

**The Willows**



**Primary School**

Explore - Dream - Discover

# Phonics Policy

## The Willows Primary School Phonics Policy

Our children learn to read and write effectively and quickly using *Letters and Sounds* and the *Read Write Inc. Phonics* programme.

### ***Letters and Sounds***

*Letters and Sounds* is taught in Nursery. It aims to build children's speaking and listening skills in their own right as well as to prepare children for learning to read by developing their phonic knowledge and skills.

Activities are divided into seven aspects, including environmental sounds, instrumental sounds, body sounds, rhythm and rhyme, alliteration, voice sounds and finally oral blending and segmenting. Once the children are confident in the seven aspects they are ready to move onto the *Read Write Inc.* programme.

### **The *Read Write Inc.* Phonic programme**

The programme is for:

- Children in nursery who are secure in Letters and Sounds
- Children in Year R to Year 2 who are learning to read and write
- Any child in Years 2 and 3 who need to catch up rapidly
- Children who are new to English in KS2.

We teach pupils to:

- decode letter-sound correspondences quickly and effortlessly, using their phonic knowledge and skills
- read 'tricky' words (rotten reds) on sight
- understand what they read
- read aloud with fluency and expression
- write confidently, with a strong focus on vocabulary and grammar
- spell quickly and easily by segmenting the sounds in words
- acquire good handwriting.

In addition, we teach children to work effectively with a partner to explain and consolidate what they are learning. This provides the teacher with opportunities to assess learning and to pick up on difficulties, such as pupils' poor articulation, or problems with blending or alphabetic code knowledge.

We group children homogeneously, according to their progress in reading rather than their writing. This is because it is known that pupils' progress in writing will lag behind progress in reading, especially for those whose motor skills are less well developed.

In Reception we emphasise the alphabetic code. The children rapidly learn sounds and the letter or groups of letters they need to represent them. Simple mnemonics help them to grasp this quickly (see appendix 1). This is especially useful for children at risk of making slower progress. This learning is consolidated daily. Children have frequent practice in reading high frequency words with irregular spellings – 'tricky words'.

We make sure that children read books that are closely matched to their increasing knowledge of phonics and the 'tricky words'. This is so that, early on, they experience success and gain confidence that they are readers. Re-reading and discussing these books with the teacher supports their increasingly fluent decoding.

Embedding the alphabetic code early on means that children quickly learn to write simple words and sentences. We encourage them to compose each sentence aloud until they are confident to write independently.

Children write at the level of their spelling knowledge, that is, they use their knowledge of the alphabetic code and the tricky words they have learnt. They can soon spell more complex words confidently and accurately. The quality of the vocabulary they use in their writing reflects the language they have heard in the books the teacher has read to them; they have also discussed what the words mean.

Our aim is for children to complete the phonics programme as quickly as possible. The sooner they complete it, the sooner they will be able to choose books to read at their own interest and comprehension level.

### **Assessing and tracking progress**

We assess all children from Year R to Year 2 on the *Read Write Inc.* Sound and Word Entry Assessment and we use these data to assign them to a phonics group. This gives us a very good indication of how well they are making progress relative to their starting points. We do this for all children, whenever they join us, so we can track all of them effectively.

By the end of Key Stage 1, our pupils are able to read aloud age-appropriate texts accurately and with sufficient speed. This means that we can focus on developing their comprehension, preparing them well for transition to Key Stage 2. Their good decoding skills mean that they have a sound strategy for decoding unfamiliar words when they come across them at whatever stage or in any subject, even into secondary school.

We aim for all children to be accurate and speedy readers by the time they enter Key Stage 2.

Children who are making slower progress usually complete the programme by the end of Year 2. We support pupils who have identified special educational needs for however long it takes until they can read.

### **Phonic screening check**

All Year 1 children complete the phonics screen in the summer term of Year 1. We hold a parents meeting to explain this process and signpost parents to websites and give them resources to support their child. We have high expectations of our pupils' progress. We attribute our high pass rate to the programme and to the expectations it builds in.

