

**THE CAMBRIDGE PRIMARY SCHOOL**

***'Inspiring Minds Together'***

**PHONICS & EARLY READING POLICY**

**2020**



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The Cambridge Primary School  
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## Phonics and Early Reading Policy

“Once you learn to read, you will be forever free.” Frederick Douglass

The teaching of phonics and early reading at The Cambridge Primary School is of the highest priority. We are committed to ensuring that every child will learn to read, regardless of ability, need or background. Giving pupils the key skills in English, enables them to access material in all curriculum areas, and provides a foundation for their learning throughout their school career and beyond. We are committed to inspiring every child to be excited about books and motivated to read for pleasure.

### INTENT

At the Cambridge Primary School, we intend:

- for every child to be a reader
- for early readers to have the skills to decode words in order to be able to read fluently
- for children to understand what they have read
- for children to respond with curiosity about what they and others have read
- for children to become enthusiastic and motivated to read for pleasure
- to develop children’s confidence in reading a wide variety of genres and text types
- to develop children’s knowledge of a wide range of authors and illustrators

### IMPLEMENTATION

#### Phonics

At the Cambridge Primary School, we will implement:

- A consistent, systematic high quality, whole school approach to teaching phonics which begins almost immediately as children enter Reception and is carried through until at least the point where children can read almost all words fluently. The Letters and Sounds Programme (DfES 2007) is used which is a systematic, synthetic approach, recommended for teaching children to read (Rose Review 2006, Bold Beginnings 2017). This programme is supplemented by the images, actions and rhymes of Jolly Phonics to aid recall. Resources are consistent across the school.
- Daily, morning lessons to ensure phonics teaching is prioritised. These follow the Letters and Sounds four part structure with time to revisit old learning, new learning, blending and segmenting. Children are immersed in a variety of activities and practical games to learn new sounds, practise pre-cursive letter formation and to build up a bank of tricky words.
- A Long Term Plan that identifies the order of teaching sounds and words in addition to when the sounds and words are taught. This promotes progression and ensures coverage.
- Monitoring of the planning, teaching and assessment to ensure phonics is of high quality and consistent across the school.

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- Planned opportunities throughout the curriculum to extend phonics teaching and learning beyond 'dedicated phonics time'. Consequently, learning is applied, reinforced and relevant connections are identified for the children.
- Teaching in ability groups to ensure teaching is targeted so every child achieves.
- Ongoing formative assessment to ensure every child's phonics provision is clearly matched to their ability. This will result in the swift identification of those experiencing difficulty and fluid movement between groups.
- Close monitoring of children making the slowest progress through:
  - summative assessments (each half term). A coded symbol is used to assess how quickly and independently, a child recalls phonic learning, so smaller steps of progress are identified.
  - Data analysis (each term following data check points).
  - Pupil progress meetings (each term following data check points).
- Sufficient effective additional support for children in danger of falling behind or those experiencing significant difficulty, to enable them to keep up. Identified children will take part in regular, short intervention groups with a focus on preteaching and overlearning. This is aimed at building confidence and successfully retaining what they have learned.
- Data from the Year 1 Phonics Screening Check is analysed and responded to with adjustments to planning and teaching.
- A supportive learning environment, with displays and table prompts showing sounds and key words accompanied by recognisable images.

### **Reading**

At the Cambridge Primary School, we will implement:

- Story time, when the children are read aloud to on a daily basis in every year group/in Reception and Key Stage 1. This is for the children's enjoyment with the main aim of motivating them to read for pleasure. Additionally, it will develop their knowledge and confidence to discuss a wide range of authors, illustrators, variety of text types and genres. They may share a text chosen by the children, teacher or one of the 'Favourite Five' books. These are five books that are repeatedly shared over a half term, with the aim of studying an author, illustrator or text type.
- Regular opportunities for children to read to adults in school. In Reception and Key Stage 1, all children will read to an adult at least once every week. Every class will have a 'Readers List' containing the names of children requiring additional practice. All adults in the every class are aware that every second counts and if there is any spare time, they can access the list and read with the children.
- English planning that is linked, inspired and supported by high quality, engaging and relevant texts. Stories form the basis for weekly continuous provision in Reception and an English teaching sequence in Key Stage 1; leading to daily discussion about the text.
- Regular opportunities in English lessons, story time and through regular for children to respond through questioning and debate to what they and others have read.

