



Osbalwick Primary Academy

Phonics and Early Reading Policy

October 2021

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Introduction

At Osbaldwick Primary Academy, we place reading at the heart of our curriculum. To ensure that all pupils are able to access the ambitious, experiential, broad curriculum that we have planned, we ensure that our children receive high quality phonics and reading lessons. This is especially true in the early years of their education, in our Early Years and Key Stage 1 classes.

We have chosen to subscribe to Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised. This is a systematic, synthetic phonics programme that was validated by the Department for Education in July 2021. We follow this programme with fidelity and consistency and the resources and routines used become familiar to the children as they progress through the programme.

Intent

At Osbaldwick Primary Academy, we believe that all our children can become fluent readers and writers. We begin teaching phonics in Nursery and Reception and follow the [Little Wandle Progression Map](#), which ensures children build on their growing knowledge of the alphabetic code, mastering phonics to read and spell as they move through the school.

As a result, our aim is that all our children will be able to tackle any unfamiliar words as they read. Within 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 for reading and writing, as well as the development of a wide, varied vocabulary, is crucial in all subjects.

At Osbaldwick Primary Academy, we see reading as an essential life skill. By the time our children leave us, our aim is that they read confidently for meaning and regularly enjoy reading for pleasure, that they are equipped with the tools to tackle unfamiliar vocabulary and the desire to read varied and diverse texts. We encourage our children to see themselves as readers for both pleasure and purpose.

Because we believe teaching every child to read is so important, we have a Phonics and Early Reading Leader who drives the phonics and early reading programme within our school. This person is highly experienced in the teaching of phonics and reading and they monitor and support teaching staff so that everyone teaches with consistency and 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 meets the curriculum expectations for the “Communications and Language” and “Literacy” Areas of Learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum. These include:

- Sharing high quality stories, non-fiction texts 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 and vocabulary development

We ensure that 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 per day. In Reception, we build from initial 10-minute lessons,

with additional daily oral blending games, to the full length lessons as quickly as possible. Each Friday we review the week's teaching to help children to become fluent readers.

The teaching and learning of phonics begins in the second week of the children starting in Reception and the [Little Wandle Progression Map](#) is followed from the start.

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 Phases 3 and 4 and are taught to read and spell words using Phase 5 GPCs with fluency and accuracy.

Daily Keep Up Lessons

Any child who needs additional practice has daily Keep Up support. Keep Up lessons match the structure of class teaching and use the same procedures, resources and mantras, but in smaller steps with more repetition with the aim that every child secures their learning.

For any child in Year 2 or above who is not fully fluent at reading or has not passed the Phonics Screening Check, Keep Up is still available. These children urgently need to catch up to ensure the gap between themselves and their peers does not widen. Regular assessments (from the Little Wandle programme) are used to identify specific gaps in their phonics knowledge which are then matched to the appropriate Keep Up activities. These activities are short, sharp lessons, taught at pace, that take place on a regular basis throughout the week.

Teaching Reading: Reading Practice Sessions

Children in Reception and Year 1 (and some in Year 2) enjoy Reading Practice Sessions three times a week. The children are taught in small groups (no more than 6) with a trained adult. The books used are matched to the children's secure phonics knowledge which is identified by analysing the end of half term assessments and guidance on pages 11-20 of the [Application of Phonics to Reading](#). All groups are overseen by the class teacher, who rotates with other members of staff and works with each group on a regular basis.

Each Reading Practice session has a clear focus, so that 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: the application of phonic knowledge to read words within a text
- Prosody: teaching the children to read with understanding and expression
- Comprehension: teaching the children to understand the text.

In Reception, these practice sessions begin as soon as children are able to recognise and blend some GPCs and to read simple words. These groups quickly become established and the routine is continued as the children move into and through Year 1. Children in Year 2 and above still receive these Reading Practice sessions until they are fluent and competent readers. The sessions, however, may be on a group or an individual basis.

Ensuring Consistency and Pace of Progress

Every Teacher and key Teaching Assistants in our school has completed the Little Wandle training modules, so that there is consistency in the knowledge, understanding and expectations of progress. The same language routines and resources to teach children to read are used across the school so that the children's cognitive load is lowered. This leads to automaticity when reading, thus freeing up the children's working memory to more clearly remember and understand what they have read.

[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 key staff have a consistent approach and structure for each lesson.

The Phonics and Early Reading Lead uses the Audit and lesson prompt cards and content grids to regularly monitor and observe teaching and learning. Outcomes of these observations are used to identify areas of future professional development for individuals or groups of staff to ensure the programme is delivered with consistency and fidelity.

Summative data from half termly assessments is used to identify children who need additional support and to identify specific gaps in learning which are then matched to Keep Up activities.

Home Reading

The decodable reading practice books are shared with parents to ensure success is shared with the family. This might be in the form of an actual book, or in the form of an E Book. These E Books are from the Little Wandle resources and match the books the children are reading in class.

To encourage reading for pleasure, children are invited to choose a book from the school library or classroom book corner to take home each week. This book is above the children’s reading level, but families are encouraged to share these books together and suggestions on how to do this most effectively are shared with parents and carers.

We use the [Little Wandle Letters and Sounds 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 and booklets.

Additional Reading Support for Vulnerable Children

In addition to whole class Reading Practice Sessions, children in Reception and Year 1 who are receiving additional phonics Keep Up sessions are also the focus for extra opportunities to read with adults on a regular basis. Volunteers who visit school to support these children are specifically trained by the Phonics and Early Reading Lead to ensure consistency of language and approach.

Ensuring Reading for Pleasure

“Reading for pleasure is the single most important indicator of a child’s success.” (OECD 2002)

*“The will influences the skill and vice versa.”
(OCED 2010)*

At Osbaldwick Primary Academy, we value reading for pleasure highly and work hard as a school to grow our Reading for Pleasure pedagogy.

Classroom staff read to the children every day. We choose these books carefully to ensure our children experience a wide range of books that reflect the diversity within our school and our local community as well as books that open windows into other worlds and 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.

Children throughout our school have a Home Reading Record. The parent/carer records comments to share with the adults in school and the adults will write in this on a regular basis to ensure communication between home and school.

As the children progress through the school, they are encouraged to write their own comments and

keep a list of the books/authors that they have read. These may be displayed in the classroom and/or the school libraries.

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 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
- By the Phonics and Early Reading Lead and scrutinised through the online Progress 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 in the Summer Term. Any child not passing the check re-sits it in Year 2.

Ongoing Assessment for Catch Up

Children who do not pass the Phonic Screening Check Resit in Year 2, are assessed through their teachers ongoing formative assessment as well as through the half termly Little Wandle summative assessments. Specific gaps can be identified and matched to Keep Up activities. These assessments and subsequent support, for some children, may extend into Key Stage 2.

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