### **Impact across the curriculum**

Our teachers are enthusiastic about using the *Read Write Inc.* programme because they can see how well children learn from it and the progress they make, not just in English but across the curriculum.

## **Quality of teaching in our school**

After direct teaching and guided practice, the child teaches another child. In this way they all rehearse and consolidate what they have been learning. This helps the children make their understanding clear to themselves and helps the teacher deal with any misconceptions. 'Partner teaching' is a key assessment tool.

Assessment is a critical element of our programme. The teachers assess:

- pupils' phonic knowledge
- the speed at which pupils are able to read the text
- their understanding of the stories they read.

We record the results from the Sound and Word Assessments. This data allow us to intervene in different ways. For instance, we quickly move children to another group if they are progressing faster than their peers. Those who continue to struggle have one-to-one interventions at another time during the day.

Simple teaching strategies and a lively pace ensure that all the children participate fully– there is no chance for them to lose concentration and miss key elements. The homogeneous groups help us to focus the teaching and ensure children make very good progress.

## **Homework**

Children may bring home words to practice. These words usually contain sounds which the child has learnt that day.

## **Attendance**

The programme is intensive and cumulative, so poor attendance disrupts the progress of any children who are absent, for however short a time.

1. All staff use the Management signals consistently in and out of RWI lessons.
2. Partner work is modelled and practised until pupils work willingly and supportively with pupils who are not their friends.
3. Praise is fundamental in helping children make progress and behave courteously.

## **Shared vision**

The school's shared vision is that every child learns to read quickly and continues to read – widely and often. The headteacher works with all the staff to ensure that this happens. In particular, she works closely with the reading leader and assistant headteacher to monitor the quality of teaching and to provide coaching for staff who need it (teachers, teaching assistants and HLTA's).

The reading leader's roles include:

- ensuring children in the 'lower progress' group are making good progress and organising one-to-one tutoring for the children who need extra support.
- keeping the groups homogeneous, i.e. at the same reading level
- providing further training (through demonstration, coaching, monitoring and masterclasses)
- ensuring that our teaching of phonics is of the highest quality and that all our children make progress.

### **Parents and carers**

We invite parents/carers to an initial meeting in Reception and we hold a workshop to show how they can help their child read at home.

We ensure that children whose parents do not attend keep up with their peers. We check that they make good progress in lessons, we give them extra one-to-one lessons, and we encourage them to read to themselves and to siblings at home.

Appendix 1 - Teaching the mnemonics for the letters

Appendix 2 – How to pronounce the pure sounds

Appendix 3 – The order of sounds taught in Read Write Inc

## Appendix 1

### Mnemonics for teaching handwriting

- a – (apple) round the apple down the leaf
- b – (boot) down the laces to the heel, round the toe
- c – (caterpillar) curl around the caterpillar
- d – (dinosaur) round his bottom up his tall neck and down to his bottom
- e – (egg) lift off the top and scoop out the egg
- f – (flower) down the stem and draw the leaves
- g – (girl) round her face, down her hair and give her a curl
- h – (horse) down the head to the hooves and over his back
- i – (insect) down the body, dot for the head
- j – (jack-in-a-box) down his body, curl and dot
- k – (kangaroo) down the kangaroo's body, tail and leg
- l – (leg) down the long leg
- m – (mountain) maisie mountain mountain
- n – (net) down Nobbie and over his net
- o – (orange) all around the orange
- p – (pirate) down the plait and over the pirates face
- q – (queen) around her face up to her earring and down her plait
- r – (robot) down his back, then curl over his arm
- s – (snake) slither down the snake
- t – (tower) down the tower, across the tower
- u – (umbrella) down and under, up to the top and draw the puddle
- v – (vulture) down a wing, up a wing
- w – (worm) down, up, down, up
- x – (Eddie exercising) down the arm and leg and repeat the other side
- y – (yak) down a horn and up a horn and under his head
- z – (zip) zig zag zig

## Appendix 2

**Supporting at home – How to pronounce the pure sounds. For more information please see [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5J2Ddf\\_0Om8](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5J2Ddf_0Om8)**

With Read, Write Inc we are using **pure** sounds, ('m' not 'muh', 's' not 'suh', etc) so that your child will be able to blend the sounds into words more easily.

