities for children to listen to a range of books read by an adult to promote fluency and language comprehension through a whole language approach that encourages a 'Reading for Pleasure' culture.

b) Aims of Subject

We aim to reinforce a consistent, high quality approach to the teaching of phonics across the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), Key Stage One and on into Key Stage Two for children who still need further support.

Our main aims are:

- To teach children aural discrimination, phonic awareness and rhyme to aid reading, writing and spelling development.
- To teach the use of segmenting and blending so that decoding skills provide a sound foundation for reading, writing and spelling.
- To ensure the teaching of phonics is lively, interactive and systematic.
- To enable children to apply phonic knowledge across the curriculum.
- To ensure that children know the 44 phonemes within the English language and read the associated graphemes speedily.
- To teach children to recognise the graphemes within words and associate them with the appropriate phoneme when reading.
- To provide children with strategies to identify and sight read 'tricky words'.

c) School Values

We aim to provide a caring, happy and safe environment in which the school values are upheld and embedded across the curriculum. This means that in Phonics:

- We support all children to become confident in their ability to use phonics in reading and writing.
- We teach them to understand the importance of phonics as a basis for their reading and writing skills.
- We give them hope to strive for the best they can be and attain their full potential.
- We work together with family and friends to ensure we understand what we need to do to become confident, enthusiastic readers and writers.

d) Cultural Capital

'The ability to read is the key to educational achievement. Without a basic foundation in literacy, children cannot gain access to a rich and diverse curriculum. Poor literacy limits opportunities not only at school, but throughout life, both economically and in terms of a wider enjoyment and appreciation of the written word'. (Education and Skills Committee).

At West Norfolk Academies Trust, we believe all children should get the best teaching possible in this crucial area so we will deliver the important skills and knowledge of phonics through a combination of strong, high quality, discrete phonics teaching combined with a whole language approach which will ensure all children succeed.

2. Planning and Sequencing

a) Reading

Once the children have been taught the first 5 sounds (m, a, s, d, t), they are then taught assisted blending using the sounds that they know. During lessons, children are taught to hear sounds and blend them together in sequence to make a word. We start with blending oral sounds, then progress to reading the letters and blending them together to read the word.

b) Order of Teaching Sounds

In Read Write Inc. Phonics the individual sounds are called 'speed sounds' — because we want every child to read them effortlessly. Set 1 sounds are the single letter sounds (phonemes), plus set 1 'special friends' (digraphs). They are taught in the following order;

m, a, s, d, t, i, n, p, g, o, c, k, u, b, f, e, l, h, r, j, v, y, w, z, x, sh, th, ch, qu, ng, nk.

There are 12 Set 2 'speed sounds' that are made up of two letters (digraphs) or three letters (trigraphs) which represent just one sound, e.g. **ay** as in play, **ee** as in tree and **igh** as in high. These are also known as 'special friends'.

ay: may I play?

ee: what can you see?

igh: fly high

ow: blow the snow

oo: poo at the zoo

ar: start the car

or: shut the door

air: that's not fair

ir: whirl and twirl

ou: shout it out

oy: toy to enjoy

When children are taught Set 1 and Set 2 sounds they will learn:

- a simple picture prompt linked to the sound
- a short phrase to say e.g. ay: may I play?
- the letters that represent a sound (special friends) e.g. ay

Each sound has a **list of green words** linked to it, so that the children have the opportunity to sound out and blend words containing the new sound they have been taught, for example, s-p-r-ay = spray.

Set 1 and the first 6 Set 2 sounds should be taught and learned by the end of Reception.

When learning Set 3 speed sounds the children will be taught alternative sounds/graphemes, e.g. **ee** as in tree and **ea** as in tea.

ea: cup of tea
a-e: make a cake
o-e: phone home
aw: yawn at dawn
ur: purse for a nurse

oi: spoil the boy
i-e: nice smile
u-e: huge brute
are: share and care
er: a better letter

ow: brown cow
oa: goat in a boat
ire: fire fire!
ure: sure it's pure?
tious / cious: (scrumptious / delicious)

ai: snail in the rain
ew: chew the stew
ear: hear with your ear
tion: (celebration)
e: he me we she be

c) Nonsense Words (Alien words)

