



# Conifers Primary School

## Phonics and Early Reading - Intent, Implementation and Impact

### Intent

#### Phonics (reading and spelling)

At Conifers 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 Reception and 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 Conifers, we 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

We recognise reading as a crucial life skill. By the time children leave us in year 6, 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 Phonics Leader who drives the Phonics and 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

#### Daily phonics lessons

- We teach phonics for 25-30 minutes a day from Reception-Year 2. Each Friday, we review and assess the week's teaching to inform planning and to help children become fluent readers.

- 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 Phase 3 and 4 and are taught to read and spell words using Phase 5 GPCs with fluency and accuracy.
  - Children in Year 2 review Phase 4 and 5 and are taught to read and spell words alternative GPCs with fluency and confidence.

### 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 and TA, 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.
- As a school, we continue to teach reading in this way for any children who still need to practise reading with decodable books. This is in addition to whole class reading lessons which are taught from Year 2-6.

### Home Reading

- The decodable reading practice book is available online and children are encouraged to read and share this book at home to ensure success is shared with the family. The class teacher will inform you of the book that they are reading and this will be written in reading record books each week.

- Reading for pleasure books (library 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.

### 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 grid, 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 Phonics Leader and English Lead 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.

### Ensuring reading for pleasure

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 Conifers and in our local community, as well as books that open windows into other worlds and cultures.
- 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 as part of their continuous provision and the books are continually refreshed (after an adult has shared it with the class).

Children from Reception onwards have a home/school reading record book. 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 continued communication between home and school. Parents/carers are also encouraged to discuss their child's reading progress on the playground before and after school.

- As the children progress through the school, they are encouraged to write their own comments and keep a list of the books/authors that they have read.
- The school library is made available for classes to use on a weekly basis and their teacher will be able to inform the class of their library day where they part take in a library lesson.
- The school library is open during lunch times for children to visit, where they will be able to change their library book and have a quiet area to read.
- Children across the school have regular opportunities to engage with a wide range of Reading for Pleasure events (book fairs, whole school reading competitions and national events).

## 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.

### Statutory assessment

- Children in Year 1 sit a statutory Phonics Screening Check in the summer term. On occasions (post National lockdowns) Year 2 children have sat the Phonics Screening Check during the autumn term. These assessments are submitted to the local authorities and parents/carers are informed of the results. Should children not pass the Phonics Screening Check, they have an opportunity to sit the Screening a year later when they are in Year 2.