



Abbey Lane Phonics and Reading policy

Intent

Phonics (reading and spelling)

At Abbey Lane, 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 Foundation Stage 2 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 Abbey Lane, 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 Abbey Lane 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

Daily phonics lessons in Reception and Year 1

- We teach phonics for 20-30 minutes a day. In Reception, we build from 10-minute lessons to the full-length lesson as quickly as possible. Each Friday, we review the week's teaching to help children become fluent readers. In FS2 we also play additional grapheme recognition and blending games throughout the day to consolidate understanding.
- Children make a strong start in Reception: teaching begins as soon as the children start school.



- 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.

Keep-up lessons ensure every child learns to read

- Any child who needs additional practice has Keep-up support for at least 3 sessions per week. They are 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 KS2 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 then the 'Rapid Catch-Up' lessons
- If any child in the rest of KS2 has gaps in their phonic knowledge when reading or writing, we plan phonics 'catch-up' lessons to address specific reading/writing gaps. These short, sharp lessons last 10 minutes and take place at least three times a week.

Teaching reading: Little Wandle Phonics Programme

- We teach children to read through reading practice sessions twice 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 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 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. They are encouraged to point to the words.
- 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.



Teaching reading: Post Little Wandle Phonics Programme

- Children have five Reading lessons per week, from Y3 onwards. Each week a child will have three lessons that gives them the opportunity to delve deeper into understanding a text, by practising VIPERS reading skills. Vocabulary, Inference, Prediction, Explaining, Retrieval and Summarising cover the whole range of comprehension skills that a child will need to develop into a well-rounded, confident reader. As a part of these five lessons, children will complete a session included only for the purpose of 'Reading for Pleasure'. Here, children will also have the opportunity for 'Book Talk' with their peers. There will also be a 'Reading Fluency' lesson, where a teacher is able to listen to individual children read, while others complete reading journal activities.
- Teachers at Abbey Lane demonstrate high quality teaching to develop children's skills and competence, so that they are fluent readers who can read to learn. Whole class shared reading is used throughout the school to enable all children to share high quality texts and develop skills in reading comprehension and fluency.

Home reading

- Each child must have two reading books (until a child becomes a 'free reader'). One must be a book-banded / Little Wandle text that follows our phonics progression. Another reading book is a 'Reading for Pleasure' book. This text is often taken from the classroom's Recommended Reads section and is for the child to read during our free reading sessions and share at home with an adult.
- 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.

Ensuring consistency and pace of progress

- Every teacher 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.
- During Little Wandle Phonics lessons, 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.
- The Reading Leader uses 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)

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 – teachers have added a specified slot for story time/class novel on their timetable to ensure this takes place. We choose books carefully as we want children to experience a wide range of books, including books that reflect the children at Abbey Lane 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 FS2, children have access to the reading corner every day in their free flow time and the books are continually refreshed.
- Children have a home reading record. The parent/carer records comments to share with the adults in school.
- The school library is made available for classes to use. 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 – Little Wandle Phonics Programme

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 in FS2 and Y1 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 for teachers can be put into place.
- The [Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised placement assessment](#) is used:



- with any child new to the school to quickly identify any gaps in their phonic knowledge and plan provide appropriate extra teaching.

Ongoing assessment for catch-up using Little Wandle

- Children in Year 2 to 6 are assessed through:
 - their teacher's ongoing formative assessment
 - the *Little Wandle Letters and Sounds* placement assessment
 - the appropriate half-termly assessments.

Assessment – Post Little Wandle Phonics Programme

- To assess a child's reading fluency, teachers keep a class reading folder to show when a child is listened to read and to evidence progress through the book banded texts. A document detailing age related expectations are kept within this folder.
- To assess comprehension, teachers use their professional judgment, alongside a gap analysis document– populated using an assessment grid specialised to each year group. This helps teachers to deem whether a child is working towards age-related expectations, at age-related expectations or indeed beyond expectations, therefore at 'greater depth'.

Statutory assessment

- Children in Year 1 sit the Phonics screening check. Any child not passing the check re-sits it in Year 2.
- Reading Papers are sat by the children in the KS1 and KS2 SATs.