As children build up their knowledge of sounds they are able to apply their decoding skills to any unfamiliar word, whether it be real or nonsense. During lessons each day, children will practice their decoding skills by sounding out nonsense words. Children are unable to rely on existing knowledge of real words, and instead have to use their letter-sound knowledge. **This is an important part of the Phonics Screening Check that the children complete at the end of year 1.**

d) Learning to Blend and Ditty Books

As soon as children have been taught a few letter sounds they begin to learn to blend the sounds together to read real words in a Word Time session. Each Word Time session involves oral blending of known sounds before they are shown the words on green cards. Children practice Fred talking the words until they become able to read them on sight. Ditty lessons follow on from this where children who are becoming excellent at reading single words are introduced to reading short sentences. Once children are confident reading the short sentences they are challenged to use their developing phonic knowledge to write a sentence.

e) Storybook Lessons

After ditty, the next stage is storybooks. These books are closely matched to their developing phonic knowledge. The storybooks consist of green words linked to the sounds that they have been learning, red words and challenge words to extend the children's vocabulary. After children have practiced these words individually they are prepared to see them in context in the story. Comprehension activities, partner discussion and writing activities based on the book, follow on from reading.

f) Reading into Writing

Through the storybooks, there is a key focus on consolidation to ensure that children have the opportunities to practise and embed their phonic knowledge, applying these skills in their independent reading and writing. Each story book follows a three or five day plan.

Writing activities include;

- 'Hold a sentence' which encourages the children to remember a whole sentence focusing first on segmenting for writing and then on checking spelling and punctuation
- 'Build a sentence' which gives the children the opportunity to create their own sentence that shows the meaning of a word
- 'Edit a sentence' which allows the children to critique a sentence using their knowledge of spelling, punctuation and grammar.

Children are then encouraged to apply what they have learnt in RWI sessions in their English lessons which are based around Talk4Writing. This gives opportunities to embed writing skills in contexts related to high quality texts.

3. Curriculum Map

We follow the Read Write Inc. Progression Map across our school and know the minimum expectations our children will achieve in each year group in phonics and early reading.

	Reception	Year 1	Year 2
Autumn 1	Teach Set 1 sounds: m a s d t i n p g o c k u b f e l h r j v w x y z sh th ch qu ng nk Teach oral blending games	Teach Set 2 sounds: ay ee igh ow oo oo ar or air ir ou oy Teach reading of words containing these Set 2 sounds. Build speed of reading words containing Set 1 sounds	Continue to teach Set 3 sounds Teach reading of multisyllabic words containing all sounds. Build speed of reading words containing Set 3 sounds.
Autumn 2	Recap any single letter alphabet gaps from the sounds above. Teach children to blend using single letter alphabet sounds.	Review all Set 2 sounds Teach reading of words containing these Set 2 sounds. Build speed of reading words containing Set 1 sounds, particularly WT 1 .6-1 .7	Recap any missing sound gaps and build fluency when reading stories. Children should complete the programme at the end

Spring 1	Recap Set 1 Special Friends: sh th ch qu ng nk Secure blending of cvc words using single letter alphabet sounds (WT 1.1-1.5).	Teach Set 2 sounds, particularly: ar or air ir ou oy Teach reading of words containing these Set 2 sounds. Build speed of reading words containing ay ee igh ow oo oo.	of Aut 2: Children can read stories and passages at a pace of 100 words per minute. They can read all sounds in words, including multisyllabic words, with little or no hesitation.
Spring 2	Recap Set 1 Special Friends: sh th ch qu ng nk Secure blending of words containing these sounds (WT 1.4-1.6).	Teach Set 3 sounds: ea, a-e Teach reading of words containing these Set 3 sounds. Build speed of reading words containing all Set 2 sounds	
Summer 1	Recap Set 1 sound gaps. Teach blending of words containing consonant blends (WT 1.7).	Continue to teach Set 3 sounds Teach reading of words containing these Set 3 sounds. Build speed of reading words containing all Set 2 and Set 3 sounds.	
Summer 2	Teach Set 2 sounds: ay ee igh ow oo oo ar or air ir ou oy Teach reading of words containing these Set 2 sounds. Build speed of reading words containing Set 1 sounds	Continue to teach Set 3 sounds Teach reading of words containing these Set 3 sounds. Build speed of reading words containing Set 3 sounds	
End of Year Expectations	Children can read all Set 1 sounds and 6 Set 2 sounds in words, including words with consonant blends. They have built speed of reading some of these words and can read them without hesitation	Children can read all Set 1, 2, 3 sounds in words and can read Set 1 and 2 sounds in words at speed. They can read some Set 3 sounds in words without hesitation. They can read at a pace of 80 words per minute.	

