

Feltham Hill Infant & Nursery School

Phonics and Early Reading Policy

March 2025

The Phonics and Early Reading Policy outlines the purpose, nature and teaching of phonics and reading at school.

It relates to all pupils from Nursery to Year 2.

It should be used by all staff to ensure consistency in teaching children to read effectively.

Prepared by: Lead teachers Claire Whitney and Kate Bradley

Agreed with: SLT & staff: June 2025

Governors Curriculum committee & Shared Space: June 2025

To be reviewed and updated: March 2027



Intent

Phonics (reading and spelling)

Leaders believe that all pupils should become fluent readers and writers.

-Reading is taught through: *Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised*, which is a systematic and synthetic phonics programme.

-Phonics is started in Nursery/Reception and the programme ends in Year 1, for most pupils depending on their needs.

-Teachers follow the *Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised progression* which ensures pupils build on their growing knowledge of the alphabetic code and mastering phonics, so they read and spell as they move through school.

-The aim is for all pupils to be able to tackle any unfamiliar words, as they read by blending phonemes (sounds).

-Teachers 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.

-There is a strong focus on language development for pupils because leaders know that speaking and listening are crucial skills for reading and writing in all subjects.

Comprehension

Leaders value reading as a crucial life skill.

-By the time pupils leave school, they will read confidently for meaning and regularly enjoy reading for pleasure.

-As readers, they will be equipped with the tools to tackle unfamiliar vocabulary.

-Pupils are encouraged to see themselves as readers for both pleasure and purpose.

-As teaching every pupil to read is so important, there are two reading leaders, who drive the early reading programme in school.

-One reading leader is responsible for early reading in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and one is responsible for early reading in Key Stage 1 (KS1).

-Both leaders work closely together to ensure consistency across the school and alongside the writing lead.

-The reading leaders are highly skilled at teaching phonics and reading, and they monitor and support all staff, so everyone teaches with fidelity to the *Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised* programme.

Implementation

Foundations for phonics in Nursery

Leaders and teachers provide a balance of child-led and adult-led experiences for all pupils 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.

-They ensure Nursery pupils are well prepared to begin learning grapheme-phoneme correspondences (GPCs) and blending in Reception.

Daily discrete phonics lessons in Reception, Year 1 & identified children in Yr2
Phonics is taught for 20 minutes a day.

-In Reception, leaders and teachers build from 10-minute lessons at the start of the year, with additional daily oral blending games, to the full-length lesson as quickly as possible.

-Each Friday, they review the week's teaching to help pupils become fluent readers.

-Pupils make a strong start in Reception: teaching begins in Week 3 of the Autumn term.

-Teachers follow the [*Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised expectations of progress*](#):

-Pupils 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.

-Pupils 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 ensure every pupil learns to read.

-Any pupil who needs additional practice has daily 'keep-up' support, taught by a fully trained adult.

-Keep-up sessions match the structure of class teaching and use the same procedures, resources and mantras, but in smaller steps with more repetition, so that every pupil secures their learning.

-Leaders timetable daily phonics lessons for any pupil in Year 2 who is not fully fluent at reading or has not passed the Phonics screening check.

-These pupils urgently need to catch up, so the gap between themselves and their peers does not widen further.

-These short, sharp lessons last 20 minutes daily and have been designed to ensure pupils catch up to age-related expectations in reading.

Teaching reading: Reading practice sessions

Leaders and teachers teach pupils to read through reading practice sessions.

-These are taught by a fully trained adult to small groups of up to six pupils.

-Teachers use books matched to the pupil's secure phonic knowledge using the [*Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised assessments*](#) using the matching grids on pages 11-20 of 'Application of phonics to reading'.

-Reading practice sessions are monitored by the class teacher, who rotates and works with each group on a regular basis.

-Discrete reading practice sessions are taught up to three times a week in Reception and KS1.

-Pupils not working at age related expectations receive extra reading practice sessions and blending practice throughout the week either individually or in small groups.

-The reading practice sessions have been designed to focus on three key reading skills:

- decoding: blending the sounds
- prosody: teaching pupils to read with understanding and expression
- comprehension: teaching pupils to understand the text.

-In Year 2, leaders and teachers continue to teach reading in this way for any pupils who still need to practice reading decodable books.

-These pupils will have daily reading practice sessions (and blending practice if needed) throughout the week with a fully trained adult.

-These are the pupils who did not pass their phonics screening in Yr1.

Reading beyond Little Wandle

Once pupils have completed the Little Wandle scheme, they will read books linked to the national book bands.

-These books are a range of fiction, non-fiction and poetry and are not fully decodable.

-They will have a guided reading session once a week where they will practice a range of specific reading skills and comprehension activities.

-These pupils will take home two books (fiction/non-fiction/poetry) which they choose from boxes levelled against national book bands.

-These books may or may not have been previously read in school.

Home reading

Each child has a green book bag which they bring to school once a week.

-The decodable reading practice book, which the child has read in school throughout the week, is then taken home to ensure success is shared with the family.

