

Sunning Hill Primary School



Phonics and Early Reading Policy

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Our school values – Building a Bright Future Together

At Sunning Hill Primary, we instil **self-belief** and promote **independence** that allows children to become **aspirational** and committed, **life-long learners**. Our journey together provides our children with opportunities to learn and grow and encourages them to be **curious** about the world.

Our children are encouraged to take **responsibility** for themselves, show **resilience** and be **proud** of who they are so they flourish within society. All achievements are celebrated to reward success, inspire ambition and nurture self-esteem.

Our Sunning Hill family work together to ensure our children are **happy, kind, charitable** and **respectful**. All children are given equal opportunities to reach their full potential. We provide a supportive, secure environment where children feel safe to take **risks and learn from their mistakes**.

These foundations provide a strong base for building a bright future together ensuring **equality** for all.

Curriculum Intent for Phonics and Early Reading

At Sunning Hill we deliver a systematic synthetic phonics programme, Little Wandle Letters and Sounds. The aim is to teach children how to read and write using a very structured approach that is supported by fully decodable reading books. Learning is whole class with a very clear learning journey that allows pupils to successfully complete phase 5 by the end of Year 1. Pupils are given group or individual 'keep up' sessions, as required, to maintain progress for all learners.

Nursery pupils begin their phonics journey with 'language through listening' before being introduced to Little Wandle, Foundations for Phonics in Nursery three-year-olds from Autumn two term. Little Wandle continues in Reception, starting at phase two.

Phonics learning follows a clear structure:

- Revisit and review: to reinforce all grapheme-phoneme correspondence (GPCs) and tricky words taught;
- Teach and practise: which introduces new GPCs and any new tricky words; and
- Practise and apply: which gives children the opportunity to use what they have learned in oral and written sentences.

The Little Wandle programme has a very strong emphasis on speaking, listening and using repetition to embed learning into the long term memory. Learning is supported by three reading practise sessions that allow pupils to apply their new learning and become highly competent readers.

Curriculum Implementation for Phonics and Early Reading

At Sunning Hill, we aim to deliver phonics to allow pupils to learn and recognise grapheme-phoneme correspondence (GPCs) which will then help them to decode and read words with understanding and confidence.

Every teacher and many teaching assistants have been trained to teach Little Wandle Phonics and Reading sessions. The phonics and reading leader regularly monitor and observe teaching to ensure consistency and high expectations. Staff are expected to follow Little Wandle lesson plans and use the same language, routines and resources to teach phonics and reading to avoid cognitive overload.

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Daily phonics lessons in Reception and Year 1

In Reception, teaching phonics begins from week 2 of the autumn term following the Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised expectations of progress. Phonics is taught for 20 minutes leading up to 30 minutes sessions in Year 1. Four new graphemes are taught each week, which are reviewed on Fridays.

- 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.

Keep-up lessons

Any child who needs additional practice has 'keep-up support', taught by a fully trained adult. 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. Any pupils who do not pass the phonics screening check continue to be taught phonics. These children urgently need to catch up, so the gap between themselves and their peers does not widen. We use the Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised assessments to identify the gaps in their phonic knowledge and teach to these using the keep-up resources.

Teaching reading: reading practice sessions

Children are taught to read through reading practice sessions three times a week. These are delivered by a fully trained adult to small groups of approximately six children. All books are fully decodable and are matched to the children's secure phonic knowledge using the Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised assessments.

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: teaching children to apply their GPC knowledge to read words fluently;
- Prosody: teaching children to read with meaning, stress and expression; and
- Comprehension: teaching children to understand the text by answering questions.

In Reception, reading sessions begin in week 4. Children who are not yet decoding have additional blending practice in small groups, so that they quickly learn to blend and can begin to read books. This reading format continues into Year 1, with children reading fully decodable books. From Year 2, pupils begin to choose a book from the book banded schemes.

Any pupil requiring further reading support, receives additional 1:1 reading with an adult to develop their reading confidence.

Home reading

Pupils take their decodable reading book home every day for additional practise with their family. Children have an age appropriate home reading record to ensure there is good communication between home and school.

Ensuring reading for pleasure

Reading for pleasure and enjoying books is promoted throughout school with books being carefully chosen to engage learners and support wider curriculum learning. We also ensure there is a wide range of books that explore diversity and cultures. Every classroom has an inviting book area that encourages a love for reading. Children across the school have regular opportunities to engage with

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a wide range of reading for pleasure events (book fairs, author visits and workshops and national events).

Curriculum Impact for Phonics and Early Reading

The acquisition of phonic knowledge and early reading is vital to many learning activities. Through the clear and aspirational intent, structured and rigorous implementation of the phonics curriculum, we aim for all pupils to have a secure understanding of GPCs and be able to apply this phonic knowledge across the curriculum to support their learning.

Assessment

Whilst teaching phonics, assessment for learning takes place in every lesson to provide additional support to any children who were not secure by the end of the lesson. Review lessons are completed at the end of each week to assess gaps, address these immediately and secure fluency of GPCs, words and spellings. Summative assessments are completed every six weeks to assess progress and identify children who require keep-up support.

Statutory assessment

At Sunning Hill, we aim for all children to have a secure phonic knowledge by the end of Year 1 and be able to apply their learning to reading.

Rigorous teaching and learning of phonics throughout EYFS and Year 1 ensures that pupils will achieve a good phonic standard by the end of Year 1 ready to complete the Phonics Screening Check. Any children who are not able to pass the Phonics Screening Check are able to take this again at the end of Year 2.

Our school aims to support all families and the wider community. Any queries or concerns regarding individual policies will be considered on an individual basis.