Once children have learnt Set 3 speed sounds they will be learning to read and write through storybooks. Our goal is for children to:

1. Work out unfamiliar words quickly — including new vocabulary and names
2. Read familiar words speedily — that is, words they have been taught
3. Read texts - including the words they have been taught — fluently

All children should achieve these expectations if they have followed the programme from Reception.

	Reception	Year 1	Year 2
End Autumn 1	Read single-letter Set 1 sounds	Read Purple Storybooks; read some Set 2 sounds	Read Blue Storybooks
End of Autumn Term	Read all Set 1 sounds; blend sounds into words orally	Read Pink Storybooks; read all Set 2 sounds	Read Blue Storybooks with increasing fluency and comprehension
End of Spring 1	Blend sounds to read words; read short Ditty stories	Read Orange Storybooks; read some Set 3 sounds	Read Grey Storybooks
End of Spring Term	Read Red Storybooks	Read Yellow Storybooks	Read Grey Storybooks with fluency and comprehension
End of Summer 1	Read Green Storybooks; read some Set 2 sounds	Read Yellow Storybooks; read all of Set 3 sounds	Access RWI Comprehension and Spelling programmes
End of Summer Term	Read 6 Set 2 sounds; Green Storybooks	Read Blue Storybooks	Access RWI Comprehension and Spelling programmes

4. Schematic Links

We recognise that Phonics teaching is the basis of ensuring that; 'Teachers should develop pupils' spoken language, reading, writing and vocabulary as integral aspects of the teaching of every subject. English is both a subject in its own right and the medium for teaching; for pupils, understanding the language provides access to the whole curriculum. Fluency in the English language is an essential foundation for success in all subjects'. (DfE (September 2013) *The National Curriculum in England (Framework Document)*, p10. London: DfE, O Crown Copyright 2013.)

5. Implementation

a) High Quality Teaching and Learning

We use a systematic, structured phonics programme called Read Write Inc. Phonics.

Read Write Inc. is divided into set sounds and storybooks with each phase building on the skills and knowledge of previous learning. Children have time to practise and rapidly expand their ability to read and spell words. They are also taught to read and spell 'red words' (tricky words), which are words with spellings that are unusual and cannot be segmented or blended (sounded out).

Through the storybooks, there is a key focus on consolidation to ensure that children have the opportunities to practise and embed their phonic knowledge, building on their knowledge and understanding to apply these skills in their independent reading and writing.

Children use phonic knowledge when they are reading and writing. This approach has been shown to provide a quick and efficient way for most young children to learn to read and write words on the page, fluently and accurately. We want children to develop this skill so that it becomes automatic. This also helps them with their spelling.

Planning for phonics is separate from English but with the understanding that good phonics teaching should link to the literacy needs of the children within an English lesson and across the curriculum.

b) Opportunities to Develop Subject Specific Literacy — Oracy and Vocabulary

We ensure that all staff are trained in the application of Read Write Inc. and in the correct pronunciation of all phonemes. We consistently use the correct terminology with the children as this helps them to understand the whole process. The technical terms, such as: Blending, Decoding, Digraph, Grapheme-Phoneme Correspondences (GPCs), Homograph, Phoneme, Segmenting, Split Digraph and Trigraph are taught explicitly to the children, who soon pick them up and use them confidently.

We provide a rich and varied environment that supports children's language learning, beginning in EYFS. As a staff we model good listening which includes making eye contact with speakers, asking questions and commenting on what has been said. We have back-and-forth conversations with children and encourage them to converse with each other for a variety of reasons.

We give children ample opportunities to extend their spoken communication. All staff provide good models of spoken English to help the children enlarge their vocabulary and learn how to structure comprehensible sentences, speak confidently and clearly, and sustain dialogue.

c) Progress - Knowing More and Remembering More

To guarantee that progress is made for all children in Phonics, the staff at West Norfolk Academies Trust ensure that we follow the teaching sequence for Read Write Inc. Phonics. All children are given the opportunity to recap on previous learning as part of this daily sequence of learning. We consistently build on the children's prior learning to deepen their understanding and build confidence in their own ability to be able to read and write independently.

d) Assessments

The purpose of monitoring and evaluation activities is to raise the overall quality of teaching and levels of pupil attainment. The Reading Leader and Senior Leaders will monitor the quality of teaching and learning throughout the school through coaching sessions, learning walks, pupil voice and regular assessments.

