



PHONICS AND EARLY READING POLICY

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Signed by:

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1. Statement of Intent, Implementation and Impact – Phonics and Early Reading

Intent

At Quinton Primary School, we are dedicated to the early, systematic and focused teaching of phonics for all children. We are committed to ensuring that every pupil learns to read, regardless of background, need or ability, and that they become fluent, confident readers by the end of Key Stage One.

Our phonics provision is aligned with the expectations of the National Curriculum and Early Learning Goals. We follow the structured progression of the Twinkl Phonics Scheme, which is rooted in the Letters and Sounds framework, ensuring clear, term-by-term progression from Nursery to Year 2.

We prioritise early reading by providing children with books that are carefully matched to their secure phonics knowledge. Through the use of fully decodable texts, including Rhino Readers, pupils are able to practise and apply their learning, ensuring cumulative progression and sustained reading success.

Alongside the teaching of phonics, we promote a strong culture of Reading for Pleasure. Children are exposed to a wide range of high-quality stories, rhymes, poems and non-fiction texts to develop their vocabulary, comprehension and love of reading.

Ultimately, our intent is to ensure that all children develop the essential skills needed to become successful, independent and lifelong readers.

Implementation

Phonics and early reading are prioritised across the school through a consistent, high-quality approach.

Phonics is taught daily from Reception to Year 2 using the Twinkl Phonics Scheme, with structured lessons following the sequence: revisit and review, teach, practise and apply. In Nursery, children begin with Phase 1 through language-rich provision that focuses on listening, attention and oral blending skills. Those who have attended our school Nursery benefit from a carefully planned progression through the seven aspects of Phase 1 phonics, ensuring strong foundations in sound discrimination, rhythm, rhyme, alliteration, oral blending and segmenting, and developing speaking and listening skills which support later phonics success in Reception and beyond.

Staff deliver phonics with fidelity and consistency and have strong subject knowledge. Children are given regular opportunities to practise decoding through reading and re-reading fully decodable books that are closely matched to their phonics stage. We use Rhino Readers texts aligned with Twinkl Phonics to ensure that pupils only encounter grapheme-phoneme correspondences (GPCs) they have been taught.

Reading is supported through a structured three-read guided reading approach: Read 1 – Fluency, where children decode unfamiliar words and practise common exception words; Read 2 – Prosody, where children reread the text with growing familiarity, focusing on expression, tone, punctuation and pace; and Read 3 – Comprehension, where children discuss the text and answer questions to check and deepen understanding.

Assessment is embedded within daily teaching and informs practice. Ongoing formative assessment ensures that misconceptions are quickly identified, while half-termly summative assessments using Twinkl materials enable precise tracking of progress. Children are grouped flexibly based on their phonics knowledge and reviewed regularly to ensure accurate placement.

Targeted interventions are in place for pupils at risk of falling behind. These take place at least twice weekly and focus on closing specific gaps in knowledge. Pupils who do not meet the expected standard in the Year 1 Phonics Screening Check receive continued, structured support in Year 2.

Phonics is embedded across the wider curriculum, with children encouraged to apply their knowledge in both reading and writing. Classrooms support independence through the display of graphemes, tricky words and high-frequency vocabulary, and staff consistently model the application of phonics for decoding and spelling.

Reading practice is a key priority. Children read regularly with adults in school and at home, and books are closely matched to their phonics stage. Early readers use fully decodable texts to ensure successful, independent reading, and re-read books multiple times to build fluency, confidence and comprehension.

As children progress, they move through the sequence of fully decodable texts, before transitioning to a wider range of reading materials following Phase 6. Throughout this journey, a range of high-quality texts is used to support language development and promote reading for pleasure.

Parents are supported to help their children read at home through workshops, meetings and guidance materials. Clear communication ensures that parents understand phonics teaching and reading expectations, including the sharing of newly taught sounds and tricky words so they can support learning at home. Regular home reading is encouraged and monitored to reinforce the acquisition of these sounds and words.

Impact

The impact of our phonics and early reading curriculum is reflected in the strong outcomes and positive attitudes of our pupils.

Children develop secure decoding skills and become fluent, confident readers who are able to read with accuracy and understanding. The vast majority of pupils meet or exceed age-related expectations, including success in the Year 1 Phonics Screening Check.

Through effective assessment and targeted support, gaps in attainment are quickly identified and addressed, ensuring that all pupils make strong progress from their starting points.

Pupils demonstrate increasing confidence and independence in their reading and develop a genuine enjoyment of books. They engage with a wide range of texts and begin to see themselves as readers.

