



Overstone Combined School

Phonics Policy

At Overstone Combined School we strive to support all our children to become confident, literate readers. If children are to become competent, fluent readers it is essential that they have a secure understanding of letters and the sounds they make in different combinations. In order to do this, we follow Read, Write, Inc. as our synthetic phonics programme.

Read, Write, Inc. Phonics is an inclusive literacy programme for all children learning to read. Children learn the 44 common sounds in the English language and how to blend them to read and spell. At Overstone Combined School, we focus on the phonics and reading aspects of RWI.

At Overstone Combined School, we firmly believe that reading is the key that unlocks the whole curriculum so the ability to efficiently decode is essential. The R.W.I sessions are expected to occur each day in reception and KS1, as the continuity and pace of the programme is key to accelerating the progress of children's reading development. In KS2, those children who are still accessing phonics will receive at least 3 sessions of phonics each week in small groups.

Aims

To teach children to:

- apply the skill of blending phonemes in order to read words.
- segment words into their constituent phonemes in order to spell words.
- learn that blending and segmenting words are reversible processes.
- read high frequency words that do not conform to regular phonic patterns.
- read texts and words that are within their phonic capabilities as early as possible.
- decode texts effortlessly so all their resources can be used to comprehend what they read.
- spell effortlessly so that all their resources can be directed towards composing their writing.

Teaching and Learning Style

The teaching of Read, Write, Inc. is consistent and the same progressive format is delivered in all classrooms and groups. Read, Write Inc. has some key principles that are closely adhered to within our classrooms. These being the 5 Ps.

Praise – Children learn quickly in a positive climate.

Pace – Good pace is essential to the lesson.

Purpose – Every part of the lesson has a specific purpose.

Passion – This is a very prescriptive programme. It is the energy, enthusiasm and passion that teachers put into the lesson that bring the teaching and learning to life!

Participation – A strong feature of R.W.I. lessons is partner work and the partners 'teaching' each other (based on research which states that we learn 70% of what we talk about with our partner and 90% of what we teach).

It is important to remember to never give up! Every child can learn to read if you persevere.

Planning

Children work within their year group and placed within groups based on their current abilities as defined by their results on the half-termly RWI assessment. The RWI Phonics Tracker is used to record and assess progress. Children are assessed every half term during the year and the groups are reorganised accordingly. Class teachers follow the relevant handbooks in order to teach the sessions.

Delivery of Phonics

- Initial sounds are to be taught in a specific order.
- Sounds taught should be 'pure' ie 'b', not 'buh' as this is central to phonic teaching and ability to recognise sounds in words.



- Blends are to be declustered. eg bl is two specific sounds.
- Set 2 sounds are to be taught after Set 1 (initial sounds)
- Letter names are introduced with Set 3.

When children know all of the set 1 single sounds they are introduced to 'word time'. These word time sessions support the blending and decoding of words. Children are then introduced to sound blending books and paper ditties to support the blending and decoding of words at a text level. When children can blend all of the set 1 sounds including special friends (digraphs) independently they then move onto the storybooks. These books increase in difficulty and are correlated to the phonics scheme. The aim of these books is to build accuracy and fluency, develop key skills that allow children to comprehend the texts they read, and to develop a love of reading.

R.W.I. across the school

Foundation Stage

Nursery children have exposure to early phonics and pre-reading activities on a daily basis through embedded routines and planned activities. Activities designed to develop children's speaking and listening skills are provided that lay the foundations for phonic work that will commence when accessing the RWI. Fred Talk is used throughout so that children are exposed to key terminology used in RWI sessions. Children who are developmentally ready are introduced to letter sounds through the R.W.I. Nursery programme.

RWI is fully implemented in Reception with daily lessons. The class will be split into groups after a baseline assessment is completed. Lessons take place daily which incorporate a 10 minute speed sound session, followed by word blending, word time and spelling sessions as children progress in line with the EYSF curriculum. Reading books which match children's current phonics knowledge take place in small groups.

Key Stage One

R.W.I. groups will be set following assessments carried out by the R.W.I lead and/or class teachers. The sessions will occur daily for 30 minutes, including a spelling element.