Every half term, the Reading Leader will assess the children's understanding and knowledge of phonics. This ensures consistency and that the children are grouped effectively so that they all make sufficient progress. In the EYFS and KSI we assess pupil progress using the RWI pupil tracker. This assessment informs the rate at which children progress through the storybooks and secure a sound understanding of phonics and will identify particular areas of need in terms of support and intervention to ensure all children reach the expected standards. Children identified as being in danger of falling behind are targeted for small group work or 1-1 tuition, following the RWI handbook.

All Year 1 children take the Phonics Screening Check - a statutory assessment required by legislation. Those who do not meet the pass mark will be given support and intervention programmes in Year Two to provide them with sufficient knowledge and understanding to re-take the Phonics Screening Check and obtain a pass mark. Those children who do not obtain the required level set by the Phonics Screening Check in Key Stage One will be further supported with phonics teaching in Key Stage Two using Read Write Inc Phonics, Read Write Inc. Fresh Start, 1-1 tutoring and/or a spelling intervention programme.

e) Learning Environment

We stress the importance of phonics within the learning environment and ensure that it is paramount and evident indoors and outdoors. All classes display a Read Write Inc. phonics wall frieze showing the graphemes in EYFS and Key Stage One. Red words are also displayed and referred to. Phonics teaching bases include the simple/complex speed sounds charts. Our working walls are used to display the week's learning using any key words as well as the grapheme-phoneme being taught. Children are able to constantly refer to this within their day for consolidation and application of previous phonics taught. Correct letter formation information is displayed within every classroom environment.

f) Reading

Phonics is the approach used to teach reading and spelling. It is an integral part of all children being able to read at West Norfolk Academies Trust. We ensure that children are taught the skills necessary through strong, high quality, discrete phonics combined with opportunities for children to listen to a range of books read by an adult to promote fluency and language comprehension through a whole language approach that ensures a 'Reading for Pleasure' culture. Children are given books from our Read Write Inc. scheme to take home and share with their families that are fully matched to their phonic learning.

They take home a familiar text that they have read multiple times at school, a book bag book (an unseen text matched to the same level as the practiced book) and a picture book to be shared with an adult at home. All children are given the opportunity to read a variety of fiction and non-fiction books that they can read for pleasure in class and at home with the support of adults if required. The ability to read is embedded throughout the curriculum and the children are given many opportunities to develop their understanding through a rich and diverse programme of learning.

g) Inclusion

During the planning and implementation of Phonics, we are aware that every child, whatever their diverse learning needs, must be given the opportunity to achieve their full potential.

We respond to the needs of children whatever their ability. We ensure that learning opportunities are provided that enable all children to make progress by setting suitable learning challenges and respond to each child's different needs through differentiation of task, resources and outcome. Staff will plan for and utilise resources that take into account all learning styles, including visual, auditory and kinaesthetic learners. Resources such as magnetic whiteboards and letters, sound cards and sound mats will be evident during phonic sessions. All activities will be firmly focused on achieving the intended learning outcome.

Children are grouped according to their ability in Phonics. Careful thought will be given to the provision of appropriately structured phonic work for children with SEN, often through intervention groups or 1-1 tuition. The school uses a variety of strategies to enable children to have increased access to the curriculum through a broad-based, multi-sensory, visual, auditory and kinaesthetically planned phonic sessions.

All staff have high expectations of each and every child but we also ensure that able, gifted and talented children have opportunities provided that develop and apply their particular capabilities. Regular assessments ensure that all children are placed into a group best matched to their needs and abilities.

h) EAL

Synthetic phonics and the development of phonological awareness supports EAL children with their reading development and many EAL learners develop the ability to decode rapidly. We also ensure we provide other activities which support the language and literacy development of EAL children.

i) Enrichment & Homework

Senior leaders promote CPD for families based on reading and RWI. This ensures consistency between teaching at school and practice at home. Adults at home are able to understand clearly the strategies and vocabulary used when teaching phonics and reading skills. This helps the children to make faster progress. An information booklet is also provided which details the different ways in which families can help their child/ren at home. Families are actively encouraged to hear their children read their books multiple times to support fluency and comprehension.

6. Impact: What Will Our Children Look Like?

We want our children to:

- read fluently for both pleasure and information
- use spelling rules, phonics and grammar accurately
- read and write clearly and with confidence in any given genre
- speak clearly and confidently in a range of situations
- listen actively and respond appropriately, developing knowledge and opinions
- be able to proofread their own work and make amendments and improvements