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Lemington Riverside Primary School

Phonics Policy

January 2024 (To be reviewed September 2024)

At Lemington Riverside Primary School, we firmly believe that reading is the key that unlocks the whole curriculum, so the ability to efficiently decode is essential.

How we teach children to read and write?

Every child deserves success right from the start. We know that the sooner children learn to read, the greater their success at school. This is why we put reading at the heart of what we do.

We use a programme called Read Write Inc. Phonics to teach our children to read and write. We make sure every child can read the last set of phonic stories before they progress to our higher-level programmes, Comprehension and Spelling. Some children complete the programme in Year 1 and others in Year 2. Year 3, 4, 5 and 6 children who need extra support follow this programme too.

During this time, we group children by their reading progress for 45 minutes a day and re-assess children every half-term so we can place them in the group where they'll make the most progress. We provide extra daily one-to-one sessions for children who need a bit of a boost to keep up.

How do we get children to remember what we teach them?

It is much easier teaching one child – we can get them to repeat what they have understood in their own words, step by step. Then, if they have not understood, we can try different words and explanations. Therefore, in order to replicate this back and forth dialogue with a group or class, we use partner work. Children answer every question with a partner; the teacher checks what they know and only moves on when they understand. It means that all children stay focused throughout the lesson. Partner talk is fundamental to the success of our school. We use, 'Turn to your partner' in every lesson throughout the day.

How do we make phonics easy for children to learn?

Read Write Inc. Phonics depends upon children learning to read and write sounds effortlessly, so we make it simple and fun. The phonic knowledge is split into two parts.

First, we teach them one way to read and write the 40+ sounds in English. We use pictures to help, for example we make 'a' into the shape of an apple, 'f' into the shape of a flower. These pictures help all children, especially slower-starters, to read the sounds easily. Children learn to read words by sound-blending using a frog called Fred. Fred says the sounds and children help him blend the sounds to read each word.

Then we teach children the different spellings of the same sounds, for example, they learn that the sound 'ay' is written ay, a-e and ai; the sound 'ee' is written ee, e and ea. We use phrases to help them remember each sound for example, ay - may I play, a-e – make a cake?

How do we ensure children can read every book?

The first thing we do is to give children books we know they can read – without any guessing. (We read many other stories to them, but do not expect them to read these for themselves until they start to read the Grey Storybooks.)

R. Turner

Before they read the story, they sound out the names of characters and new words, practise reading any of the 'tricky Red' words and we tell them a thought-provoking introduction to get them excited about the story. Then, over three days, children read the story three times: first to focus on reading the words carefully; the second to help them read the story fluently; and on the third, we talk about the story together for example, how characters might be feeling and why. By the time children read the story at home, they will be able to read it confidently with expression.

How do we assess and track children's progress?

For children to make the best possible progress, they will read Storybooks closely matched to their reading level, every day.

This means we group children by their word reading and fluency – not by their progress in comprehension or writing, or by their age.

Every half-term, we assess all children in YR to Y6 who are accessing phonics.

The Reading Leader carries out all the online assessments to ensure children are placed in the correct group.

We track each child's individual progress on the online assessment tracker. We use this to identify children who need more support through daily one-to-one tutoring.

How are slower progress readers supported?

We identify those children who are at risk of falling behind their peers immediately. We make sure children 'keep up not catch up' from Reception.

The slowest progress readers in both KS1 and KS2 receive daily one-to-one tutoring for 10 minutes, in addition to their group session in the morning. Children practise reading sounds speedily, learn to blend sounds into words and read a Storybook that is matched to the sounds they know and the quantity they can read.

What are the expectations of children's progress on the Read Write Inc. Phonics programme?

After two years of implementation, it is expected that:

- Reception children will be able to read Green Storybooks by the end of the summer term.
- Year 1 children will be able to read Blue Storybooks by the end of the summer term.
- Year 2 children will have completed the Phonics programme by the end of the spring term.

We have high expectations for our children to meet the expected standard in the Phonic Screening Check, and help all children to be accurate and fluent readers by the time they enter Key Stage 2.

How is the programme led to ensure these expectations are achieved?

The Reading Leader's role is vital to ensure that the teaching of reading is of the highest quality and all children make rapid progress. They organise one-to-one tutoring for children who need extra support.

Importantly, they are released from class teaching duties during Read Write Inc. sessions so they can ensure reading teachers achieve a high standard of teaching.

All staff have been thoroughly trained to teach reading. They attend a two-day Phonics training course and receive termly coaching from one of Ruth Miskin's training consultants to ensure that children are making

the best possible progress. They also have access to all the training on the Ruth Miskin Training School portal.

The Reading Leader organises further training in weekly practice sessions. These ensure teachers get better at teaching every week: everyone practises together so they can teach reading confidently. They underpin the progress of all teachers and children.

The practice sessions set the agenda for the weekly coaching and feedback schedule. Reading teachers are coached and receive face-to-face feedback and practise of any steps that need further rehearsal.

Storytime

Storytime is the highlight of every day. We have a canon of stories that children get to know really well, and others we read just for fun. Parents can find the list of stories on our school's website so they can read these to their children at home. Children learn to retell the story, learn the refrains by heart and act out the stories in the role-play area. Children learn poetry too. We have chosen wonderful, memorable poems so children can learn them by heart. The poems focus upon feelings and situations with which young children are likely to be familiar, e.g. bedtime, siblings and feeling poorly.

How can parents help at home?

The children take home two books every few days: a Read Write Inc. 'phonics' Storybook and a 'Book Bag Book' for children to read to parents. Children may also bring home library books where parents can read to their children.

Read Write Inc. 'phonics' Storybooks

Children will have already read the 'phonics' storybook two or three times in the reading lessons so they should be able to read it confidently. We encourage parents not to say 'this is too easy!' There is guidance in the storybooks to guide parents too.

Children also take home a Book Bag Book which matches the book they have read in school.

Phonics Screening Check

All children in Year 1 will take part in a statutory phonics screening check. This is a test to confirm whether pupils have made the expected progress in phonics by the end of Year 1. The children will sit with a familiar teacher and will be asked to read 40 words aloud. 20 words will be real words and 20 words are alien (not real).

After the check, parents and carers will be informed of their child's result. Children who have not met the standard in Year 1 will be required to take the test again in Year 2.

All children are individuals and develop at different rates. The screening check ensures that teachers and practitioners understand the needs of the children and can plan to diminish any differences.

All staff administering the phonics screening check will have received training from the local authority.

Monitoring and Review

It is the responsibility of the English Lead to develop and maintain outstanding phonic teaching practice in school and to provide various levels of support for individual staff. They will monitor the impact of this policy, the scheme used and evaluate how it works and provide points for future action. Monitoring may be achieved through:

- Providing CPD in school for all. This may take the form of a whole staff meeting for updates or more specific phase meetings to target individual needs.
- Pupil voice – speaking to children to gather their views and opinions on their phonic teaching and feeding these responses back to Class Teachers.
- Professional discussions with staff about the teaching and learning of their class and groups in phonics.
- Lesson observations or learning walks termly to monitor good practice.
- Book or work scrutiny – to see the application of phonic targets across the curriculum.



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Inclusion and equality

Lemington Riverside Primary School ensure all children are given opportunities to succeed and develop, both academically and personally. All children will feel part of the school community rooted in mutual respect. All children are entitled to a broad and balanced curriculum.