

Intent

At Worthington Primary School, we are passionate about ensuring all children become confident and enthusiastic readers and writers. We believe that phonics provides the foundations for learning, making the transition to fluent reading and writing easier. To ensure our children develop strong phonics awareness and master effective blending and decoding skills, we have chosen to use the synthetic phonics program 'Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised.' This program ensures that children build on their growing knowledge of the alphabetic code, mastering phonics to read and spell as they progress through school.

We passionately believe that teaching children to read and write independently is one of the primary purposes of a primary school. It enables them to access a broad and exciting curriculum and ensures they flourish as learners throughout their time at our school. These fundamental skills not only unlock the doors to the rest of the curriculum but also have a profound impact on children's self-esteem and future life opportunities.

Our chosen program is validated by the Department for Education (DfE) and follows evidence-based structures to ensure that all children succeed, regardless of their backgrounds or abilities. The program is carefully planned to offer clear progression, building upon learning in a sequential and structured manner, providing repeated practice (see Appendix 1 for progression). The ultimate goal of teaching phonics is to enable children to read fluently, recognising most words instantly and using phonics to decode any unknown words. This means that phonics knowledge needs to be embedded in long-term memory so that its application becomes automatic. Repeated, spaced practice is by far the most effective way to transfer knowledge from short-term to long-term memory. Effective phonics teaching offers repeated practice at the point of learning and revisits the same elements at intervals over an extended period.

In addition, the pace of Little Wandle allows for full coverage of all aspects of the progression in a cumulative way, without introducing too many new elements of learning at any one time. It also allows for significant periods of practice, consolidation, and revision.

At Worthington, by adopting our chosen program, teachers demonstrate fidelity to the scheme, ensuring consistency across all age groups and maintaining high expectations for all children. The program offers ongoing training, allowing all staff to be highly trained and share effective practices with each other and with other schools.

Within the program 'Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised,' children can read fully-decodable books that have been carefully selected to:

- Be exactly matched to the phonics progression of the program used
- Present only words made up of grapheme-phoneme correspondences (GPCs) learned to that point
- Include tricky words only as they are introduced in the program
- Be used exclusively when children are practicing reading and not mixed with books that are not fully decodable at the child's level

Alongside fully decodable books, at Worthington, we foster a love of reading from the time a child enters our nursery until they leave Worthington. We believe that learning to read and fostering a love of reading is the greatest gift we can give our children (see the English policy for more details).

Implementation

Little Wandle Foundations

The teaching of phonics begins in nursery, where our staff have fully adopted the 'Little Wandle Foundations' program. Little Wandle Foundations is a comprehensive pre-phonics program designed to help build strong foundations for reading 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.' It supports our children to:

- Develop their phonological awareness, including an understanding of rhyme, alliteration, syllables, initial and voice sounds, and oral blending.
- Love stories and rhymes, and learn by heart a bank of familiar favourites.
- Increase their vocabulary and confidence to talk.
- Improve their listening and ability to take part in back-and-forth conversations.

The program is broken down into three areas: Foundations for a Love of Reading, Foundations for Phonics, and Foundations for Language (see Appendix 2 for the timetable).

We believe that the priority in Nursery should be building the foundations for phonics for all children. Research tells us that disadvantaged children start Nursery behind their more fortunate peers. By leaving formal phonics teaching to Reception, Foundations allows you to devote more time to working with children who need extra help to develop the skills and behaviours that underpin successful reading.

Main Phonics Programme

Discrete daily phonics lessons in Reception and Year 1

It is essential that the teaching of phonics is conducted as a whole-class, discrete phonics session every day. In Reception, we progress from 10-minute sessions, with additional daily oral blending games, to longer sessions as quickly as possible (up to 30 minutes). Each session includes time to revisit and review previously taught graphemes, decodable words, as well as tricky words. This is followed by new learning, which involves graphemes and words containing the newly introduced grapheme, and then the application of both new words and previously taught words within a sentence. Finally, the children are encouraged to understand the two-way process of reading and spelling. Therefore, within the session, the children begin to spell words with the new grapheme taught that day. Every Friday, we review the week's teaching to help children become fluent readers. Children make a strong start in Reception, with teaching beginning in Week 2 of the Autumn term. We follow the Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised expectations of progress (see Appendix 1 for the progression)

To ensure consistency across the teaching of phonics we have ensured:

- 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. (see appendix 3 for mantras used)
- 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;

It is essential that any child in danger of falling behind is identified early. Therefore, each teacher is highly skilled in assessment for learning allowing repeated practice throughout the day.