By the end of Key Stage One, children are well-prepared to transition from learning to read to reading to learn, equipped with the essential skills needed to access the wider curriculum and succeed in the next stage of their education.

2. Legal framework

This policy has due regard to all relevant legislation and guidance including, but not limited to, the following:

- DfE 'English programmes of study: key stages 1 and 2'
- DfE 'Early years foundation stage statutory framework'

This policy operates in conjunction with the following school policies:

- Primary English Policy

3. Roles and responsibilities

The governing board will be responsible for:

- Ensuring a broad and balanced reading curriculum is implemented in the school.
- Ensuring the school's reading curriculum is accessible to all pupils.

The headteacher will be responsible for:

- The overall implementation of this policy.
- Ensuring the school's reading curriculum is implemented consistently.
- Ensuring appropriate resources are allocated to the reading curriculum.
- Ensuring all pupils are appropriately supported.
- Appointing a member of staff to lead on the school's approach to teaching reading.

The literacy lead will be responsible for:

- Leading on the school's approach to reading.
- Preparing curriculum plans and schemes of work for the subject.
- Communicating developments in the subject to all teaching staff and the SLT, as appropriate.

Teachers will be responsible for:

- Acting in accordance with this policy.
- Planning lessons effectively, ensuring a range of teaching methods are used to cover the content of the curriculum.
- Liaising with the literacy lead about key topics, resources and support for individual pupils.
- Monitoring the progress of pupils in their class and reporting this on an annual basis to parents.
- Reporting any concerns regarding the teaching of the subject to the subject leader or a member of the SLT.
- Undertaking any training that is necessary in order to effectively teach reading skills.

The SENCO will be responsible for:

- Liaising with the literacy lead in order to implement and develop specialist reading-based learning throughout the school.
- Organising and providing training for staff regarding the reading curriculum for pupils with SEND.
- Advising staff how best to support pupils' needs.

4. EYFS

All pupils within the EYFS will be taught to develop their reading skills as an integral part of the work covered during the academic year.

All reading objectives will be underpinned by the early learning goals (ELGs) that pupils should have attained by the end of the EYFS.

In accordance with the word reading ELG, at the end of the EYFS, pupils at the expected level of development will be able to:

- Say a sound for each letter in the alphabet and at least 10 digraphs.
- Read words consistent with their phonic knowledge by sound-blending.
- Read aloud simple sentences and books that are consistent with their phonic knowledge, including some common exception words.

In accordance with the comprehension ELG, at the end of the EYFS, pupils at the expected level of development will be able to:

- Demonstrate understanding of what has been read to them by retelling stories and narratives using their own words and recently introduced vocabulary.
- Anticipate, where appropriate, key events in stories.
- Use and understand recently introduced vocabulary during discussions about stories, non-fiction, rhymes and poems during role play.

5. The curriculum

In Year 1, pupils will be taught to:

Word reading

- Apply phonic knowledge and skills to decode words.
- Respond speedily with the correct sound to graphemes (letters or groups of letters) for all phonemes (40+), including, where applicable, alternative sounds for graphemes.
- Read accurately by blending sounds in unfamiliar words containing grapheme-phoneme correspondences (GPCs) that have been taught.
- Read common exception words, noting unusual correspondences between spelling and sound and where these occur in the word.
- Read words containing taught GPCs and -s, -es, -ing, -ed, -er, and -est endings.
- Read other words of more than one syllable that contain taught GPCs.
- Read words with contractions, e.g. I'm, I'll, we'll, and understand that the apostrophe represents the omitted letter/s.
- Accurately read books aloud that are consistent with their developing phonic knowledge and that do not require them to use other strategies to work out words.
- Re-read these books to build up their fluency and confidence in reading.

Comprehension

- Develop pleasure in reading, motivation to read, vocabulary and understanding by:

- Listening to and discussing a wide range of poems, stories and non-fiction at a level beyond which they can read independently at.
- Being encouraged to link what they read or hear to their own experiences.
- Becoming very familiar with key stories, fairy stories and traditional tales, retelling them and considering their particular characteristics.
- Recognising and joining in with predictable phrases.
- Learning to appreciate rhymes and poems, and to recite some by heart.
- Discussing word meanings, linking new meanings to those already known.
- Understand the books they can already read accurately and fluently, and those they listen to by:
 - Drawing on what they already know or on background information and vocabulary provided by the teacher.
 - Checking that the text makes sense to them as they read.
 - Correcting inaccurate reading.
 - Discussing the significance of the title and events.
 - Making inferences on the basis of what is being said and done.
 - Predicting what might happen on the basis of what has been read so far.
- Participate in discussion about what is read to them, taking turns and listening to what others say.
- Explain clearly their understanding of what is read to them.

