



Bingham Primary School

Policy Document

Policy Name: Phonics and Early Reading

Date: Sept 2023

Review: Sept 2024

The Bingham Primary School approach to phonics and early reading.

Why reading matters

Reading is the gateway to everything. If a child can read they can access the whole breadth of the curriculum as well as secure a stronger future.

The teaching of reading should not only focus on the functional decoding aspect (through systematic synthetic phonics – SSP) but also reading for meaning (comprehension) and developing a life-long love of reading for pleasure.

Through our structured approach we aim to ensure we enable learners to achieve all three aspects.

Vocabulary and language

At **Bingham Primary School**, we recognise that children need exposure and experience of a wide and ambitious vocabulary range, ensuring they hear, use and understand new words to build this bank of knowledge.

The words in our vocabulary are the building blocks for understanding and expressing ideas. As children are exposed to complex language they begin to use more advanced vocabulary. They also begin to use more complex words to explain concepts, describe their observations, and make predictions.

Children's vocabulary and concept development is dependent on consistent, nurturing and interacting learning experiences with adults and peers. Children need to have a large and varied vocabulary that continually grows.

Thus, concept development and vocabulary are key components for language learning. Developing these skills can pave the way for learning in language, the arts, sciences, technology, and mathematics.

Learning vocabulary is a continual process of language and literacy development, which begins in the early years of life, and continues through schooling and beyond and it is crucial that children have rich, implicit and explicit opportunities to learn new, and more advanced vocabulary.

This will be encouraged, built on and expanded as part of our **Bingham Primary School** early reading experience.

Knowledge of vocabulary meanings affects children's abilities to understand and use words appropriately during the language acts of listening, speaking, reading, and writing."



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- *Vocabulary knowledge "influences the complexities and nuances of children's thinking ... and how well they will understand printed texts." (Sinatra, Zygouris-Coe, and Dasinger, 2011, p. 333).*

Having more complex language allows children to make meaning from what people say, and engage with new concepts. These are relevant for early numeracy, science, and literacy (and other disciplinary) knowledge, as well as for equipping children to share their own thoughts and feelings.

Systematic Synthetic Phonics (SSP):

From September 2014 systematic phonics is a statutory requirement of the National Curriculum and is as a key strategy in the teaching of **early reading**.

-A robust SSP programme will give all children a solid base upon which to build as they progress through school

-help children to develop the habit of reading widely and often, for both pleasure and information

Intent:

Our Systematic Synthetic Phonics Programme – **we use Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Phonics programme.**

Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised is a SSP programme that has been developed by Little Sutton and Wandle English Hubs and taken forward by Little Sutton Primary School and Wandle Learning Trust in partnership with other phonics and early reading experts.

Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised has been built around the DfE requirements for a successful SSP as well as drawing on the latest research into how children learn best, how to ensure learning stays in children's long-term memory and how best to enable children to apply their learning to become highly competent readers.

How does it work?

Seven key features have been identified by the English Hub and wider research as characterising phonics teaching in highly successful schools, no matter which validated programme is being used. These are:

- direct teaching in frequent, short bursts
- consistency of approach
- secure, systematic progression in phonics learning
- maintaining pace of learning
- providing repeated practice



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- application of phonics using matched decodable books
- early identification of children at risk of falling behind, linked to the provision of effective keep-up support.

We aim to ensure the effective teaching of systematic synthetic phonics by applying those 7 principles through out our teaching of early reading.

Coverage:

It is essential for progression in phonics learning to cover:

- all the phonemes of English words
- correct pronunciation of the phonemes
- all commonly occurring grapheme-phoneme correspondences (GPCs)
- the correct formation of all graphemes
- blending for reading
- segmenting for writing
- the sequenced learning of appropriate tricky words.

The programme will establish a clear sequence that enables children to begin to read and write simple words, phrases and sentences as early as possible. It will then, systematically and cumulatively, work towards children being able to decode any unknown words in age appropriate texts by the time they complete the programme. This will be done through the structured teaching of daily phonics lessons.

Daily phonics lessons in Reception and Year 1

- We teach phonics for 30 minutes a day. In Reception, we build from 10minute 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.



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- 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 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 or 3 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 and teach to these using the Keep-up resources – at pace.
- If any child in Year 3 to 6 has gaps in their phonic knowledge when reading or writing, we plan phonics 'catch-up' lessons to address specific reading/writing gaps. These short, sharp lessons last 10 minutes and take place at least three times a week.

Teaching reading: Reading practice sessions three times a week

- We teach children to read through reading practice sessions three times a week. These:
 - are taught by a fully trained adult to small groups of approximately six children
 - use books matched to the children's secure phonic knowledge using the *Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised* assessments and book matching grids on pages 11–20 of 'Application of phonics to reading'
 - are 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:
 - decoding
 - prosody: teaching children to read with understanding and expression
 - comprehension: teaching children to understand the text.
- In Reception these 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 and 3, we continue to teach reading in this way for any children who still need to practise reading with decodable books.



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Home reading

- The decodable reading practice book is taken home to ensure success is shared with the family.
 - Reading for pleasure books also go home for parents to share and read to children.
 - We use the [Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised parents' resources](#) to engage our families and share information about phonics, the benefits of sharing books, how children learn to blend and other aspects of our provision, both online and through workshops.

Additional reading support for vulnerable children

- Children 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 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.
- 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.

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
 - 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.
 - by SLT and scrutinised through 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.



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Statutory assessment

- Children in Year 1 sit the Phonics Screening Check. Any child not passing the check re-sits it in Year 2.

Ongoing assessment for catch-up

- Children in Year 2 to 6 are assessed through their teacher's ongoing formative assessment as well as through the half-termly *Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised* summative assessments.

Ensuring reading for pleasure

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

'The will influences the skill and vice versa.' (OECD 2010)

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 **Bingham Primary School** and our local community as well as books that open windows into other worlds and cultures.
- Adults in school actively model reading behaviour and take opportunities to share their love of reading regularly with the children.
- Every classroom has an inviting book corner that encourages a love for reading. We curate these books and talk about them to entice children to read a wide range of books.
- In Reception, children have access to the reading corner every day in their child-initiated learning time and the books are continually refreshed.
- Children from Reception onwards have a home reading record. The parent/carer records comments 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.
- Each class visits the local library as part of the curriculum offer;
- The school library is made available for classes to use at protected times i.e they are timetabled for specific year groups during the week. Children across the school have regular opportunities to engage with a wide range of Reading for Pleasure events (book fairs, author visits and workshops, national events etc).

As the children progress through the school, we use Accelerated Reader (AR) to help develop their independent reading skills.



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AR is a whole class management and monitoring programme that aims to foster independent reading in primary and secondary school pupils, it allows teachers to monitor the reading development and practices of their pupils, and provides tools to quickly ascertain their reading level, reading age and comprehension level.

Pupils read a book, take an online quiz and get immediate feedback. They are aided in their selection of the next book by the monitoring software which will guide the level of difficulty for their choice. The programme encourages pupils to read independently and more importantly at their own pace and level. Our school library has a wide range of books at each level, in order to support pupils' choices and our staff are fully trained to support and develop children's learning.