



Park Hall Infant Academy

Phonics and Reading Policy

Overview

At Park Hall Infant Academy, we are committed to ensuring that all pupils become confident, fluent readers through the systematic teaching of phonics and a carefully structured reading provision.

We deliver Read Write Inc. (RWI) with fidelity, adapting provision thoughtfully to meet the needs of our pupils. We have high ambition for every child and believe that secure phonics knowledge is the foundation for successful reading and writing and enables full access to the wider curriculum.

Alongside developing strong decoding skills, we aim to nurture a love of reading so that pupils read widely, often and with increasing confidence.

Intent

Our phonics and reading curriculum aims to ensure that all pupils:

- Develop secure knowledge of grapheme–phoneme correspondences
- Decode unfamiliar words accurately and fluently
- Read books closely matched to their phonics knowledge
- Apply phonics when spelling in their writing
- Meet or exceed national expectations, including success in the Year 1 Phonics Screening Check and at the end of KS1.

We aim for every child to become a confident, independent reader who reads for both knowledge and pleasure.

Implementation

Early Years Foundation Stage

In Nursery, children begin phonics when developmentally ready through daily Speed Sound sessions, focusing on sound recognition, listening skills and early oral blending.

In Reception, pupils receive four structured phonics sessions each week in small, carefully matched groups. Sessions include:

- Explicit teaching of new sounds
- Oral blending and segmenting
- Decoding and reading practice
- Structured opportunities for speaking and listening

Children practise reading regularly with books carefully matched to their phonic knowledge to build confidence and fluency.

Within Literacy lessons, children are also exposed to high quality texts, read to them by their teachers. Reading books as a class for pleasure occurs in addition to these lessons every day.



Key Stage 1

In Year 1, pupils continue to receive four phonics sessions per week through the Read Write Inc. programme. Groups are:

- Precisely matched to pupils' attainment
- Regularly reviewed and adjusted
- Assessed at least half-termly

Where pupils are not making expected progress, Fast Track Tutoring provides targeted support to close gaps quickly. In Year 2, additional phonics teaching is provided for pupils who require further support to meet the expected standard.

Once the children are assessed to have completed the RWI programme, they then move on to completing the RWI Comprehension units. These units are designed to continue to reinforce their phonic knowledge but apply it to longer and increasingly challenging texts. They are taught how to read to retrieve information from a text, infer information and develop their understanding of a wide and rich vocabulary.

English lessons are taught daily and include reading from high quality texts. Lessons are planned to allow discussion and debate around the texts. These include sharing opinions on the books, making predictions based on what has been read, and analysis of the vocabulary chosen to understand how the author wants the reader to feel.

Children in Years One and Two all take part in Guided Reading sessions in addition to their English and Phonics lessons. Initially, these groups will mirror their Phonics groups, with the corresponding 'Book Bag Books' being read with an adult. As children 'complete' the Phonics programme, class teachers will assess their reading using the EARS Reading Fluency Rubric to match them to the correct Oxford Reading Tree reading level. All children will read at least once a week with an adult in school, and then will take the same book home to read there too. Within these Guided Reading sessions, staff will ask children questions to develop their skills and understanding of what they are reading and will also model and improve children's fluency and expression.

Key Stage 2

Some pupils continue to access Read Write Inc. to consolidate phonics knowledge and improve reading fluency.

Fresh Start tutoring in the junior phase provides targeted support for pupils who need to close gaps and build confidence when reading age-appropriate texts.

Reading Books and Home Reading

Reading books are carefully matched to pupils' phonics knowledge to ensure successful early reading. While pupils are accessing Read Write Inc., they take home Book Bag Books which match the level of their phonics reading book. This allows children to practise and consolidate the sounds and words they have already been taught. Re-reading familiar texts supports the development of fluency, accuracy and comprehension.

