

THE FLITCH GREEN

ACADEMY

Learning for Life

Phonics and Reading Subject Statement

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'Reading is like breathing in and writing is like breathing out, and storytelling is what links both: it is the soul of literacy. The most powerful tool that we have to strengthen literacy is often the most underused and overlooked, and that is a child's own stories.'

Pam Allyn, American author

Intent:

At The Flitch Green Academy, it is our intent that all our children become confident, fluent and enthusiastic readers. Fostering positive attitudes towards reading at the earliest age is a priority for us here at the Academy as we believe these early perceptions play a vital role in developing motivated readers who read widely and regularly for both pleasure and purpose. We believe that through the teaching of early reading and a systematic and synthetic phonics programme, our children are provided with the strongest start for their reading journey.

Through the teaching of reading, children will acquire a wide range of vocabulary and a secure understanding of grammar, fundamental for accessing not only our curriculum, but also crucial life skills. By exposing children to a wide variety of rich and diverse texts, we teach children about a broad literary heritage. We use these texts to support and promote British values throughout the reading curriculum and to make cross-curricular links, where appropriate.

We recognise that the teaching of reading and phonics is directly linked to the teaching of speaking and listening. In response to the growing amount of SLC difficulties within our setting, we believe oracy to be a powerful tool for learning; by teaching students to become more effective speakers and listeners we empower them to better understand themselves, each other and the world around them.

Implementation

Systematic Phonics

At The Flitch Green Academy, children's reading journey begins in Reception with our systematic and synthetic phonics programme, Little Wandle Letters and Sounds. This rigorous programme, used with fidelity throughout the school by trained members of staff, ensures that all pupils receive the same high quality phonics teaching and provision. These sessions are taught whole-class to expose all children to the same content. Within these sessions children revisit and review content daily. This approach enables us to maintain our ambitious and high expectations of all our children,

whilst providing regular opportunities to consolidate learning.

In closely following the [Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised progression](#), all children, including the most disadvantaged, are provided with a clear and structured route to meet or exceed all National Curriculum expectations for word reading through decoding by the end of Key Stage 1, including achieving the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screening check.

Formal phonics teaching begins in the third week of Reception, where we build from ten minute lessons, with additional daily oral blending games, to the full-length thirty minute lessons inline with Year 1. In Reception, children 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 also learn to read 'Tricky Words' that do not conform to common spelling rules. These tricky words are taught in the sequence provided by the [Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised progression](#), starting with the most commonly used words in Reception.

Through our half termly Little Wandle Letters and Sounds assessments and teacher based observations, we identify children who require keep up sessions. This additional support takes place individually or in small groups daily and is delivered by a Little Wandle trained member of staff. Keep up sessions closely match the structure of class teaching, using the same procedures, resources and mantras, but in smaller steps with more repetition. This ensures that every child secures their learning, enabling them to become a fluent reader. In addition, we timetable regular phonics lessons for any child who has not yet passed the Phonics screening test. This will continue until the Autumn term of Year 3 where alternative routes to reading will be explored.

Early home reading

At the Academy, children have regular opportunities to apply the phonics they have learnt to reading through participating in our reading practice sessions three times a week. During these sessions, small groups of children share a fully decodable Big Cat Phonics for Little Wandle reading book before taking it home to share. These books show cumulative progression in phonics and connect closely with our systematic and synthetic phonics programme.

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: During this first read, children focus on the relationship between phonemes and graphemes. Understanding this relationship enables children to blend phonemes together to decode unfamiliar texts.

Prosody: This session focuses on reading the story with appropriate meaning, stress and intonation. It provides an opportunity to explore and develop a greater breadth of vocabulary as well as gaining an understanding of how punctuation adds meaning to a text.

Comprehension: In this final session, we aim for children to be reading their text automatically, applying their decoding skills to read with greater accuracy and fluency, enabling their working memory to focus on developing their comprehension skills. Staff focus each comprehension session on a specific [reading content domain](#) and work with children to develop their application of these skills through a variety of different texts.

Using the half termly assessments in conjunction with the Little Wandle Matching Grid, class teachers and trained staff are able to match each child's secure phonic knowledge in reading words to the appropriate decodable reading book. This will be reviewed every six weeks for most and every three weeks for those who have not yet met the expected progress or who have made accelerated progress.

Reading for Pleasure

Fostering positive attitudes towards reading at the earliest age is crucial. To support this, children in EYFS and KS1 self-select their own Reading for Pleasure book, in addition to their fully decodable phonics book. Every week, children spend time choosing from a wide range of texts with staff who generate positive book talk with children around the title they have selected. This book is to be shared at home with a focus on encouraging a love of reading through providing children with the opportunity to listen to stories, read with enthusiasm and intonation.

Home reading

Whole-Class Reading

Building on this foundation in EYFS and year 1, whole-class reading takes place in addition to English lessons in years 2-6. These sessions are taught in mixed ability seating to promote peer-discussion and to give children the opportunity to support and learn from one another. The sessions will not necessarily involve listening to all children read individually; rather they include discussion of issues, responses, ideas and opinions that lead and extend pupils through careful questioning, structured activities and reference to texts. They are planned bespoke by class teachers to cater for the needs of the class with the support of the subject leader.