Daily Keep Up

Daily keep-up is planned using the summative assessments undertaken every half term. The results of the assessments are analysed and staff discuss the needs of the children with our highly trained staff who carry out the keep-up sessions. The keep-up sessions are carefully planned using the resources from the Little Wandle website. 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.

Teaching reading: Reading practice sessions three times a week

Our Reading Practice Sessions are a crucial part of our phonics program and occur three times a week, every week. Each session serves a specific purpose: decoding, prosody, or comprehension. A highly trained staff member conducts each session with a small group of children. The books are carefully matched to the children's phonics development, using the matching grid.

Reading prompt cards are utilised to ensure consistency across each session, regardless of the leader. Each session follows a similar format, allowing time to revisit the graphemes and words the children will encounter in the book. Each child reads their own copy, with the adult tapping into listen to each individual child. The first session focuses on developing an understanding of any new vocabulary, the second session model's expression and fluency, and in the comprehension session, the children's understanding is assessed. Comprehension sessions encompass different reading domains:

- Draw on knowledge of vocabulary to understand texts (Vocabulary)
- Identify/explain key aspects of fiction and non-fiction texts, such as characters, events, titles and information
- Identify and explain the sequence of events in texts
- Make inferences from the text (using reasoning skills to interpret beyond the literal).
- Predict what might happen on the basis of what has been read so far
- Deduction – coming to a logical conclusion from the information/evidence available (inference)
- Skimming and Scanning

Engaging Parents/Carers

At Worthington we understand the importance of engaging parents/carers in the development of their child's reading. We understand and embrace the need to develop relationships with our children's parent/carers from the moment they enter our school nursery. We develop many strategies to support and inform our parent/carers about how we teach reading. For example:

- Workshops and information sessions – these vary between whole class invites to introduce the scheme we use at the earliest opportunity to more targeted group workshops.
- Regular updates on the children's learning in class – sending home story sacks in nursery; information about the rhymes being used in class; weekly homework sheet from reception introducing the new GPC's and tricky words; information and videos on class dojo about the new learning.
- Regular updates to parents on the progress of their children and ideas of how parents can help at home.
- Events for reading for pleasure (see English policy.)
- Reading books sent home as below.

Online E-Book – the book the child has read in their reading session in school that week.

Independent Book – this book will be fully decodable and is to practise the children’s fluency.

Sharing Book - these books are made up from our other reading scheme books that are not fully decodable. We have placed a sticker on these books so you know which book isn’t fully decodable.

Teaching Phonics and Reading in Year 2

The needs of each cohort will change. What to teach and when will be discussed with the Year 2 teachers, English and Reading lead. If phonics teaching is still needed then children will continue to follow the scheme as a whole-class or in groups. Once the programme is completed, Year 2 will then move to the Little Wandle spelling programme:

- Phase 5 Review (5 weeks)
- Bridge to Spelling (5 weeks)
- Spelling (20 weeks)

Regular assessments and keep-up will continue as described in this policy.

Practice Reading Sessions three times a week will continue until the children exit the Little Wandle programme. To exit the programme children, need to complete the fluency assessments.

Phonics and SEND

At Worthington, we believe every child can succeed. Within our teaching, we have high expectations for all children. Where possible we will teach children within the whole-class however, at times we will need to adapt our teaching to meet the needs of each individual child. This will be planned and delivered after careful consideration and discussion with all relevant parties. (class teacher, SEND lead, reading lead and parents). We have accessed the training and resources offered by Little Wandle SEND programme.