These first sounds should all be stretched slightly. Try to avoid saying **uh** after each one: eg /mm/ not muh, /ss/ not suh, /ff/ not fuh.

**m** – mmmmmmountain (keep lips pressed together hard)

**s** – ssssssnake (keep teeth together and hiss – unvoiced)

**n** – nnnnnnet (keep tongue behind teeth)

**f** – ffffflower (keep teeth on bottom lip and force air out sharply – unvoiced)

**l** – lllllleg (keep pointed curled tongue behind teeth).

**r** – rrrrrrobot (say rrr as if you are growling)

**v** – vvvvvvulture (keep teeth on bottom lip and force air out gently)

**z** – zzzzzzig zzzzzag (keep teeth together and make a buzzing sound)

**th** – thhhhank you ( stick out tongue and breathe out sharply)

**sh** – shhhh (make a shhh noise as though you are telling somebody to be quiet!)

**ng** – thinnnnngg on a strinnnnngg (curl your tongue at the back of your throat)

**nk** – I think I stink (make a piggy oink noise without the oi! nk nk nk)

These next sounds cannot be stretched. Make the sound as short as possible avoiding **uh** at the end of the sound:

**t** – (tick tongue behind the teeth – unvoiced)

**p** - (make distinctive p with lips – unvoiced)

**k** – (make sharp click at back of throat)

**c** - as above

**h** – (say h as you breathe sharply out – unvoiced)

**ch** - (make a short sneezing sound)

**x** – (say a sharp c and add s – unvoiced)

## **Progression through the RWI phonics programme**

Children are taught sounds in a specific order, at the appropriate pace for their individual ability. As each new sound is taught, children will take home words to practice to consolidate their new learning.

	<b>Set 1 sounds</b>
<b>CVC letters &amp; words</b>	<b>m</b>
	<b>a</b>
	<b>s (ss)</b>
	<b>d</b>
	<b>t</b>
	<b>i</b>
	<b>n</b>
<b>Assisted blending</b>	<b>p</b>
	<b>g</b>
	<b>o</b>
	<b>c</b>
	<b>k (ck)</b>
	<b>u</b>
	<b>b</b>
<b>CCVC words</b>	<b>f (ff)</b>
	<b>e</b>
	<b>l (ll)</b>
	<b>h</b>
	<b>r</b>
	<b>j</b>
	<b>v</b>
	<b>y</b>
	<b>w</b>
	<b>x</b>
<b>z (zz)</b>	
<b>Independently blending</b>	<b>qu</b>
	<b>sh</b>
	<b>th</b>
	<b>ch</b>
<b>Send home green CCVC CVCC words</b>	<b>ng</b>
	<b>nk</b>
<b>Consider home reading books</b>	



**Set 2 sounds****ay (may I play)****ee (what can you see)****igh (fly high)****ow (blow the snow)****oo (poo at the zoo)****oo (look at a book)****ar (start the car)****or (shut the door)****air (that's not fair)****ir (whirl and twirl)****ou (shout it out)****oy (toy for a boy)****Set 3****a-e (make a cake)****ea (cup of tea)****i-e (nice smile)****o-e (phone home)****u-e (huge brute)****aw (yawn at dawn)****are (care and share)****ur (nurse with a purse)****ow (brown cow)****oi (spoil the boy)****ai (snail in the rain)****e (he me she we be)****oa (goat in a boat)****ew (chew the stew)****er (a better letter)****ire (fire fire!)****ear (you hear with your ear)****ure (sure it's pure)****tion (celebration)****cious/tious (scrumptious, delicious)**