Our curriculum ensures each class is allocated a rich and ambitious text to study every half term/term (depending on the length of the text) for these sessions. These texts have been sequenced carefully: to build on prior learning of key literary figures; to develop reading stamina; to broaden vocabulary progressively and to develop cultural awareness within our setting.

These core texts are read daily by the class teacher for 10-15 minutes in preparation for the delivery of these reading sessions and to ensure that children have the opportunity to listen to high quality story-telling.

Whole-class reading sessions are delivered by three, forty-five minute lessons each week and adhere to the following structure:

- **Lesson 1** - This is a non-fiction/poetry lesson. Children have the opportunity to explore a range of non-fiction and poetry that link to themes within the core text they are studying. These sessions tend to focus largely on purpose, structure and organisation.
- **Lesson 2** - In this session, pupils focus on a short extract from the core text and carry out some close reading. The teacher will share the key vocabulary for the session (taken from the extract) and complete a variety of tasks to enable them to explore these words at a deeper level and in a range of contexts.
- **Lesson 3** - In the final session of the week, the children start the lesson with a quick reading starter (ERIC) which requires them to revisit key strands of reading (Retrieve, Interpret and Choice) in order for them to fully embed. In the remainder of the session, the pupils will learn a specific comprehension skill, taken from one of the six reading strands below. They will apply this skill to the extract that they studied in lesson 2 and the skill will be modelled by the class teacher before having an opportunity to practise it themselves.

Our skills-based approach to learning here at the Academy, means that children are guided through ways of developing specific reading skills before working independently to apply the new skill that they have acquired.

These skills are woven throughout whole-class reading sessions and have been grouped into the six different strands below:

RETRIEVE: Understand, describe, select or retrieve information, events or ideas from texts and use quotation and reference to text.	INTERPRET Deduce, infer or interpret information, events or ideas from text.	CHOICE: Use a variety of strategies to find information in both fiction and nonfiction texts.	VIEWPOINT Identify and comment on the writer's purposes and viewpoints and the overall effect of the text on the reader.	REVIEW: Discuss books read independently and as a group, justifying their views.	PERFORM: Show understanding through intonation, tone, volume and action when performing poems and playscripts
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Accelerated Reader

Building fluency and accuracy in reading is vital. To support this process, children read independently for at least twenty minutes each day. During this time, teachers will listen to specific children and discuss book choices with them.

In KS2, independent reading is supported through the use of Accelerated Reader. Accelerated Reader helps teachers and leaders to motivate, monitor, and manage students' independent reading practice. Children in year 2 will begin to transition onto the programme when they are ready and have secured the necessary decoding and comprehension skills. The programme supports teachers in recognising pupil achievements through regular book quizzing and works to create a culture of reading through choice. We celebrate these reading achievements in whole-school assemblies every week and display them prominently opposite our library.

Through Accelerated Reader, the children will also complete a STAR test, a computer adaptive test, at least four times yearly (a September baseline and then end of term thereafter). The results from these assessments provide children with a ZPD (Zone of Proximal Development), this ensures books are matched appropriately to individual ability for optimal reading progress. In addition to this, these assessments give teachers and leaders an accurate picture of children's decoding and fluency skills and provide insights into their attainment and progress both within the context of the class and on a national scale. This assessment process is invaluable in identifying those children in need of early intervention. Once intervention needs have been identified, these children are prioritised by way of regular reading to an adult and a more personalised learning plan, where appropriate.

Speaking and Listening

We provide ample opportunity for developing speaking and listening through structured talk and imaginative play to extend and challenge pupil's thinking and their ability to articulate themselves accurately. All staff prioritise conversational opportunities and model good levels of oracy, to help promote our high expectations for speaking and listening across the school.

In EYFS, children take part in regular circle time to support pupils in answering questions orally, guiding children to form sentences correctly. This activity encourages pupils from an early age to become confident speakers and active listeners. Throughout EYFS and year 1, role play areas are also used to develop peer-talk and imaginative play. Children throughout the school are read high-quality text daily by an adult who models expressive story-telling and provides children with the opportunity to actively listen and respond.

All staff have received training on visual coding to support communication and language difficulties. This is used throughout the school either in 1:1 sessions or as part of whole-class teaching. This tool scaffolds children's understanding of language and sentence structures.

Impact

By the time our children leave The Fritch Green Academy they will:

- be fluent, confident readers.
- talk enthusiastically about reading.
- show an awareness and appreciation of our diverse and rich literary heritage.
- be equipped with the necessary reading skills to access a more advanced curriculum in secondary school and essential life skills.
- be able to express opinions and critically discuss a range of texts.

The impact of our reading curriculum will be monitored through the following ways:

- Evidence gathered from books and moderations
- Discussions with both pupils and staff
- Evidence gathered from lesson observations and learning walks
- Half termly summative assessment strategies such as comprehension papers, STAR tests, Little Wandle
- Statutory assessments such as the Phonics screening test
- Termly teacher assessments, recorded on INSIGHT