Key Stage Two

R.W.I. groups will take the form of an intervention. These sessions support those children who did not meet age related expectation at the phonics screen or resit at the end of KS1. Fast Track Tutoring also supports children in making rapid progress in order to 'catch up'.

SEND Pupils

SEN pupils are fully involved in R.W.I. lessons as all pupils work in ability groups and teaching is geared to the speed of progress of each group.

Supporting children who may experience challenges

Not all children will progress naturally with their phonic development and may experience challenges. Difficulties may be linked to Speech & Language, sight or hearing impairments or other Special Educational Needs. Where specialist advice is given, Overstone Combined School ensure that the individualised targets are evident on individual support plan SMART targets. Additional interventions are given to children who are struggling with aspects of their phonic development where alternative methods are visited.

Differentiation

Overstone Combined School strive to ensure all children reach their full potential across all areas of the curriculum. Varied opportunities are given to access phonics. We recognise children of all abilities, including those who have challenges and those who are exceeding age-related expectations. Planning will ensure that the level of challenge is appropriate to the individual child and will allow children to



gain a progressively deeper understanding of the English language so that children are equipped with the key skills needed to become a fluent reader. Learning experiences will be provided for auditory, visual and kinaesthetic learners.

Resources

Resources are listed in the RWI handbook and include simple and complex speed sounds charts, small and large phonic flash cards, magnetic letters, fiction and non-fiction graded reading books, green and red word flash cards, phonics wall friezes, Fred the Frog toys, tutoring kit, Phonics handbook, writing handbook, speed sounds lesson plans book, ditty book. All resources are kept in classrooms or in the Reading Room. Staff should inform the RWI lead if they require any additional resources. Online subscription videos will be made available to parents to support their child's learning at home. All staff have ongoing access to continuous professional development through subscription to the Online School Portal.

Book Bag Books

All pupils accessing RWI phonics have a RWI decodable paper 'ditty' or 'Book Bag Book' as their home reading book. Those pupils who are also working on their comprehension and fluency may also have a banded book, but this will always be alongside a book bag book until pupils have completed the phonics programme.

Learning at Home

Parents are encouraged to attend Parent Information Sessions to support their child learning to read at home. Different workshops are held for parents of children in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 and help parents to understand how to help their child at different stages in their reading journey. During Year 1, there is also an information session for parents to understand more about the statutory Phonics Screening Check.

Children in Year 1 and 2 take home a reading bookmark which supports parents with the different types of questions to ask their child when reading with them. These questions are based on vocabulary, inference, prediction, explanation and sequence to support the development of their child's comprehension.

Assessment and Recording

Children are assessed throughout every lesson. Every time partner work is used the teacher assesses the progress of their children. The teacher assesses how children:

- read the grapheme chart
- read the green and red words
- decode the ditty/story
- comprehend the story

Adults are requested to identify pupils who need extra reinforcement of a particular element that has been covered so that this can be addressed quickly throughout the day. Formal assessment is carried out every half term using the RWI assessment materials to ensure pupils are grouped appropriately.

Phonic Screening Check

All children in Year 1 will undertake the 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 in their annual report. 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 further support them as they move into Year 2.



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 RWI 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 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.

The English Lead:

- assesses all Reception and KS1 pupils and designates pupils to the correct groups, along with class teachers
- 'drops in' on R.W.I. groups to give advice and to informally check that pupils are in the correct groups
- models lessons, where necessary
- attends up-date meetings when they occur and reports back to the R.W.I. teaching staff
- speaks with the head teacher regarding groupings, teaching spaces and other pertinent matters
- is responsible for reporting to the governors about the quality of the implementation of R.W.I. and the impact on standards.
- organises intervention groups for children not making progress

Application across curriculum

Content taught in discrete phonic sessions is expected to be applied across the curriculum. Overstone Combined School has high expectations of all learners, in all areas. Children's reading and writing application across the curriculum will be marked and feedback given for both knowledge objectives and personal phonic expectations. In Key Stage Two (and for children who no longer need the phonic programme) the same expectation will be in place for spelling. Opportunities will be given in all areas of the curriculum for children to apply their new skills.

Inclusion and equality

Overstone Combined 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.

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Reviewed annually