

WESTFIELD PRIMARY SCHOOL

Phonics Policy

February 2024

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This policy was written by Catherine Thomas



To learn to read is to light a fire; every syllable that is spelled out is a spark. Victor Hugo

The best primary schools in England teach virtually every child to read, regardless of the social and economic circumstances of their neighbourhoods, the ethnicity of their pupils, the language spoken at home and most special educational needs or disabilities. A sample of 12 of these schools finds that their success is based on a determination that every child will learn to read, together with a very rigorous and sequential approach to developing speaking and listening and teaching reading, writing and spelling through systematic phonics. This approach is applied with a high degree of consistency and sustained. **Ofsted: Reading by Six. 2012**

Our vision for Phonics

Westfield Primary School has a clear, consistent, whole school approach to the teaching of phonics. 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 and 4 children who need extra support follow this programme too; struggling readers in Year 5 and 6 children follow a similar programme called Fresh Start.

During this time, we group children by their reading progress for up to one hour a day (20 to 45 minutes in Reception) 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.

Aims for our children:

- To teach children aural discrimination, phonemic awareness and rhyme awareness
- To encourage speedy and accurate blending and decoding
- To read common exception words on sight
- To understand what they read
- To read aloud with fluency and expression
- To spell quickly and easily by segmenting the sounds in words
- To write confidently with correctly formed handwriting.

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 lots of other stories to them, but do not expect them to read these for themselves until they start to read the Grey Storybooks.)

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 teach children to spell confidently?

We use just two simple activities: Fred Fingers to spell regular words and Red Rhythms for tricky words.

Fred Fingers

We teach children to spell using 'Fred Fingers': we say a word and then children pinch the sounds onto their fingers and write the word, sound by sound.

Red Rhythms

We teach tricky words with Red Rhythms. We say the tricky letters in a puzzled voice and build the letter names up into a rhythm, for example, s-ai-d.

Children learn to spell new words and review past words every week, they practise spelling them with a partner and – when they're ready – we give them a test to celebrate their spelling success.

How do we make writing simple for children to learn?

We teach handwriting, spelling and composition separately, gradually bringing each skill together step-by-step.

We teach children to form letters with the correct pencil grip and in the correct sitting position from the very beginning. They practise handwriting every day so they learn to write quickly and easily.

Once children can write simple words, we teach them to 'hold' a sentence in their heads and then write it with correct spelling and punctuation.

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 carry out online assessments for all children in YR to Y2 and ensure the children are placed in the correct groups.

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.

Children in KS2 who are at risk of not meeting end of Key Stage 2 national expectations for reading are supported using the Fresh Start reading programme.

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?

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 Phonics 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.

Partnership with Parents:

Co-operation and support from parents are paramount if a child is to become a successful and competent reader. At Westfield Primary School we are fully committed to strong partnership working between home and school.

We invite parents/carers to an initial meeting and we hold workshops to show how they can help their children read at home.

We ensure all parents are aware of the resources on the parent page on the Ruth Miskin Training website: <http://www.ruthmiskin.com/en/parents/>













At the start of Reception each child is given a phonics pack with the new sound they have learnt that day. They are expected to practise recognising and saying these sounds and correctly forming the corresponding grapheme at home.

The children take home two books at least once a week: A Read Write Inc. 'phonics' Storybook for children to read to parents, and a picture book for parents to read to them. In Reception we also send home interactive, animated lessons from our Virtual Classroom so you and your child can join in with lessons at home. The online teachers help children to practice the sounds and words they have learnt in school.