Impact

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 for Reception and Year 1 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.

Fluency assessments measure children’s accuracy and reading speed in short one-minute assessments.

They are used:

- in Year 1, when children are reading the Phase 5 set 3 and 4
- in Year 2, when children are reading the Phase 5 set 5 to exit the phonics programme
- with children following the Rapid Catch-up programme in Years 2 to 6, when they are reading the Phase 5 set 3, 4 and 5 books

- to assess when children are ready to exit their programme. For Year 1 children, this is when they read the final fluency assessment at 60–70+ words per minute. Older children can exit the Rapid Catch-up programme when they read the final fluency assessment at 90+ words per minute. At these levels, children should have sufficient fluency to tackle any book at age-related expectations. After exiting their programme, children do not need to read any more fully decodable books.

A placement assessment is used:

- with any child new to the school in Reception and Year 1 to quickly identify any gaps in their phonic knowledge and plan and provide appropriate extra teaching.

The Rapid Catch-up assessment is used

- with any child new to the school in Year 2 and above to quickly identify any gaps in their phonic knowledge and plan and provide appropriate extra teaching.

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 Rapid Catch-up in Years 2 to 6

Children in Year 2 to 6 are assessed through:

- the Rapid Catch-up initial assessment to quickly identify any gaps in their phonic knowledge and plan appropriate teaching
- the Rapid Catch-up summative assessments to assess progress and inform teaching
- the Rapid Catch-up fluency assessments when children are reading the Phase 5 set 3, 4 and 5 books for age 7+.
- The fluency assessments measure children's accuracy and reading speed in short one-minute assessments. They also assess when children are ready to exit the Rapid Catch-up programme, which is when they read the final fluency assessment at 90+ words per minute.

Appendix 1:

Reception and Year 1 overviews This programme overview shows the progression of GPCs and tricky words that we teach term-by-term. The progression has been organised so that children are taught from the simple to more complex GPCs, as well as considering the frequency of their occurrence in the most commonly encountered words. All the graphemes taught are practised in words, sentences, and later on, in fully decodable books. Children review and revise GPCs and words, daily, weekly and across terms and years, in order to move this knowledge into their long-term memory. Children need to learn to read as quickly as reasonably possible, so they can move from learning to read, to reading to learn, giving them access to the treasure house of reading. Our expectations of progression are aspirational yet achievable if schools maintain pace, practice and participation by all children. Children who are not keeping up with their peers should be given additional practice immediately through keep-up sessions.

Reception	
Graphemes	New Tricky Words
Autumn One	
s a t p i n m d g o c k c k e u r h b f l	is I the
Autumn Two	
ff ll ss j v w x y z zz qu ch sh th ng nk <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • words with –s /s/ added at the end (hats sits) • words ending in s /z/ (his) and with –s /z/ added at the end (bags sings) 	as and has his her go no to into she he of we me be
Spring One	
ai ee igh oa oo oo ar or ur ow oi ear air er <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • words with double letters • longer words 	was you they my by all are sure pure
Spring Two	
Review Phase 3 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • words with double letters, longer words, words with two or more digraphs, words ending in –ing, compound words • words with s /z/ in the middle • words with –s /s/ /z/ at the end • words with –es /z/ at the end 	Review all tricky words taught so far
Summer One	
Short vowels with adjacent consonants <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CVCC CCVC CCVCC CCCVC CCCVCC • longer words and compound words • words ending in suf-xes: –ing, –ed /t/, –ed /id/ /ed/, –est 	said so have like some come love do were here little says there when what one out today
Summer Two	
Phase 3 long vowel graphemes with adjacent consonants <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CVCC CCVC CCCVC CCV CCVCC • words ending in suf-xes: –ing, –ed /t/, –ed /id/ /ed/, –ed /d/ –er, –est • longer words 	Review all tricky words taught so far

Year One	
Graphemes	New Tricky Words
Autumn One	
Review Phase 3 and 4 Phase 5 /ai/ ay play /ow/ ou cloud /oi/ oy toy /ea/ ea each	Review phase 2-4 tricky words

