

Phonics, spelling and early reading policy

Policy Date	September 21	Author	
Approval Date	September 21	Approved by	
Review Date	September 23		

At Rokeby our aims are:

- To establish consistent practice, progression and continuity in the teaching and learning of systematic and synthetic phonics and spellings throughout the school.
- To give our Rokeby children the phonic knowledge and spelling strategies that will enable them to become fluent readers and confident writers.

Intent - Phonics (reading and spelling)

At Rokeby, we believe that all our children can become fluent readers and writers. This is why we teach reading and phonics through our SSP programme '*Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised*', which is a systematic and synthetic phonics programme. We start teaching phonics in Nursery/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. From Year 2 onwards, our children build on their knowledge of spellings and spelling patterns with our spelling programme No-nonsense spellings (NNS).

As a result, all our children have the knowledge and strategies to tackle any unfamiliar words as they read. At Rokeby, 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. To support alongside our SSP programme we have many language programmes such as our EYFS Welcomm screening check, NELI, Pepper therapy and our NHS speech and language support service.

Comprehension

At Rokeby, we value reading as a crucial life skill and through our Power of Reading texts embed a love of reading for our children by designing our curriculum learning around the texts. By the time our children leave Rokeby, 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. Therefore, every class has a high-quality Power of Reading text half termly, as well as a daily class story, daily live poetry reading from poets, weekly reading in the library assemblies, alongside our Rokeby Librarians who maintain our many vibrant reading areas as well as our reading trolley and weekly book swap for each class.

Implementation

Foundations for phonics in Nursery

- We provide a balance of child-led and adult-led experiences for all children that meet the curriculum expectations for 'Communication and language' and 'Literacy'. These include:
 - sharing high-quality stories and poems
 - learning a range of nursery rhymes and action rhymes
 - activities that develop focused listening and attention, including oral blending
 - attention to high-quality language.
- We ensure Nursery children are well prepared to begin learning grapheme-phoneme correspondences (GPCs) and blending in Reception.

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 Week 2 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 Phase 3 and 4 and are taught to read and spell words using Phase 5 GPCs with fluency and accuracy.

Daily Keep-up lessons ensure every child learns to read

- 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.
- We timetable daily phonics lessons for any child in Year 2 or 3 who is not fully fluent at reading or 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 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 – at pace.
- If any child in Year 3 to 6 has gaps in their phonic knowledge when reading or writing, we plan phonics 'catch-up' lessons to address specific reading/writing gaps. These focused learning groups are taught by a trained teacher on two consecutive days alongside afternoon interventions addressing gaps in reading and writing by fully trained adults.

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 fully trained adults to small groups of approximately six children
 - use books are 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, 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 around week 4 when the children can blend the phonemes taught so far. For those children who are not yet decoding will have daily additional blending practice in small groups, so that they quickly learn to blend and can begin to read books.
- In Year 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

- The decodable reading practice book is taken home to ensure success is shared with the family.
 - Reading for pleasure books are chosen by the children from either their book corner or through the Rokeby Librarians book exchange to keep in their tray at school.
 - We share our reading and phonic information with our parents on Clasdojo, our school website and through shared learning and nursery rhyme mornings.

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 with an adult on a 1:1 basis regularly throughout the week.

Ensuring consistency and pace of progress

- By December 2021 all teachers and TA's will have been trained in our new SSP programme and how 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 grids map each element of new learning to each day, week and term for the duration of our phonics programme.
- Lesson templates, Prompt cards and 'How to' videos ensure teachers all have a consistent approach and structure for each lesson.
- The English 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.

Ensuring 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)

At Rokeby we value our love of reading and reading for pleasure in all our children, staff, and families.

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 Rokeby and 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 Nursery/Reception, children have access to the reading corner every day and the books are continually refreshed.
- Children from Nursery/Reception have story bag to take home and share with their families including key questions for parents to share the love of books and stories.
- From Reception onwards children have a communication 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 communication between home and school on the reading at home.
- 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.
- From Year 3 the children visit our Rugby Library each half term.
- The school library is timetabled for class assemblies as well as for book swaps.
- Our RPTA are very engaged and supportive in providing monthly subscriptions to magazines and newspaper for the classes.
- We have regular theatre trips and visiting theatre groups and Drama workshops to engage and promote a love of reading.

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.
 - by the English leader and SLT using the assessment tracker and Pixl, to narrow attainment gaps between different groups of children and so that any additional support for teachers can be put into place.

Statutory assessment

- Children in Year 1 sit the Phonics Screening Check. Any child not passing the check re-sits it in Year 2. With children in Year 2 in 2021, taking a past screening check in the Autumn 2.

Ongoing assessment for catch-up

- Children in Year 2 to 6 are assessed through their teacher's ongoing formative assessment with support from the SENCO, English Lead as well as through the half-termly *Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised* summative assessments.