

Hassocks Infant School

Phonics and Early Reading Policy



* Explore * Respect * Flourish

Date policy agreed:	November 2023
Date policy to be reviewed:	Four yearly, November 2027
Responsibility:	Literacy lead



Hassocks Infant School Phonics and Early Reading Policy



A COMPLETE PHONICS RESOURCE TO SUPPORT CHILDREN

Intent

Phonics (reading and spelling)

At Hassocks Infants we believe in enabling the children to become independent lifelong readers and in giving children the tools to achieve this. It is essential that our approach to teaching phonics and reading is accessible to all learners, regardless of background. We believe that all our children can become fluent readers and writers. This is why we teach reading through *Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised*, which is a systematic and synthetic phonics programme. We start teaching phonics in 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 as they move through school.

As a result, all our children are able to tackle any unfamiliar words as they read. At Hassocks Infant school, 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.

Comprehension

At Hassocks Infant school we value reading as a crucial life skill. By the time children leave us, 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.

Because we believe teaching every child to read is so important, we have a Reading Leader who drives the early reading programme in our school. This person is highly skilled at teaching phonics and reading, and they monitor and support our reading team, so everyone teaches with fidelity to the *Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised* programme.

Implementation

It is crucial for children to develop a life-long love of reading. Reading consists of two dimensions: language comprehension and word reading. Language comprehension (necessary for both reading and writing) starts from birth. It only develops when adults talk with children about the world around them and the books (stories and non-fiction) they read

with them, and enjoy rhymes, poems and songs together. Skilled word reading, taught later, involves both the speedy working out of the pronunciation of unfamiliar printed words (decoding) and the speedy recognition of familiar printed words.

Daily phonics lessons in Reception and KS1

- 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 Phases 3 and 4 and are taught to read and spell words using Phase 5 GPCs with fluency and accuracy.
 - Children in year 2 Review phase 5 in Autumn term and then move to the Little Wandle spelling programme in Spring term.

Spelling in Year 2

Little Wandle Spelling is designed to provide a seamless link from *Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised* to learning spelling in Year 2 by building on children's knowledge of the alphabetic code and teaching them how to spell with confidence. We begin by reviewing Phase 5 so we are sure every child has secured that part of the alphabetic code. Children then learn foundational spelling concepts in the Bridge to spelling that they will apply in the Spelling units.

Daily Keep-up lessons ensure every child learns to read

- Any child who needs additional practice has daily 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 all children in Year 2 however, any child who is not fully fluent at reading or has not passed the Phonics screening check are assessed using the Rapid Catch-up assessments to identify the gaps in their phonic knowledge and then we teach to these using the Rapid Catch-up resources – at pace.
- These short, sharp lessons last 15-20 minutes daily and have been designed to ensure children quickly catch up to age-related expectations in reading.

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 a fully trained adult to small groups of approximately six children
 - use books matched to the children's secure phonic knowledge using the *Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised* assessments and book matching grids on and assessment tracker.
 - 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 in Week 4. Children who are not yet decoding have daily additional blending practice in small groups, so that they quickly learn to blend and can begin to read books.
- In Year 2, 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 also go home for parents to share and read to children. We share the research behind the importance and impact of sharing quality children's books with parents through workshops and leaflets.
 - We use the [*Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised* parents' resources](#) to engage our families and share information about phonics, the benefits of sharing books, how children learn to blend and other aspects of our provision, both online and through workshops.

Additional reading support for vulnerable children

- Many children in Reception and KS1 who are receiving additional phonics Keep-up sessions read their reading practice book to an adult daily.

Ensuring consistency and pace of progress

- Every teacher and TA in our school has been trained 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.
- We also ensure any additional helpers who come in to read have Little Wandle training so they are proficient at taking groups and using consistent language and mantras.
- Weekly content grids map each element of new learning to each day, week and term for the duration of the programme.
- Lesson templates, Prompt cards and 'How to' videos ensure teachers all have a consistent approach and structure for each lesson.
- Regular staff meetings ensure that this consistent approach is communicated effectively to all staff.
- The Reading Leader and SLT regularly monitor and observe teaching; summative assessment is used to identify children who need additional support and gaps in learning and this is monitored through pupil progress meetings.

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)

We value reading for pleasure highly and work hard as a school to grow our Reading for Pleasure pedagogy.

- 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 Hassocks Infant school and our local community as well as books that open windows into other worlds and cultures, these can be found on our Reading spine.

- 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.
- We have a Reading Pledge that is shared each year with parents and children.
- In Reception and Year 1, children have access to the reading corner every day in their continuous provision and the books are continually refreshed.
- Children from Reception onwards have a home reading record. 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.
- We have a well-stocked school library with books that promote other worlds and cultures as well as many familiar stories. Each class visits the school library every other week and is able to borrow books. (Reception start this from Spring term onwards)
- Children across the school have regular opportunities to engage with a wide range of Reading for Pleasure events (book fairs, author visits and workshops, national events etc).

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 for [Reception](#) and KS1 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 SLT and scrutinised through the *Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised* assessment tracker, to narrow attainment gaps between different groups of children and so that any additional support can be put into place.
- Children not working at age related in Year 2 are assessed through:
 - the Rapid Catch-up initial assessment to quickly identify any gaps in their phonic knowledge and plan appropriate teaching
 - the Rapid Catch-up summative assessments to assess progress and inform teaching
- [Fluency assessments](#) measure children's accuracy and reading speed in short one-minute assessments. They are used:
 - in Year 1, when children are reading the Phase 5 set 3, 4 and 5 books
 - with children following the Rapid Catch-up programme in Year 2, when they are reading the Phase 5 set 3, 4 and 5 books
 - to assess when children are ready to exit their programme. Year 2 children can exit the Rapid Catch-up programme when they read the final fluency assessment at 90+ words per minute. At these levels, children should have sufficient fluency to tackle any book at age-related expectations. After exiting their programme, children do not need to read any more fully decodable books.

- A placement assessment is used:
 - with any child new to the school to quickly identify any gaps in their phonic knowledge and plan and provide appropriate extra teaching.
- The [Rapid Catch-up assessment](#) is used
 - with any child new to the school in Year 2 and above to quickly identify any gaps in their phonic knowledge and plan and provide appropriate extra teaching.

Little Wandle SEND programme

‘Children (with SEND) have to navigate the same written language, unlock the same alphabetic code, learn the same skills, and learn and remember the same body of knowledge as their peers. It is a critical skill in helping them prepare for adulthood.’

(The reading framework: Teaching the foundations of literacy, DfE 2021)

Children with complex SEND issues that affect cognition will follow the Little Wandle SEND programme. These children might have an EHCP, although many children with an EHCP are able to follow the main programme. It helps children learn to read using the right level of challenge for each child and using the graduated approach.

Statutory assessment

Children in Year 1 sit the Phonics screening check. Any child not passing the check re-sits it in Year 2.