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

Appendix

Group		In Speed Sounds lessons, teach children to:	To progress into the next group children should be able to:
Set 1 Sounds Group A		Read first 16 Set 1 sounds Learn to blend: Word Time 1.1 to 1.3 Spell using Fred Fingers	Read first 16 single-letter sounds speedily
Set 1 Sounds Group B		Read 25 Set 1 single letter sounds Learn to blend: Word Time 1.1 to 1.4 Spell using Fred Fingers	Read 25 single-letter sounds speedily Blend sounds into words orally
Set 1 Sounds Group C		Read 25 Set 1 single letter sounds speedily Blend independently using Phonics Green Word cards: Word Time 1.1 to 1.5 Spell using Fred Fingers	Read all Set 1 single letter sounds speedily Read Word Time 1.1 to 1.5 words with Fred Talk
Ditties PCM		Read Set 1 Special Friends Read Word Time 1.6 words (words with Special Friends) Review Word Time 1.1 to 1.5 Read 3-sound nonsense words Spell using Fred Fingers	Read all Set 1 Sounds speedily Read Word Time 1.6 words (words with Special Friends) with Fred Talk Read 3-sound nonsense words with Fred Talk
Red Ditty Books		Review Set 1 sounds speedily Read Word Time 1.7 words (words with double consonants and 4- and 5-sound words) Review Word Time 1.1 to 1.6 Read 3 and 4 sound nonsense words Spell using Fred Fingers	Read all Set 1 Sounds speedily including ll, ff, ss, and ck Read words with Special Friends; words with double consonants and 4-sound words with Fred Talk Read 3 and 4 sound nonsense words with Fred Talk
Green		Read Set 2 sounds and matching Phonics Green Words including longer words Review Set 1 Phonics Green Words Read nonsense words Spell using Fred Fingers	Read Word Time 1.6 and 1.7 words Read 4 and 5 sound nonsense words with Fred Talk Read previously taught words with Set 1 sounds speedily
Purple		Read Set 2 sounds and matching Phonics Green Words including longer words Review Set 1 Phonics Green Words Read nonsense words Spell using Fred Fingers Once secure, read Set 3 sounds and matching Phonics Green Words. Continue to spell Set 1 and Set 2 words.	Read the first six Set 2 sounds (ay, ee, igh, ow, oo, oo) speedily Read these sounds in real words and nonsense words with Fred Talk Read previously taught words with Set 1 sounds speedily
Pink		Read Set 2 sounds and matching Phonics Green Words including longer words. Review Set 1 and 2 Phonics Green Words Read nonsense words Spell using Fred Fingers Once secure, read Set 3 sounds and matching Phonics Green Words. Continue to spell Set 1 and Set 2 words.	Read all Set 2 sounds speedily Read these sounds in real words and nonsense words with Fred Talk Read previously taught words with Set 1 and 2 sounds speedily
Orange		Read Set 3 sounds and matching Phonics Green Words including longer words Review Set 1 and 2 Phonics Green Words Read nonsense words Spell using Fred Fingers: focus on Set 2 words	Read Set 1 and Set 2 sounds in longer words Read Set 1 and Set 2 sounds in 4 and 5 sound nonsense words Read previously taught words with Set 1 and Set 2 sounds speedily
Yellow		Read Set 3 sounds and matching Phonics Green Words including longer words Review Set 1, 2 and 3 Phonics Green Words Read nonsense words Spell using Fred Fingers: Set 2 and 3 words	Read the first six Set 3 sounds (ea, oi, a-e, i-e, o-e, u-e) speedily Read these sounds in real words and nonsense words Read a passage at 60-70 words per minute, attempting intonation to show comprehension
Blue		Read Set 3 sounds and matching Phonics Green Words including longer words Review Set 1, 2 and 3 Phonics Green Words Read nonsense words Spell using Fred Fingers: Set 2 and 3 words	Read all Set 3 sounds speedily Read Set 3 Sounds in real words and nonsense words Read a passage at 70-80 words per minute, attempting intonation to show comprehension
Grey		Read unfamiliar multi-syllabic words Review Set 1, 2 and 3 sounds and matching Phonics Green Words including longer words speedily Read nonsense words Spell using Fred Fingers: multi-syllabic, Set 2 and 3 words	Read all Set 3 sounds in nonsense words Read multi-syllabic words containing Set 1, 2 and 3 sounds Read a passage at 80-90+ words per minute with intonation that shows some comprehension

