



Pentland Infant and Nursery School Phonics and Early Reading Policy

Our School Context

At Pentland Infant and Nursery School we have high expectations in phonics and reading for all of our children. The majority of pupils at Pentland are EAL. However, this does not alter our expectations of these pupils. Through dedicated, targeted teaching, alongside the support of staff who speak heritage language we strive for every child in our school to reach their full potential in phonics and reading and meet the end of year expectations for their year group, if not exceed them. Currently we have an above average percentage of children on the SEN Register with a small group of children either having an IEPs or EHCPs. Once again, we match the teaching and learning of phonics and reading to the needs of these children to ensure they make good progress and develop an enjoyment in reading. It is essential that our approach to teaching phonics and reading is accessible to all learners, regardless of their background and learning needs.

Intent

Phonics (reading and spelling)

At Pentland Infant and Nursery School, 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 Phase One phonics in Nursery. This is then reviewed and continued in Reception where children 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, all our children are able to tackle any unfamiliar words as they read.

At Pentland Infant and Nursery 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 are crucial skills for reading and writing in all subjects.

Comprehension

At Pentland, we value reading as a crucial life skill. By the time children leave us at the end of Year Two, they read confidently for meaning and regularly enjoy reading for pleasure. Our readers are equipped with the tools to tackle unfamiliar vocabulary. 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 Reading Leader who drives the early reading programme in our school. This person is highly skilled at teaching phonics and reading, and they monitor and support staff, so everyone teaches with fidelity to the *Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised* programme.

Implementation

Foundations for Phonics in Nursery

In Nursery, we provide a balance of child-led and adult-led experiences for all children 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.

We ensure 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 a day. In Reception, we build from 10-minute lessons, with additional daily oral blending games, to the full-length lesson as quickly as possible. Each Friday, we review the week's teaching to help children become fluent readers.

Children make a strong start in Reception: teaching begins in Week 2 of the Autumn term.

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 phonics lessons in Year 2

Phonics continues to be taught daily in Year 2. In the Autumn Term, Phase 5 from the *Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised* programme is reviewed. The children then move onto Phase 6 and follow the Spelling Guidance set out in the National Curriculum.

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 daily phonics lessons for any child in Year 2 who is not fully fluent at reading or has not passed the Phonics screening check. These children urgently need to catch up, so the gap between themselves and their peers does not widen. We use the *Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised* assessments to identify the gaps in their phonic knowledge, alongside the Phonics Screening Check materials, and teach to these using the Keep-up resources – at pace.

Teaching reading: Reading practice sessions three times a week

We teach children to read through reading practice sessions three times a week. These reading sessions are taught by a fully trained adult who will work with a small group of approximately six children at a time. The books children read are matched to their secure phonic knowledge, using the *Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised* assessments and book matching grids created by Little Wandle (p11–20 of '*Application of phonics to reading*'). Reading is 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:

- Session One: decoding
- Session Two: prosody: teaching children to read with understanding and expression
- Session Three: comprehension: teaching children to understand the text.

In Reception these reading sessions start in Week 4. 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 2, we continue to teach reading in this way for any children who still need to practise reading with decodable books. Children who have passed the Phonics Screening Check and are confident fluent readers, will move onto reading other texts (a mixture of Rising Stars: Reading Planet and Bug Club).

Home reading

After reading the text three times in school, the decodable reading practice book is taken home to ensure success is shared with the family. Children also have access to an e-book version of this text.

Alongside their decodable reading book, children also select a reading for pleasure library book of their choice, which they can share with their family at home. We strive towards encouraging reading for pleasure and children are allocated time to peruse and select a book, discussing with their teachers why they have made their choices. We ensure that parent engagement with reading is a key driver for our school. We share information about phonics, offer workshops about phonics and reading, and aim to inform parents about how children learn to blend and the benefits of reading.

Additional reading support for vulnerable children

Children in Reception, Year One and Year Two who are receiving additional phonics Keep-up sessions read their reading practice book to an adult regularly.

Ensuring consistency and pace of progress

Every teacher in our school has been trained to teach reading, so we have 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.

In addition, the Reading Leader and SLT use the Audit and Prompt cards to regularly monitor and observe teaching; they use the summative data to identify children 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)

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 Pentland Infant and Nursery 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. Children have access to these throughout the day in EYFS and during independent learning time in Key Stage One. We curate these books and talk about them to entice children to read a wide range of books.

In the Reading Area are the term's 'Favourite Five' texts which are read regularly to the children who can then access the books independently in the Reading Area. By having the 'Favourite Five' texts we are ensuring the children familiarise themselves in depth with books and it becomes part of their reading repertoire. These are mainly fiction texts in Reception and Year 1, then move on to include poetry and non-fiction texts in Year 2.

Children from Nursery upwards onwards have a home reading record. The parent/carer records a comment 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.

The school library is made available for classes to use at allocated times within the weekly timetable. Regular opportunities are made available to engage the children in reading with a wide range of Reading for Pleasure events. This includes: book fairs, author visits and workshops, reading challenges, nursery rhyme week, national events, such as World Book Day 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, and also 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. In addition, the Reading Lead and SLT will scrutinise the data on 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.

For children who are new to school, the Placement Assessment is used to quickly identify any gaps in their phonic knowledge and plan provide appropriate extra teaching.

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. These children also take part in daily keep up lessons to address the gaps in their phonic knowledge.

Policy Updated: July 2022

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