Autumn Two	
/ur/ ir bird /igh/ ie pie /oo/ /yoo/ ue blue rescue /yoo/ u unicorn /oa/ o go /igh/ i tiger /ai/ a paper /ee/ e he /ai/ a-e shake /igh/ i-e time /oa/ o-e home /oo/ /yoo/ u-e rude cute /ee/ e-e these /oo/ /yoo/ ew chew new /ee/ ie shield /or/ aw claw	their people oh your Mr Mrs Ms could would should our house mouse water want
Spring One	
/ee/ y funny /e/ ea head /w/ wh wheel /oa/ oe ou toe shoulder /igh/ y fly /oa/ ow snow /j/ g giant /f/ ph phone /l/ le al apple metal /s/ c ice /v/ ve give /u/ o-e o ou some mother young /z/ se cheese /s/ se ce mouse fence /ee/ ey donkey /oo/ ui ou fruit soup	any many again who whole where two school call different thought through friend work
Spring Two	
/ur/ or word /oo/ u owl awful could /air/ are share /or/ au aur oor al author dinosaur floor walk /ch/ tch ture match adventure /ar/ al a half* father* /or/ a water schwa in longer words: different /o/ a want /air/ ear ere bear there /ur/ ear learn /r/ wr wrist /s/ st sc whistle science /c/ ch school /sh/ ch chef /z/ ze freeze schwa at the end of words: actor	once laugh because eye
Summer One	
Revision for phonic screening	
Summer Two	
/ai/ eigh aigh ey ea eight straight grey break /n/ kn gn knee gnaw /m/ mb thumb /ear/ ere eer here deer /zh/ su si treasure vision /j/ dge bridge /i/ y crystal /j/ ge large /sh/ ti ssi si ci potion mission mansion delicious /or/ augh our oar ore daughter pour oar more	busy beautiful pretty hour move improve parents shoe

Appendix 2:

Programme	Area	How long?	How often?
Foundations for the Love of Reading	Story time using our guidance/reading spine	5-10 minutes	Daily (am and pm session)
	Book Plans: Continuous provision	N/A	1–2 weeks every half term - provision based on book plan
	Book plans: Adult-led activities	5-10 minutes	During this blocked time, every child takes part at least three times a week.
Foundations for Phonics	Tuning into sounds activities and oral blending games	5 mins	Small groups 3 times a week
	Rhyme time songs and matched activities	5 mins	Small groups 3 times a week
Foundations for Language	Interaction Techniques	All day every day!	

Appendix 3:

Strategies used to support teaching and learning in Phonics lessons are those promoted in the Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised SSP. Teachers may also use other simple classroom management strategies to ensure the lessons are delivered with good pace and rigour. Strategies you would see in every Phonics lesson:

- “Sound talk blend to read” is used when reading new words
- Tap Tap sweep is used to model the reading process. We point to each individual grapheme as it is said then drag finger underneath all of word as it is blended.
- Sound Buttons are used to support children with recognising the graphemes within a word. We use dots for individual letter graphemes and a line for digraphs and trigraphs.
- “Sound talk in your head and read for fluency” is used when encouraging children to begin to read with increasing fluency and automaticity
- “Segmenting Fingers” are used to help children segment and count the phonemes in a word. We do this with palm facing out, left to right from thumb (left hand - left to right).
- “Copy me” (hand to ear) is used to show expectations of children repeating.
- “Speedy Sounds” process of revisiting GPC’s
- “Shuffle time” is used to maintain interest while word cards are re-shuffled ready to review in a different order.
- “Tricky Bit” used to identify the part of the tricky word that can not be decoded at that point of teaching
- “Grapheme spotter” identify the GPC in the word
- “Chunk it up” to break apart longer words
- “2/3 letters -one sound” to identify a digraph or a trigraph

The vocabulary we use when teaching, assessing and planning Phonics is that promoted in the Glossary of Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Terminology document.

September 2023