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- A range of regular events to engage pupils with the joy and wonder of a wide range of text types so they are confident, enthused and motivated to read for pleasure. Events include Book Buddies, Mystery Readers, World Book Day, visiting authors, bedtime stories and reading challenges.
- A structured reading system. This consists of:
  - 'Phonics Readers' that are fully decodable books from a range of reading schemes to introduce a wide variety of literature. They are organised in groups that match the teaching sequence of the Letters and Sounds programme and will match as closely as possible, the sounds and words each child is currently learning. The children should be able to decode the words by sounding out and blending, and not by using the pictures. A child will keep their 'Phonics Reader' for a week with the intention of reading it daily to develop fluency and pace.
  - 'Family Readers' are aimed at developing and inspiring a love of reading through the shared experience of reading together. These books contain sounds and tricky words that do not match those the children are currently learning so they are not expected to be able to decode them. The 'Family Reader' can be changed daily.
- The discrete teaching of comprehension skills from high quality guided reading planning to ensure comprehension skills are taught rigorously and consistently across the school. In Reception, children are taught daily for 10 minutes as a whole class. In Key Stage 1, children are taught daily, for thirty minutes as a whole class. A different skill is focused on each day to include: vocabulary, inference, prediction, retrieval and sequencing. These skills are represented by colour-coded engaging characters to make them memorable so the children will connect them to all curriculum areas.
- Monitoring of the planning, teaching and assessment to ensure reading is of high quality and consistent across the school.
- Ongoing formative assessment of every child during their weekly read with an adult will ensure their 'Phonics Reader' is clearly matched to their ability and their comprehension skills are developing. Those experiencing difficulty decoding will be supported through phonics intervention and any difficulties with comprehension skills can be targeted during lesson time in focus groups.
- Close monitoring of children making the slowest progress through:
  - Data analysis (each term following data check points).
  - Pupil progress meetings (each term following data check points).
- Data from the End of the Key Stage 1 Assessments for reading is analysed and responded to with adjustments to planning and teaching.
- A supportive learning environment with inviting book corners in every classroom so children have access to engaging books and interactive colour-coded displays to support the teaching of comprehension.

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## Learning Characteristics

We consider it is of vital importance that children learn and develop positive characteristics as individuals alongside academic knowledge and skills. These are qualities that will ensure they continue to learn and thrive throughout their school life and beyond. We will foster the school's own characteristics of being brave, innovative, collaborative and taking ownership.

**In phonics and guided reading lessons, we will encourage the learning of these characteristics by providing opportunities for the children to:**

### Brave:

- Self-assess to identify the sounds and key words they find harder to recall
- Persevere when decoding words to read
- Share their 'marvellous mistakes' to help their friends learn

### Innovate:

- Make games and activities to help learn sounds and key words
- Create from stories, for example, write a play, compose a song or make a puppet based on what they have read
- Develop their reasoning to answer inferential questions

### Collaborate:

- Practically learn phonics and key words in small groups or with a partner
- Work in mixed ability groups and as a whole class to read and discuss texts
- Find evidence within the texts they read to answer comprehension questions with a partner and in small groups

### Ownership:

- Choose if they need to use phonics resources to decode words
- Select from a range of comprehension questions depending on the amount of challenge they are ready for
- Self-assess against reading targets

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### **Meeting the needs of all our learners**

At the Cambridge Primary School we believe that phonics is best supported when taught in ability groups. This enables the teaching to be targeted more accurately so every child receives the correct amount of support and challenge to ensure they blend words to begin reading as quickly as possible.

The 'Phonic Reader' books are fully decodable and match as closely as possible, the sounds and words each child is currently learning to enable them success and develop confidence to 'see' themselves as readers.

Phonics is taught using a multi-sensory approach with visual images, songs, rhymes and practical activities a part of the lessons. This appeals to all learning styles.

Conversely, reading comprehension is taught as a whole class and in mixed ability groups in Reception and Key Stage 1. The text is read to the children which enables them to fully focus on developing their understanding of the following aspects of reading: vocabulary, sequencing, retrieval, inference and prediction. As the children work together, under the guidance of the teacher, they are supported by the skills they all possess to share understanding and ideas. This in turn promotes learning and progress.

Children requiring extra support for phonics and reading are identified swiftly through rigorous assessment. Extra support is available through pre-teaching and overlearning with the aim of enabling them to make rapid progress to 'catch up'. If progress is not made, extra intervention and specialist support will be investigated.

All children are stretched and challenged in phonics as they learn and recall new sounds and key words. Regarding reading comprehension, stretch and challenge occurs at every level as children are required to explain and reason their understanding of a text. They are also challenged to complete innovation tasks, as mentioned previously.

### **Parents as Partners**

Research has also repeatedly shown that parental involvement in their child's schooling is a more powerful force than other family background variables, such as social class, family size and level of parental education. We recognise and value the important role parents play in education as they know their child best. Consequently, we encourage parents to engage in an active partnership with the school.

Parents have the opportunity to attend phonics and reading workshops at school to gain further insight into how they are taught and how they can support their child. They receive a reading booklet, with information on supporting their child's reading development at home in addition to questions to support the development of comprehension skills. Every week, parents receive a home learning letter containing focus sounds and words from the week's learning with suggested games and activities to embed them. Parents are expected to read with their children daily, complete the phonics home learning task and their comments are welcomed in the home reading diaries.

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## IMPACT

At the Cambridge Primary School, the impact will be seen through:

- Internal monitoring including learning walks, lesson observations, whole school, moderation, book and planning scrutiny. This will ensure teaching, learning and assessment is of high quality and consistent across the school.
- Pupils commenting on a love of reading throughout Reception and Key Stage 1 during pupil conferencing.
- External moderation of phonics and reading with schools within the EEE Trust and local authority group moderation meetings. This provides an external quality assurance and validation of our teacher assessments.
- Our tracking and assessment system (Scholarpack) which enables formative and summative assessment to be recorded. Leadership and class teachers analyse the data to review the attainment and progress of individual and key groups of children. Any children who are not on track to make expected progress are tracked during pupil progress meetings that are held each term following data checkpoints.
- Rapid, effective support for children in danger of falling behind or those experiencing significant difficulty, to enable them to keep up.

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