

Phonics and Early Reading Policy

Our Intent

The teaching of phonics is the core strategy used to empower our children to read, write, and spell. Our aim is for every child to become a successful, fluent reader and writer by the end of Key Stage 1. We believe that consistent, high-quality daily phonics is the foundation of this success. By mastering the alphabetic code early, children reduce their cognitive load, allowing them to focus on **oral rehearsal, creative composition, and fluid handwriting**.

Teaching and Learning

We follow the **Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised** program. This ensures a complete systematic approach to teaching Grapheme-Phoneme Correspondence (GPC).

- **Daily Lessons:** Phonics takes place daily in Reception and KS1. We follow the specific Little Wandle lesson structure: *Review, Teach, Practise, Apply*. This ensures children consolidate their knowledge and can immediately apply it to their reading and writing.
- **Aural & Oral Focus:** Lessons prioritize oral blending and segmenting. We encourage children to "say the word" and "stretch the sounds" before they attempt to write, reinforcing our **"Think it, Say it, Write it"** mantra.
- **Classroom Resources:** All learning environments are equipped with Little Wandle sound walls, flashcards, and desktop mats to ensure consistency between the lesson and independent work.
- **Continuous Provision:** In EYFS, phonetic challenges are woven into play. Adults facilitate these moments by modeling precise enunciation and encouraging children to apply their "sound of the day" within their activities.
- **Handwriting Integration:** Phonics lessons are the primary vehicle for teaching letter formation. We use the specific Little Wandle mnemonics and

phrases to ensure that every child develops a comfortable and correct pencil grip and legible script from the start.

Removing Barriers and Intervention

We know that phonics is the vital tool in shaping a confident reader.

- **Keep-up, Not Catch-up:** Using the Little Wandle assessments, we identify children falling behind the pace of the program immediately.
 - **Targeted Interventions:** Daily "Keep-up" sessions are delivered to small groups to address specific gaps, such as blending difficulties or obscure GPCs.
 - **KS2 Support:** For pupils in Key Stage 2 who have not yet met the expected standard, we continue to use the Little Wandle Rapid Catch-up resources to ensure they gain the necessary tools for literacy.
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Assessment

Assessment is continuous and purposeful, ensuring the correct level of challenge for every child.

- **Formative:** Teachers assess daily during the "Apply" section of the lesson.
 - **Summative:** Children are assessed every six weeks using the Little Wandle assessment toolkit. This data is used to re-group children and target interventions.
 - **Statutory Checks:** At the end of Year 1, children participate in the Phonics Screening Check. Those who do not meet the threshold receive urgent, targeted support and retake the check in Year 2.
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Responsibilities

The Phonics Leader is responsible for:

- Ensuring the fidelity of the Little Wandle program across the school.
- Providing staff with training and CPD to maintain expert subject knowledge.
- Monitoring the impact of phonics teaching on independent writing and reading fluency.
- Managing resources and analyzing school-wide data.

Adults delivering phonics are responsible for:

- Delivering energetic, interactive, and consistent daily sessions.
 - Modeling precise enunciation (pure sounds) and correct Little Wandle letter formation.
 - Recording half-termly assessments and using them to drive "Keep-up" sessions.
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Partnership with Parents

We believe that a strong partnership with home is essential. To support this, we:

- Hold **Little Wandle workshops** to show parents how to pronounce pure sounds and use formation phrases at home.
- Provide **phonetically decodable books** that are strictly matched to the child's current phonics stage, ensuring they experience success and build reading confidence.
- Share digital resources and videos from the Little Wandle website to model correct pronunciation for families.