Phonics Policy

Date approved	Committee responsible for review of policy	Next review date	Policy on website	Statutory policy
September 2025	FGB	September 2027	No	No

Headteacher: Mrs Fiona Micklefield

1. Purpose of the policy

This policy reflects the aims and values of St Lawrence CE Primary School. It ensures all stakeholders, including staff, governors, parents and pupils, are working towards the same goals.

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Set out a framework for all teaching and non-teaching staff, giving guidance on planning, teaching and assessment
- Demonstrate adherence to the National Curriculum objectives and guidelines (if appropriate)
- Provide clear information to parents and carers about what their children will be taught
- Allow the governing board to monitor the curriculum
- Provide Ofsted inspectors with evidence of curriculum planning and implementation

2. Subject vison

The systematic teaching of phonics has a high priority throughout Early Years and Key Stage One and is taught using the *Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised* Programme.

At St Lawrence CE Primary, we are dedicated to enabling our pupils to become lifelong readers. We value and encourage all pupils to read for enjoyment and recognise that this starts with the foundations of; acquiring letter sounds, segmenting, blending and decoding skills. We passionately believe that these fundamental skills hold the keys to access a broad and exciting curriculum, ensuring our children flourish as learners throughout their time at St Lawrence CE Primary.

3. Aims and outcomes

The programmes of study for reading at key stages 1 and 2 consist of 2 dimensions:

- word reading
- comprehension (both listening and reading)

It is essential that teaching focuses on developing pupils' competence in both dimensions; different kinds of teaching are needed for each.

Skilled word reading involves both the speedy working out of the pronunciation of unfamiliar printed words (decoding) and the speedy recognition of familiar printed words. Underpinning both is the understanding that the letters on the page represent the sounds in spoken words. This is why phonics should be emphasised in the early teaching of reading to beginners (ie unskilled readers) when they start school.

Good comprehension draws from linguistic knowledge (in particular of vocabulary and grammar) and on knowledge of the world. Comprehension skills develop through pupils' experience of high-quality discussion with the teacher, as well as from reading and discussing a range of stories, poems and non-fiction. All pupils must be encouraged to read widely across both fiction and non-fiction to develop their knowledge of themselves and the world they live in, to establish an appreciation and love of reading, and to gain knowledge across the curriculum. Reading widely and often increases pupils' vocabulary because they encounter words they would rarely hear or use in everyday speech. Reading also feeds pupils' imagination and opens up a treasure house of wonder and joy for curious young minds.

It is essential that, by the end of their primary education, all pupils are able to read fluently, and with confidence, in any subject in their forthcoming secondary education.

4. Teaching and learning

The Little Wandle programme overview and progression map shows the progression of GPCs and tricky words that we teach term-by-term. The progression has been organised so that children are taught from the simple to more complex GPCs, as well as taking into account the frequency of their occurrence in the most commonly encountered words. All the graphemes taught are practised in words, sentences, and later on, in fully decodable books. Children review and revise GPCs and words, daily, weekly and across terms and years, in order to move this knowledge into their long-term memory.

Phonics sessions take place daily in year groups. Pupils are assessed every 5 weeks and these one-to-one assessments keep track of pupils' progress, inform next steps for teaching and identify pupils for 'keep up' and 'catch up' sessions. Our careful monitoring of progress allows us to quickly identify children who require additional support alongside the main programme and also ensures that any children in KS2 who require additional phonics knowledge can be included in the KS2 Rapid Catch-Up Programme. In addition, towards the end of Year 1, children are also exposed to regular practise of Phonics Checks to make sure that they are confident with the process which surrounds the Phonics Statutory Screening Check.

<u>Daily phonics lessons in Reception and Year 1</u>

We teach phonics for 30 minutes a day. In Reception, we build from 10-minute lessons, with additional daily oral blending games, to full-length lessons as quickly as possible. Each Friday, we review the week's teaching to help children become fluent readers.

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.

Daily Keep-up lessons ensure every child learns to read .Any child in Reception and Year 1 who needs additional practice has Daily Keep-up support and is taught by a fully trained adult. Daily Keep-up lessons follow the Little Wandle progression and use the same procedures, resources and mantras, but in smaller steps with more repetition so that every child secures their learning.

Daily phonics and spelling in Year 2

Year 2 begins with a five-week Phase 5 review. This ensures that children secure the trickier elements of Phase 5 and can apply this alphabetic knowledge in both reading and spelling. Once the Phase 5 review is secure; we teach the Bridge to Spelling before moving to the Spelling units.

Children with larger gaps in their phonic knowledge than their peers have daily phonics teaching and follow the Rapid Catch-up programme.

Rapid Catch-up Programme Year 2-6

We timetable daily phonics lessons for any child in Year 2 and above who is not at age-related expectations for 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. These short, sharp lessons last 15 to 20 minutes daily and have been designed to ensure children quickly catch up to age-related expectations in reading.

We assess children who are new to our school, new to the country or new to English using the Rapid Catch-up assessments to quickly identify their needs. We use the Rapid Catch-up assessments to identify the gaps in children's phonic knowledge and teach these using the Rapid Catch-up resources – at pace. We assess children every four weeks using the Rapid Catch-up summative assessments to assess progress and inform teaching.