-Only books that have been read in school should be sent home.

-Each child has a yellow reading record book which stays in the book bag.

-The date and title of the book sent home should be recorded and parents are encouraged to write a comment.

-Reading for pleasure books also go home for parents to share and read to pupils.

-In EYFS pupils will pick a 'sharing book' each week to enjoy with their family from the library book box.

-In KS1 pupils visit the library once a fortnight to choose a book to take home and share with their family.

-Leaders share the research behind the importance and impact of sharing quality pupil's books with parents through workshops, leaflets and the [Everybody read!](#) resources.

-Leaders use the [Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised parents' resources](#) to engage families and share information about phonics, the benefits of sharing books, how pupils learn to blend and other aspects of school's provision, both online and through workshops.

Additional reading support for vulnerable pupils

Pupils 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

Every teacher and TA/EYP in school has been trained to teach reading, so leaders have the same expectations of progress.

-Staff all use the same language, routines and resources to teach pupils to read so that they lower pupil'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 and TA/EYPs all have a consistent approach and structure for each lesson.

-The Reading Leaders and senior leadership team (SLT) use the Audit and Prompt cards to regularly monitor and observe teaching; they use the summative data to identify pupils who need additional support and gaps in learning.

Ensuring reading for pleasure

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

'They will influence the skill and vice versa.' (OECD 2010)

-Leaders and teachers value reading for pleasure highly and work hard, as a school to grow the Reading for Pleasure pedagogy.

-Staff read to pupils every day choosing these books carefully, as leaders want pupils to experience a wide range of books, including books that reflect the pupils at Feltham Hill Infant and Nursery School and the local community, as well as books that open windows into other worlds and cultures.

-Each class has story time at the end of the day.

-Adults make stories engaging and exciting to inspire imagination, enrich vocabulary and create joy in reading.

-Every classroom has a stunning book area that encourages a love for reading.

-Staff curate these books and talk about them to entice pupils to read a wide range of books.

-All pupils, from Nursery to Year 2 have access to the reading area every day, as well as, in their busy learning time.

-These books are continually refreshed.

-Each class has a 'read again box' with carefully chosen quality children's books which can be read over and over again.

-The school library is made available for classes in KS1 to use at specified times.

-Pupils across the school have regular opportunities to engage with a wide range of Reading for Pleasure events (e.g. book fairs, author visits and workshops, national events etc).

-Leaders have access to the '**Everybody read!**' resources, to grow teachers' knowledge of current books, the most recent research and to grow our own Reading for Pleasure practice.

<https://www.littlewandlelettersandsounds.org.uk/resources/my-letters-and-sounds/everybody-read/>

Busy Learning

All pupils from Nursery to Year 2 have continuous provision (busy learning) in their classrooms and outside.

- Pupils have opportunities to apply their reading skills in these busy learning areas inside and outside.
- There are: signs, labels, instructions, games which are carefully written to enable pupils to decode.
- Some busy learning areas have specifically planned reading activities (at a range of levels) to give pupils opportunities to apply their skills.
- Busy learning areas also have some carefully chosen fiction and non-fiction library books related to the activity.
- In EYFS teachers and leaders have also made their own books to meet pupil's needs.

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 pupils 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 for Reception and Year 1 and identified pupils in Yr2 is used every six weeks to:

assess progress, identify gaps in learning that need to be addressed, identify any pupils needing additional support and to plan the keep-up support that they need.

-This is led by SLT and scrutinised through the *Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised assessment tracker*, to narrow attainment gaps between different groups of pupils and so that any additional support for teachers can be put into place.

Fluency assessments

Measure pupils' accuracy and reading speed in short one-minute assessments.

- They are used when pupils are reading the Phase 5 set 3, 4 and 5 books.
- For Year 1 and some Year 2 pupils, this is when they read the final fluency assessment at 60-70+ words per minute.
- At these levels, pupils should have sufficient fluency to tackle any book at age-related expectations.
- After exiting their programme, pupils do not need to read any more fully decodable books.

A placement assessment is used:

With any child new to the school in Reception and Year 1 to quickly identify any gaps in their phonic knowledge and plan and provide appropriate extra teaching.

The **Rapid Catch-up assessment** is used with any child new to the school in Year 2 to quickly identify any gaps in their phonic knowledge and plan and provide appropriate extra teaching.

Statutory assessment

Pupils in Year 1 sit the Phonics screening check.

-Any child not passing the check re-sits it in Year 2.

-The impact is that pupils in Year 1's phonics screening is in line with National expectations (2022).

-Another impact is that for pupils in Year 2, the end of Key stage 1 reading attainment (2022) is above National expectations for expected and above.

-As well as at Greater depth.

This includes pupils with English as an additional language (EAL) and pupil premium pupils (PP).

Monitoring

The policy will be reviewed every 2 years by the reading leads.
And governors' curriculum committee.

Policies

It should be read in conjunction with:

- EYFS policy
- SEN policy
- Teaching and learning policy