



Phonics and early reading policy

The context of our school

At Nelson Primary School it is essential that our approach to teaching phonics and reading is accessible to all learners, regardless of background.

Intent

Phonics (reading and spelling)

Our curriculum at Nelson Primary School is to create responsible active citizens, while promoting high academic and social aspirations (social mobility).

It is our intent to deliver a Phonics curriculum that gives children the tools to become a successful reader. Our aim, through structured and consistent daily teaching of Synthetic Phonics, is for the children to develop the skills necessary to access a wide range of literature, no matter what their barriers to learning may be. This is to say, every child has the skills to read, and it is our job to help them unlock these. Those who may arrive with additional needs, which may pose some barriers to learning, will be identified and supported immediately, giving them the opportunity to catch up.

In return, whilst their confidence in reading words increases, so will the love for reading books. It is our intent that every child can develop a pleasure for reading, through accessing and successfully reading books to those around them. It is important that the children's lives are reflected in the stories they read and the children will be exposed to a range of literature. They will feel pride when sharing stories and feel inspired to read more.

No child will see spelling as a barrier to writing. In becoming successful readers, our intent is for every child to use phonics as a foundation to becoming successful writers too. The children will be given the tools to segment and write any word, no matter how ambitious. The children will feel confident spelling words independently, using the GPC learnt through consistent phonics teaching. And with the GPC's becoming more secure, spelling will become more fluent, leaving the children's imagination and creativity to take the lead.

At Nelson Primary School, 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.

As a result, all our children are able to tackle any unfamiliar words as they read. At Nelson Primary School, 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.

Because we believe teaching every child to read is so important, we have a Reading Team who drive the early reading programme in our school. Therefore, staff feel supported in teaching phonics and reading, with fidelity to the *Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised* 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 'Communication and language' and 'Literacy'. 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 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 become fluent readers.
- Teaching of the Little Wandle Scheme begins in Week 2 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 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, 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.
- Any child who does not pass the phonics screening check in Year 1 are taught daily, 20 minute phonics sessions in place of SPaG in Year 2 by a trained adult.
- In KS2, we identify children who need phonics support through a register. They are then allocated time to do daily catch-up sessions with a trained adult. These children urgently need to catch up, so any gaps in their learning can be filled. 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 – at pace. These sessions last no more than 10 minutes per day.

Home Learning

- A decodable reading practice book, linked to the phase the child is **secure** in, is taken home to ensure success is shared with the family.
- Each class has a 'Lending Library' where children can sign books out of each week to share with their family, encouraging reading for pleasure.
- We use the [Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised parents' resources](#) to engage our families and share information about phonics, the benefits of sharing books, how children learn to blend and other aspects of our provision, both online and through workshops.
- In Year 1, Spelling words are sent home on a **Thursday**, which link to the sounds taught that week. Each spelling set has tricky words included within it to increase fluency.

Additional reading support for vulnerable children

- Children who have been identified as being in the lowest 20% for reading have an extra reading book in school, related to their phonics secured phase. They then receive extra reading sessions with an adult at least 2 times per week.

Ensuring consistency and pace of progress

- Every teacher in our school has been trained to teach early reading, so we have the same expectations of progress. We all use the same language, routines and resources to teach children 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 English team uses the Audit and Prompt cards to regularly monitor and observe teaching; they use the summative data to identify children who need additional support and gaps in learning.

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 (class teachers are responsible for passing on this information to the trained adult offering same day intervention to close the gaps presented during lesson time).
 - weekly in the Review lesson to assess gaps, address these immediately and 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.

- to narrow attainment gaps between different groups of children and so that any additional support for teachers can be put into place.
- The [Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised placement assessment](#) is used:
 - with any child new to the school to quickly identify any gaps in their phonic knowledge and provide appropriate extra teaching.

Statutory assessment

- Children in Year 1 sit the Phonics screening check in the Summer term. Any child not passing the check re-sits it in Year 2.

Ongoing assessment for catch-up

- Children in Year 2 to 6 are assessed through:
 - their teacher's ongoing formative assessment
 - the *Little Wandle Letters and Sounds* placement assessment
 - the appropriate half-termly assessments.

Approved: 16th September 2022

To be reviewed: September 2024