Teaching Reading

All children will participate in three reading practice sessions each week which also provide further opportunities to practise and consolidate their phonic knowledge. These sessions allow the children to develop their skills of reading with prosody, along with developing their understanding and comprehension.

Reading practice sessions are taught by a fully trained adult to small groups of approximately six children. Books are matched to the children's secure phonic knowledge

using the Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised assessments and book matching grids on pages 11 to 20 of 'Application of phonics to reading.' Reading sessions 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: teaching children to use phonic knowledge to read words
- prosody: teaching children to read with understanding and expression
- comprehension: using dialogic talk to help children to understand the text.

Reading sessions in Reception start in Week 4 of teaching at the latest. Initially, children will read wordless books. In these sessions, children review GPCS and are taught blending using teacher-led blending. Once children can blend, they progress onto decodable books matched to their secure phonic knowledge. In Year 2, we ensure children complete reading the core programme decodable books (up to Phase 5 Set 5).

Little Wandle Fluency

We teach reading to children in Year 2 and above who have exited the core programme using Little Wandle Fluency. Each Fluency reading lesson is 25 to 30 minutes. The structure of every lesson is the same:

- A pre-read to practise reading words and to support vocabulary o
- Children read aloud for ten minutes and the teacher 'taps in' to hear every child read
- Focussed teaching of prosody, repeated reading and comprehension through discussion.

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.

5. Curriculum overview

Please see the hyperlink below which takes you to the whole school subject overview on the school website where you can see the subject content across all year groups from EYFS, Key Stage 1 to Key Stage 2.

Curriculum overview

5.4 Programmes of study

Please see the hyperlink below which takes you to the National Curriculum.

National Curriculum

6. Cross-curricular links

The teaching of early reading skills through phonics plays a vital role in our children's opportunities to access a broad, rich curriculum throughout their primary school years.

In Phonics there are many opportunities for cross curricular links. The fully decodable books we provide for example cover a wide range of genres and topics including links to:

- Geography: reading books about different countries throughout the world
- Science: reading non-fiction books about a range of topics across Science such as animals and plants
- History: reading books about key historical events such as the Great Fire of London

7. Assessment and recording

7.1 Assessment

St Lawrence CE Primary School uses assessment to enable staff to understand what pupils have learnt before, what they need to learn now and what they will learn next.

Formative assessment
Formative assessment is ongoing and will be used to inform teachers in relation to their planning, lesson activities and differentiation.

Summative assessment
Summative assessment is recorded at the end of each unit of work.

Feedback

Children receive regular feedback during the lesson and can receive this at the beginning of the next.

7.2 Recording

Pupils will record their learning in the following ways:

- Subject books
- Year R Individual Learning Journey or on Tapestry

This may take the form of photographs, pictures, notes or written work, and may be worksheet-based or fully independent.

8. Resources

8.1 Educational equipment

Quality fiction and non-fictions texts that are matched to children's current phonic knowledge. Little Wandle grapheme chart (Year R), Grow the code grapheme chart (Year 1)

and complete the code grapheme charts (Year 2 and 3) displayed in classrooms, Little Wandle lesson planning and word cards.

8.2 External speakers, local museums, trips

Visits to the local Library.

9. Roles and responsibilities

9.1 Headteacher

The headteacher at our school will:

- Support the subject leader but also hold them to account for the effectiveness of the subject
- Support staff through the provision of training and resources
- Monitor the planning and delivery of the subject
- Ensure the requirements of the National Curriculum are met
- Ensure this policy is reviewed according to the timescales set out

9.2 Subject leader

The subject leaders at our school will:

- Prepare and review subject policy and curriculum plans
- Promote the study of the subject throughout the school
- Monitor the teaching and assessment of the subject
- Attend appropriate CPD
- Stay informed regarding developments in the study and teaching of the subject
- Evaluate resources
- Provide training and CPD to staff on the subject curriculum and its delivery, and keep them informed about subject developments nationally
- Assess the impact of the subject curriculum on pupils' learning and development
- Make presentations to governors on the subject and how it is being taught

9.3 Classroom teacher

Classroom teachers at our school will:

- Teach and assess the subject according to the principles laid out in this policy
- Report to the subject leader
- Maintain subject knowledge and appropriate CPD

9.5 Parents

The parent community at our school will:

- Make sure their children are prepared for learning

- Sign the home school agreement

10. Inclusion

Teachers set high expectations for all pupils in Phonics. They will use appropriate assessment to set ambitious targets and plan challenging work for all groups, including:

- More able pupils
- Pupils with low prior attainment
- Pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds
- Pupils with special educational needs (SEN)
- Pupils with English as an additional language (EAL)

Teachers will plan lessons so pupils with SEN and/or disabilities can study Phonics, wherever possible, and ensure that there are no barriers to every pupil achieving.

Teachers will also take account of the needs of pupils whose first language is not English. Lessons will be planned so that teaching opportunities help pupils to develop their English, and to support pupils to take part in Phonics.

A Support and challenge section forms part of the learning journey planner.

Further information can be found in our statement of equality information and objectives, and in our SEN policy and information report.

11. Links to other policies

This subject policy links to the following policies and procedures:

- Curriculum policy
- Assessment policy
- Feedback policy
- SEN policy

12. Monitoring and review

This policy will be reviewed by staff and governors every 2 years.

Head Teacher's signature
(Fiona Micklefield)

Chair of Governors' signature
(Paul Whitty)