Once pupils have completed the Read Write Inc. programme and are secure readers, they move off the scheme and begin reading from a wider range of books. This enables children to explore different authors, genres and text types while continuing to develop stamina and enjoyment in reading. All classrooms display Speed Sound Charts to reinforce learning and support independence.

Assessment

Assessment is an integral part of our phonics provision and ensures teaching is closely matched to pupils' needs. Pupils are assessed regularly using Read Write Inc. assessments to identify their secure sound knowledge and blending ability. These assessments inform groupings and enable staff to adjust provision where



needed. Progress is reviewed at least half-termly, allowing the Phonics Lead and staff to track attainment, identify pupils who require additional support and implement targeted interventions promptly.

In Key Stage One, children also complete termly assessments in Reading. These assessments include NFER, Test Base and KS1 SATs papers. These tests are analysed to identify areas of focus for teaching as well as identifying children for whom the comprehension of the text is more challenging than the decoding. These children can then be supported further in class, or receive additional reading practice where needed.

Children who have completed the phonics programme are also assessed regularly using the EARS Fluency Rubric to ensure their Guided Reading books continue to provide a suitable level of challenge. The EARS Fluency involves asking the teacher to assess children based on:

- Expression – whether children are able to add suitable expression to their reading
- Automatic word recognition – whether the words in the text can be read without decoding
- Rhythm and phrasing – whether they are able to use the punctuation to read in phrases with the correct intonation
- Smoothness – whether their reading sounds conversational and smooth rather than ‘choppy’ or hesitant.

Reading for Pleasure

Developing a love of reading is central to our curriculum. Alongside structured phonics teaching, pupils are immersed in a rich reading environment.

Children experience:

- Daily story time with high-quality texts
- Access to well-stocked classroom book areas
- Opportunities to explore a wide range of authors and genres
- Adults modelling enthusiasm and enjoyment for reading
- Weekly class visits to the school library where they choose a book to take home to read
- These experiences support pupils in developing positive attitudes towards reading and encourage them to read widely.

SEND and Inclusion

We maintain high ambition for pupils with SEND and ensure all pupils can access the phonics curriculum through adaptive teaching and targeted support.

Provision may include:

- Adjusting pace and increasing modelling
- Additional rehearsal and overlearning
- Pre-teaching of key sounds and vocabulary
- Smaller teaching groups
- Additional adult support
- Reasonable adjustments to reduce cognitive load
- Copies of texts with corresponding widgets within lessons to allow children to read and understand a text that may be beyond their current decoding level



Regular assessment enables staff to identify barriers early. The Phonics Lead and SENDCo work closely with staff to ensure support is precise and effective. Fresh Start tutoring in the junior school ensures continued support and helps prevent widening attainment gaps.

Leadership and Quality Assurance

The Phonics Lead ensures high-quality implementation through:

- Maintaining fidelity to the Read Write Inc. programme
- Regular staff training and coaching
- Monitoring teaching and provision
- Half-termly progress tracking
- Supporting staff to ensure consistency across groups

The English Lead ensures high-quality reading teaching beyond phonics through:

- Careful choice of high quality texts from a variety of themes, authors and styles to ensure a rich diet of literature through our English lessons.
- Staff training and support around the teaching and assessing of reading
- Staff training and support to ensure Guided Reading sessions remain impactful in Key Stage One
- Analysis of Reading Assessment data to identify gaps or areas of need
- Promotion of reading for pleasure and engagement through incentives and initiatives including World Book Day, competitions and the Scholastic Book Fair.
- Regular audits of 'Reading for Pleasure' book boxes in classes to make sure they are well-stocked and up-to-date with high quality and engaging books.

Impact

As a result of our systematic approach:

- Pupils read accurately and with increasing fluency
- Outcomes in the Phonics Screening Check are strong
- Pupils apply phonics confidently in their writing
- Children develop positive attitudes towards reading

At Park Hall Infant Academy, reading is central to our curriculum. We strive to develop confident, capable readers who can access the full curriculum and who read for both knowledge and enjoyment.