In Year 2, pupils will be taught to:

Word reading

- Continue to apply phonic knowledge and skills to decode words until automatic decoding has become embedded and reading is fluent.
- Read accurately by blending the sounds in words that contain the graphemes taught so far, especially recognising alternative sounds for graphemes.
- Accurately read words of two or more syllables that contain the graphemes taught so far.
- Read words containing common suffixes.
- Read further common exception words, noting unusual correspondences between spelling and sound and where these occur in the word.
- Read most words quickly and accurately, without overt sounding and blending, when they have been frequently encountered.
- Read aloud books closely matched to their improving phonic knowledge, sounding out unfamiliar words accurately, automatically and without undue hesitation.
- Re-read these books to build up their fluency and confidence in word reading.

Comprehension

- Develop pleasure in reading, motivation to read, vocabulary and understanding by:
 - Listening to, discussing and expressing views about a wide range of contemporary and classic poetry, stories and non-fiction at a level beyond that at which they can read independently.
 - Discussing the sequence of events in books and how items of information are related.

- Becoming increasingly familiar with and retelling a wide range of stories, fairy stories and traditional tales.
- Being introduced to non-fiction books that are structured in different ways.
- Recognising simple recurring literary language in stories and poetry.
- Discussing and clarifying the meanings of words, linking new meanings to known vocabulary.
- Discussing their favourite words and phrases.
- Continuing to build up a repertoire of poems learnt by heart, appreciating these and reciting some, with appropriate intonation to make the meaning clear.
- Understand the books that they can already read accurately and fluently, and those that they listen to by:
 - Drawing on what they already know or on background information and vocabulary provided by the teacher.
 - Checking that the text makes sense to them as they read, and correcting inaccurate reading.
 - Making inferences on the basis of what is being said and done.
 - Answering and asking questions.
 - Predicting what might happen on the basis of what has been read so far.
- Participate in discussion about books, poems and other works that are read to them and those that they can read for themselves, taking turns and listening to what others say.
- Explain and discuss their understanding of books, poems and other material, both those that they listen to and those that they read for themselves.

In Years 3 and 4, pupils will be taught to:

Word reading

- Apply their growing knowledge of root words, prefixes and suffixes (etymology and morphology) to reading aloud and understanding the meaning of new words they meet.
- Read further exception words, noting the unusual correspondences between spelling and sound, and where these occur in the word.

Comprehension

- Develop positive attitudes to reading, and an understanding of what they read, by:
 - Listening to and discussing a wide range of fiction, poetry, plays, non-fiction and reference books or textbooks.
 - Reading books that are structured in different ways and reading for a range of purposes.
 - Using dictionaries to check the meaning of words that they have read.
 - Increasing their familiarity with a wide range of books, including fairy stories, myths and legends, and retelling some of these orally.
 - Identifying themes and conventions in a wide range of books.
 - Preparing poems and play scripts to read aloud and to perform, showing understanding through intonation, tone, volume and action.
 - Discussing words and phrases that capture the reader's interest and imagination.
 - Recognising some different forms of poetry, e.g. free verse, narrative poetry.

- Understand what they read, in books they can read independently, by:
 - Checking that the text makes sense to them, discussing their understanding, and explaining the meaning of words in context.
 - Asking questions to improve their understanding of a text.
 - Drawing inferences such as inferring characters' feelings, thoughts and motives from their actions, and justifying inferences with evidence.
 - Predicting what might happen from details stated and implied.
 - Identifying main ideas drawn from more than one paragraph and summarising these.
 - Identifying how language, structure, and presentation contribute to meaning.
- Retrieve and record information from non-fiction.
- Participate in discussion about both books that are read to them and those they can read for themselves, taking turns and listening to what others say.

In Years 5 and 6, pupils will be taught to:

Word reading

- Apply their growing knowledge of root words, prefixes and suffixes (morphology and etymology) to both read aloud and understand the meaning of new words they encounter.

