

**THE CAMBRIDGE PRIMARY SCHOOL**

***'Inspiring Minds Together'***

**PHONICS & EARLY READING POLICY**

**2023**



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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 Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised Programme (2021) is used in its entirety in Reception and in Year 1 whilst those children continuing with phonics support past this point, will follow the Rapid Catch-up or SEND programme. Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised is a systematic, synthetic approach which is recommended for teaching children to read (Rose Review 2006, Bold Beginnings 2017, The reading framework: teaching the foundations of literacy 2021).
- Daily, morning lessons to ensure phonics teaching is prioritised. These follow the Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised four part structure with time to revisit old learning, new learning, blending and segmenting. Children are immersed in activities to learn new sounds, apply them to read words, practise letter formation and to build up a bank of tricky words.
- A clear progression through the programme so children are taught from the simple to the more complex grapheme phoneme correspondences and tricky words. Opportunities to review and revise learning daily, weekly and across terms and years is included in order to move learning into children’s long term memory.

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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 whole class groups in Reception and Year 1. In other year groups, phonics is sometimes taught in ability groups where appropriate to ensure teaching is targeted so every child achieves at an appropriate pace.
- Ongoing formative assessment to ensure every child 'keeps up' with the phonics provision.
- Keep up sessions offering immediate additional practice for those children who are identified as not keeping up with their peers. Identified children will take part in regular, short intervention groups with a focus on pre-teaching and overlearning. This is aimed at building confidence and successfully retaining what they have learnt.
- Close monitoring of children making the slowest progress through:
  - Summative assessments (each half term)
  - Phonic screening check practice
  - Data analysis (each term following data check points)
  - Pupil progress meetings (each term following data check points)
- Data analysis of the Year 1 Phonics Screening Check which is responded to with adjustments to planning and teaching.
- Monitoring of teaching and learning to ensure phonics is of high quality and consistent across the school.
- A supportive learning environment, with displays and table prompts showing sounds and key words accompanied by recognisable images that are consistent across all year groups.
- Regular staff training to develop subject knowledge, confidence and ensure phonics teaching and learning is consistent across Reception, Key Stage 1 and 2 (where necessary).

## **Reading**

At the Cambridge Primary School, we will implement:

- A reading expert strategy:  
The reading experts at The Cambridge Primary School have a shared understanding that reading is an essential skill for everyone. Reading is for enjoyment and for learning. We strive to create a reading culture where reading is prioritised and at the heart of everything we do. A whole school approach that combines both reading pleasure and achievement for all.
- Story time, when the children are read aloud to on a daily basis in every year group. This is for the children's enjoyment with the main aim of motivating them to read for pleasure. Texts will be ambitious for each year group with rich language to develop the children's vocabulary. Additionally, it will develop their knowledge and confidence to discuss a wide range of authors, illustrators, variety of text types and genres.
- Regular opportunities for children to read to adults in school. In Reception, Key Stage 1 and 2, all children will read to an adult at least once every week through individual and group reading practice sessions. Every class will have a traffic light 'Readers List' containing the names of children requiring additional practice. Children identified as 'red readers', read to an adult at least three times a week, 'amber readers' read at

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least twice weekly whilst 'green readers' read at least once each week. Adults in 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 and 2. This leads to daily discussion about the text where children are encouraged to respond to what they and others have read with questioning and debate.
- 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 Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised programme. They will match as closely as possible, the sounds and words each child is currently learning so any words the children do not recognise, can be decoded using phonic knowledge and not by any other strategy, for example, using the pictures. A child will keep their 'Phonics Reader' for a week with the intention of reading it daily to develop fluency, pace and prosody.
  - '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 reading:
  - Reception and Year 1 children take part in small group reading practice sessions. There are three sessions weekly with a specific focus on the skills of decoding, prosody and comprehension.
  - In Year 2 and Key Stage 2, children take part in whole class guided reading lessons to develop fluency and comprehension skills. The children focus on different comprehension skills such as: vocabulary, inference, prediction, retrieval and sequencing. These are represented by colour-coded engaging characters (dogs in Key Stage 1 and snakes in Key Stage 2) to make them memorable. Often, the text used is related directly to the focus text used in English or the topic.
- Weekly 'Chatter Books' sessions in every year group to develop an intrinsic love of reading. Children take ownership of the session structure under the guidance of the class teacher, participating in informal book talk activities such as recommending texts, drama and exploring authors and illustrators. This also enhances teacher knowledge of the children's reading practices.
- 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 supportive learning environment with engaging books in every classroom
- 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).

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- 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.

### Time allocations (weekly)

Phonics (time allocation)							
Early Years (Reception)		Key Stage 1 (Year 1)			Key Stage 1 & 2 (Year 2-4)		
Phonics Whole class	2hrs 30 mins (daily 30 mins)	Phonics Whole class	2hrs 30 mins (daily 30 mins)	Phonics Support groups organised in Phases (times per group)	1hr 30 mins (x3 weekly 30 mins)		
Keep Up sessions (as and when needed)		Keep Up sessions (as and when needed) PSC booster (20 mins x3 weekly)			Individual support: precision teach, interventions and reading, benchmarking assessment.		
Reading (time allocation)							
Early Years (Reception)		Key Stage 1 (Year 1)		Key Stage 1 (Year 2)		Key Stage 2 (Year 3 and 4)	
Reading Practice Sessions (ability groups)	1hr 30 mins (x3 weekly 30 mins)	Reading Practice Sessions (ability groups)	1hr 30 mins (x3 weekly 30 mins)	Guided Reading (whole class)	1hr 30mins (x3 weekly 30 mins)	Guided Reading (whole class)	1hr 30mins (x3 weekly 30 mins)
Chatter Books	1hr 15 mins (x5 weekly 15 mins)	Chatter Books	20 mins (x1 weekly)	Chatter Books	20 mins (x1 weekly)	Chatter Books	20 mins (x1 weekly)
Storytelling	15 mins (x1 weekly)						
1:1 reading	1:1 reading (at least x1 weekly)						
Story Time	approx. 1hr (daily approx. 15 mins)						

### 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, reading practice, guided reading and 'Chatter Books' lessons, we will encourage the development of these characteristics by providing opportunities for the children such as :**

#### Brave:

- Self-assessing to identify the sounds and key words they find harder to recall.
- Persevering when decoding words to read.
- Sharing their 'marvellous mistakes' to help their friends learn.

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**Innovate:**

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

**Collaborate:**

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

**Ownership:**

- Choosing if they need to use phonics resources to decode words.
- Selecting from a range of comprehension questions depending on the amount of challenge they are ready for.
- Self-assessing.

**Meeting the needs of all our learners**

At the Cambridge Primary School we believe that sometimes 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 the confidence to 'see' themselves as readers.

Phonics keep up sessions are taught in a more practical way to appeal to all learning styles.

Reading comprehension is taught during reading practice sessions and as a whole class. To enable the children to fully focus on developing their understanding of the different aspects of reading, sometimes, the text is read to the children by an adult or partner. Film and images are also used. 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 'keep 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.

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## 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. There is information on the school website and in the children's Reading Records. Every week, parents in Reception and Year 1 receive a home learning letter containing focus sounds and words from the week's learning. Parents are expected to read with their children daily and their comments are encouraged in the Reading Records.

## IMPACT

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

- Internal monitoring including learning walks, lesson observations, pupil conferencing, 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 during pupil conferencing.
- External moderation of phonics and reading with schools within the EEEA 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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