



FENISCOWLES PRIMARY SCHOOL  
*'STRIVING FOR EXCELLENCE'*



PHONICS POLICY

SEPTEMBER 2022

## Contents

Revisions .....	3
Context .....	3
Statement of Intent .....	3
Phonics (Reading and Spelling) .....	3
Comprehension.....	3
Implementation.....	4
Daily phonics lessons in Reception and Year 1 .....	4
Teaching reading: Reading practice sessions three times a week .....	4
Home reading .....	5
Additional reading support for vulnerable children .....	5
Ensuring consistency and pace of progress .....	6
Reading for pleasure .....	6
Impact.....	6
Assessment.....	6
Statutory National Assessment.....	7
Recording of work.....	7
Phonics .....	7
Reading.....	8
SEND and Greater Depth .....	8
Daily Keep-up lessons ensure every child learns to read .....	8
Greater Depth.....	8
The Learning Environment .....	8
Involving Parents and Carers .....	8
Training, support for staff and connected experts.....	9

# Revisions

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Revision 1:

## Context

Feniscowles Primary School is a 2-form entry school with spaces for a 60 pupil intake in each year group. Our school is made up of 2 separate buildings: an infant building on Park Farm Close and a junior building on Livsey Branch Road. At our school, 7% of pupils have an EHCP for SEND and the school has 15% of pupils in receipt of pupil premium funding. 1% of our pupils speak English as an Additional Language.

Whilst we are working hard to reduce it, 10% of pupils remain persistently absent. It is essential that our approach to teaching phonics and reading is accessible to all learners, regardless of background and our policy is written this in mind.

## Statement of Intent

Feniscowles Primary School has created a curriculum intent statement. This intent has been written to provide an overarching context for our school curriculum to allow ***'A Feniscowles Child' to 'Live Life in its fullest'***. ***This document can be found on our website and should be read in conjunction with our subject specific intent statements.***

## Phonics (Reading and Spelling)

At Feniscowles Primary 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 phonics in our Reception classes and we 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 Feniscowles, 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 Feniscowles Primary School, we value reading as a crucial life skill. By the time children leave us, 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 our reading team, so everyone teaches with fidelity to the Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised programme.

## Implementation

All adults working in classrooms at Feniscowles Primary School create a positive attitude to phonics and the application to reading within our classrooms. Adults in school reinforce an expectation that all learners are capable of achieving high standards and becoming life-long readers.

### 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 second full week 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 Phases 3 and 4 and are taught to read and spell words using Phase 5 GPCs with fluency and accuracy.

### 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' Guidance document. Available on Request.
- 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 the 4<sup>th</sup> full week. 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 Years 2 and 3, we continue to teach reading in this way for any children who still need to practise reading with decodable books.

## **Home reading**

At Fensicowles Primary school, children in the infants will bring home x3 home reading books each week.

- **The Reading Practise book.**
- **The Shared Reading Book.**
- **The Library Book – also known as the Reading For Pleasure Book.**

Each of these books has a distinct and separate purpose.

### The Reading Practise book

This book should be read by the child and completely independently with around 95%+ accuracy. Children will read this book with ease and will sound confident when they do so. They will begin to use the skills of reading aloud such as using character voices and reading with appropriate tones and expression. You can tell which is the reading practise book by looking for this logo

### The Shared Reading Book

This book is sent home for children and families to share. A skilled reader will need to read this book with the child as this book will contain some more unfamiliar words. It is vital that the child is not left to read this book alone. The purpose of the shared read is to expose children to an even greater variety of literature and to broaden the vocabulary that children read.

### The Library Book – also known as the Reading For Pleasure Book

This book is to be read almost entirely by the adult or skilled reader at home. At Fensicowles, we surveyed our infant children about the types of books they would like to read and we stocked our library with titles according to the findings of the survey. The library books are far beyond the reading capabilities of our children and so it is vital that an adult reads this book to them. When an adult reads to a child they are able to model so many of the skills that a good reader uses: pitch, speed, tone, voices, self-correcting strategies and much, much more.

## **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 adult - both teachers and teaching assistants - that work in our classrooms, has been trained to teach reading in the same way, so we all 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.