Comprehension

- Maintain positive attitudes to reading and an understanding of what they read by:
 - Continuing to read and discuss an increasingly wide range of fiction, poetry, plays, non-fiction and reference books or textbooks.
 - Reading books that are structured in different ways and reading for a range of purposes.
 - Increasing their familiarity with a wide range of books, including myths, legends and traditional stories, modern fiction, fiction from our literary heritage, and books from other cultures and traditions.
 - Recommending books that they have read to their peers, giving reasons for their choices.
 - Identifying and discussing themes and conventions in and across a wide range of writing.
 - Making comparisons within and across books.
 - Learning a wider range of poetry by heart.
 - Preparing poems and plays to read aloud and to perform, showing understanding through intonation, tone and volume so that the meaning is clear to an audience.
- Understand what they read by:
 - Checking that the book makes sense to them, discussing their understanding and exploring the meaning of words in context.
 - Asking questions to improve their understanding.
 - Drawing inferences such as inferring characters' feelings, thoughts and motives from their actions, and justifying inferences with evidence.
 - Predicting what might happen from details stated and implied.

- Summarising the main ideas drawn from more than one paragraph, identifying key details that support the main ideas.
- Identifying how language, structure and presentation contribute to meaning.
- Discuss and evaluate how authors use language, including figurative language, considering the impact on the reader.
- Distinguish between statements of fact and opinion.
- Retrieve, record and present information from non-fiction.
- Participate in discussions about books that are read to them and those they can read for themselves, building on their own and others' ideas and challenging views courteously.
- Explain and discuss their understanding of what they have read, including through formal presentations and debates, maintaining a focus on the topic and using notes where necessary.
- Provide reasoned justifications for their views.

6. Teaching and learning

The teaching of reading will primarily be delivered during Phonics Sessions (EYFS and KS1) and literacy lessons; however, reading will be encouraged in all areas of the curriculum and other learning activities.

The statutory national curriculum content from the DfE's 'English programmes of study: key stages 1 and 2', as outlined above, will be used as the starting point for lesson planning.

All lessons will have clear learning objectives, which are shared and reviewed with pupils.

Reading will be taught both as a discrete lesson and as part of cross-curricular themes when appropriate.

All relevant staff members will be briefed on the school's planning procedures as part of their staff training.

7. Assessment and reporting

The EYFS Profile will be completed for each pupil in the final term of the year in which they reach age five. The progress and development of pupils within the EYFS is assessed against the ELGs outlined in the 'Statutory framework for the early years foundation stage'.

Formative and summative assessments will take place throughout the year to assess pupils' progress and attainment in reading and to identify support required. Pupils' reading will also be assessed during the relevant statutory assessments.

Assessment will take various forms, including the following:

- End of Year 1 Phonics Screen
- Rhino Readers Fluency Assessment
- Talking to pupils and asking questions
- Discussing pupils' work with them
- Observing oral and performative tasks and activities
- Classroom tests and formal exams

Parents will be provided with a written report about their child's progress during the summer term every year. These include information on pupils' attitudes towards reading and their understanding of key concepts. Parents are also kept informed about their child's reading journey through home reading records, discussions at parents' evenings, interim reports and 'celebration of learning' sessions, where they are invited into school to share and review their child's work.

The progress of pupils with SEND will be monitored by both the class teacher and the SENCO.

8. Resources

The literacy lead will be responsible for the management and maintenance of reading resources.

Reading resources will be stored in [each classroom](#).

The school library will contain an array of resources to support pupils' learning.

9. Equal opportunities

The school will actively encourage all pupils to read books that are suitable for their reading ability, and this will be reflected in the reading materials which are used.

The literacy lead and teachers will ensure reading activities are adapted as appropriate to ensure all pupils can access the curriculum.

10. Additional reading activities

Alongside the set reading curriculum, the school ensures pupils are able to take part in a range of enrichment activities to promote a love of reading, including:

- Reading buddy opportunities across year groups
- Regular visits to the school library
- Use of termly topic book boxes provided by the Warwickshire Library Service, linked to the curriculum
- Celebrations such as World Book Day
- A whole-school reading focus during the first term following the Christmas break
- A February half-term reading challenge
- Oracy challenges and competitions to develop spoken language and confidence
- The Book Fair, held twice annually, including linked competitions and rewards

Reading at home

Parental involvement and encouragement plays a crucial part in pupils' reading development and the school will promote a home-school reading partnership by:

- Communicating with parents and sharing information with them through parent meetings, newsletters, diaries, and curriculum evenings.
- Giving pupils a book to read at home to further the skills they have learned during guided reading.
- Encouraging parents to make notes in the pupils' diaries about reading progress made at home.

Pupils are encouraged to read at home through the following methods:

- Family learning sessions

- After school meetings with parents
- Notifications for parents informing them of their child's progress

11. Monitoring and review

This policy will be reviewed on an [annual](#) basis by the literacy lead and the headteacher.

Any changes made to this policy will be communicated to all teaching staff and other key stakeholders.

The next scheduled review of this policy is [March 2027](#)