

## Phonics and Early Reading Policy

“All pupils must be encouraged to read widely across both fiction and non-fiction to develop their knowledge of themselves and the world they live in, to establish an appreciation and love of reading, and to gain knowledge across the curriculum. Reading widely and often increases pupils’ vocabulary because they encounter words they would rarely hear or use in everyday speech. Reading also feeds pupils’ imagination and opens up a treasure house of wonder and joy for curious young minds.

It is essential that, by the end of their primary education, all pupils are able to read fluently, and with confidence, in any subject in their forthcoming secondary education.” NC 2014

At St Paul’s School we believe that reading lies at the heart the curriculum and is essential not only for children to access learning but also as a life skill that bring immense pleasure. It is essential that our approach to teaching phonics and reading is accessible to all learners, regardless of background.

### Intent

#### Phonics (reading and spelling)

At **St Paul’s** we believe that all our children can become fluent readers and writers. This is why we teach reading through *Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised*, which is a systematic and synthetic phonics programme. We start teaching phonics in 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, our children are able to tackle any unfamiliar words as they read. At **St Paul’s**, 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.

### Comprehension

At **St Paul’s**, we value reading as a crucial life skill. By the time children leave us, they read confidently for meaning and regularly enjoy reading for pleasure. Our readers are equipped with the tools to tackle unfamiliar vocabulary.

We teach comprehension skills explicitly across all age groups, building on prior learning and developing it progressively through from Early Years to the end of KS2. We encourage our children to see themselves as readers for both pleasure and purpose and identify and support those children who are reluctant to engage in reading either at home or at school.

## Implementation

### Daily phonics lessons in Reception and Year 1

- In Reception, we build from 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 become fluent readers.
- 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 3 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.
- We timetable additional phonics intervention for any child from Reception to Year 2 who is not reading fluently or has not passed the Phonics Screening Check.

### Rapid Catch-up programme for KS2 children

- Every child in Year 2 or above who cannot read at age-related expectations needs urgent targeted support so that they can access the curriculum and enjoy reading as soon as possible. We use the Little Wandle Rapid Catch-up programme to help children catch up quickly. This mirrors the main phonics programme but has a faster pace.
- In order for children to make rapid progress, Rapid Catch-up phonics lessons are timetabled three times a week. Reading practice sessions are also timetabled three times a week.
- The resources we use have been designed to work seamlessly with existing Little Wandle resources such as the grapheme cards and picture cards, and the grapheme charts and mats.

### Teaching reading in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2: Reading practice sessions three times a week

- We teach children to read through reading practice sessions three times a week. These:
  - are taught by a fully trained adult to small groups of approximately six children
  - use books matched to the children's secure phonic knowledge using the *Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised* assessments

- are monitored by the class teacher, who rotates 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
  - prosody: teaching children to read with understanding and expression
  - comprehension: teaching children to understand the text.
- Children who are not yet decoding have daily additional blending practice in small groups, so that they quickly learn to blend and can begin to read books.
- In Year 3 to 6 , we continue to teach reading in through a '3 reads' approach, ensuring that children are working with the same text three times during their guided reading rotation – a pre-read enabling independent reading of a new text, a teacher led session focused on key comprehension skills and a follow up task.

### **Home reading**

- The decodable reading practice book is taken home to ensure success is shared with the family.
- Reading for pleasure books also go home for parents to share and read to children.

### **Additional reading support for vulnerable children**

- Children in Reception and Year 1 who are receiving additional phonics Keep-up sessions read their reading practice book to an adult daily.

### **Ensuring consistency and pace of progress**

- Teachers in our school have received the same training in order to ensure consistency and 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 Early Reading Lead follows a coaching plan to support teachers and teaching assistants in consistently and effectively delivering phonics teaching.

### **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.'* (OECD 2010)

We value reading for pleasure highly and work hard as a school to grow our Reading for Pleasure pedagogy.

- We read to children every day. We choose these books carefully as we want children to experience a wide range of books, including books that reflect the children at **St Paul's** 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.
- In Reception, children have access to the reading corner every day in their free-flow time and the books are continually refreshed.
- Children from Reception onwards 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.
- The school library is made available for classes to use at protected times. Children across the school have regular opportunities to engage with a wide range of Reading for Pleasure events (book fairs, author visits and workshops, national events etc).

## **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.
  - every three weeks for children receiving Keep-up support to ensure progress is being made.
  - by SLT and scrutinised through the *Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised* assessment 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. 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 as well as through termly summative assessments.