## 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. This can be within the English lesson or through carefully chosen books, as we want children to experience a wide range of literature, including books that reflect the children at Feniscowles and our local community as well as books that open windows into other worlds and cultures.
- In addition to phonics, our English Curriculum has been built around a text-rich literature spine, placing reading at the core of our wider English work. The Literature Spine can be found on our school website under the curriculum tab in the reading section.
- 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 free flow time and the books are continually refreshed.
- We use the *Everybody read!* resources on The Little Wandle Website to grow our teachers' knowledge of current books, the most recent research and to grow our own Reading for Pleasure practice.

## 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 or further target teaching
- weekly in the Review lessons to assess gaps, address these immediately and secure fluency of GPCs, words and spellings.
- By using a reading feedback sheet for the class teacher

***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, 4 and 5 books
- 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 ready 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.

**Statutory National Assessment**

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

## **Recording of work**

### **Phonics**

In our phonics sessions work is recorded on whiteboard for skill practise based work and in our phonics books when children complete the “application” part of the session. Dependant on the content of the lesson, children will record individual graphemes, whole decodable words, tricky words and full sentences containing the target words from recent teaching.

## **Reading**

In the Autumn Term, any work completed in the reading session is done so orally. Once children reach the Spring term, oral responses are used to generate written responses in the day 3 comprehension sessions. These responses are recorded in a reading practise book.

## **SEND and Greater Depth**

### **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 sessions 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 phonics intervention sessions for any child in Year 3 and above who 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 currently use a discrete intervention to programme to support these children and they are taught by a fully trained member of staff.

### **Greater Depth**

Within the phonics sessions, our teachers make appropriate adaptations to stretch and challenge our more able learners. This can be done (for example) in EYFS by asking a child to write a whole words whilst others are learning single letter phonemes and graphemes. In year 1, this may be done (for example) by asking children to write increasingly more complex sentences during the apply part of the session.

Within the reading sessions, our more able children are also catered for with the materials that they use. At Feniscowles, we match each book carefully the child's ability. At the start of the reading session, children have opportunities to visit more complex words containing the target graphemes. Our children who are more able will also have books with a higher word count.

## **The Learning Environment**

In each classroom, phonics is promoted via phonics phase appropriate displays. This includes using the "Grown The Code" chart. The displays are designed to be a reference point for children to support learning and they can also be referred back to support with reading and writing outside of the phonics sessions.

## **Involving Parents and Carers**

The school believes that it is vitally important to have the support of parents, carers and the wider community for our phonics curriculum. We routinely hold in-depth phonics workshops for our families to support them in



understanding the principals and practises in school and to also support them with effective strategies to help their child to thrive at home.

- All children 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.
- 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 in school.#
- We have training videos for parents to support them in how to help their children at home with both the reading practise book and with the phonics home learning resources.
- We ensure of families know about the *Little Wandle at Home* resources which can support home-learning. School will be working on providing additional training for the use of these materials in the Spring Term 2023. The *Little Wandle at Home* resources have QR codes on the packaging which link parents to videos. These videos demonstrate how to use the resources and support of phoneme pronunciation.

## **Training, support for staff and connected experts**

Prior to launching the *Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised* approach the following training took place:

- All staff in school in both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 undertook x6 hours of module-based training;
- Any staff with direct, daily involvement with the teaching of phonics, have also had the opportunity to see the approach in practise at other schools prior to its full implementation here at Feniscowles;
- All staff members had Little Wandle Website training. This supported them to navigate the sections and in accessing “How To” and “Training Module” videos which are always available to refer back to later;
- The Reading Leader attended leader-specific webinars and made links with other local schools to form a support network.

Now that the programme has been implemented, our on-going training consists of:

- Coaching sessions for staff with direct, daily involvement with the teaching of phonics;
- On demand access to training videos which staff use according to their own training and development needs;
- Opportunities to book additional webinars on an as-needs basis in -line with developmental needs of the staff and the successful running of the programme.
- Opportunities to work with other reading leads and teachers in local schools to support the development of best practise in the teaching of phonics and early reading.