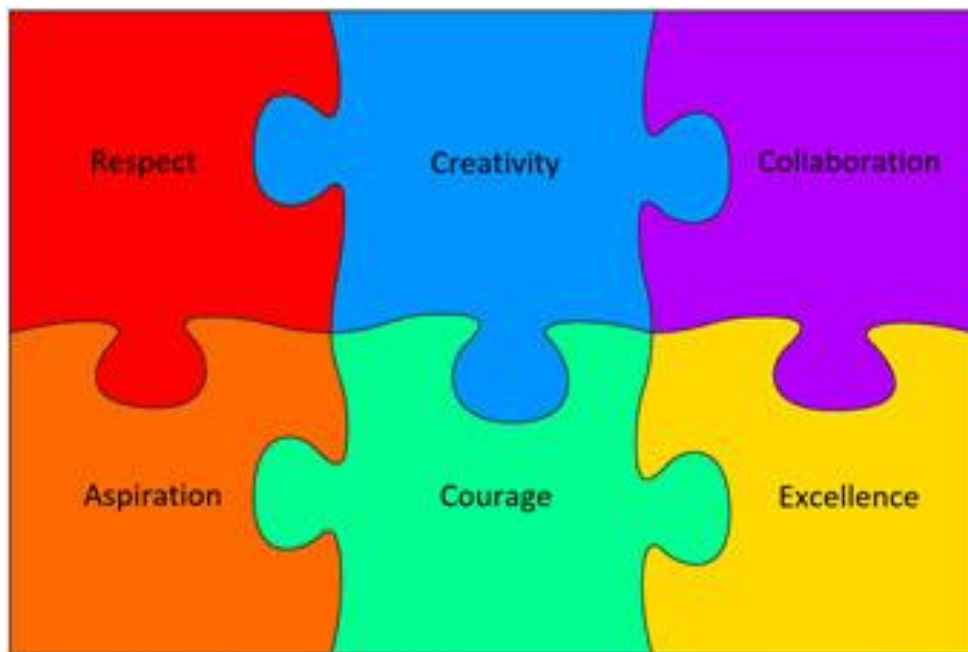


Randlay Primary School and Nursery



Phonics Policy

Date: September 2025

To be reviewed: September 2026

Intent

At Randlay Primary School and Nursery we aim to give our learners the best possible start on their phonics and reading journey.

We aim to ensure that every child makes speedy progress in phonics and reading, develops and understands a wide range of vocabulary and that all pupils' develop a life-long love of reading.

We recognise that the best way to achieve this is through the use of a systematic, synthetic phonics programme, that teaches the essential skills of phonics and phonological awareness, right from the start of nursery, through a consistent, systematic and engaging approach. This is critical to ensure that our learners become confident and fluent readers.

It is essential to us that our approach is accessible to all learners, regardless of background, including those identified as SEND, EAL or Pupil Premium.

To achieve this, we teach systematic synthetic phonics by following the systematic progression of Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised, starting with pre-reading phonological awareness skills within nursery. We then build on and extend these skills throughout their time in the EYFS and Key Stage 1. Additional support is also available should it be needed in Key Stage 2.

Implementation- Our Approach

Time Allocation

Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised lessons are time-tabled and take place daily in nursery, reception and year 1. These also continue into year 2 and KS2 until learners are fully secure, up to phase 5.

In year 2, children who have completed the phonics programme will start the Little Wandle Spelling programme and reading fluency sessions.

Outside of this, each child will also take part in three guided reading practice sessions each week, lasting between 20-30 minutes, as well as having time to independently read for pleasure.

Children requiring additional 'Keep-Up' support will also complete additional daily interventions.

Time is also allocated each day to whole-class story, song and rhyme times and there will also be an additional five minutes a day spent on oral blending and/or blending blasts in nursery, reception and year 1.

Organisation and Groupings

We aim to ensure that all children 'Keep Up' not 'Catch Up' and most children will access a daily, whole-class phonics lesson, with Keep-Up interventions used to quickly close any gaps identified. Where pupils are identified as being unable to access the whole-class session, they will be taught phonics at the appropriate phase, using a modified approach as needed.

Organisation of the session is carefully planned. Sessions take place in quiet, comfortable spaces, where all pupils are able to access the materials. The teacher/ teaching assistant positions themselves and the resources used, to ensure that every child can see. The lowest 20% will be positioned carefully to ensure the best eyeline with the teacher.

The spelling section of the session is completed at tables, in phonics books. Teaching assistants will be used to support identified pupils who may require additional practice with the oral segmentation of the sounds.

Planning

'Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised' discrete weekly phonics lesson plans are used to ensure systematic progression and a consistent approach. These are easily accessible to all members of staff through the Little Wandle website. The progression and approaches must be followed with fidelity, but it is also recognised that adaptations may be needed to support the specific needs of pupils.

Reading Practice Sessions

In reception and year 1 we teach children to read through reading practice sessions. These take place three times a week, with each session having a distinct focus. These sessions are led by a fully trained adult.

- Session 1- Decoding- Pupils first revisit known GPCs and tricky words, to aid fluency and ensure word meanings are understood. Each pupil independently reads the text and the adult moves around the group to hear each pupils read.
- Session 2- Prosody- These sessions focus on reading with expression, rhythm and pausing, taking account of punctuation and supporting the process of emotional engagement through emphasis and reading with feeling.
- Session 3- Comprehension- These sessions explore comprehension skills such as word meanings, retrieval, sequencing, summary and inference skills.

Following the three guided sessions, pupils then take the book home to further develop their fluency.

The text used will always be one that has been linked to the Little Wandle Letters and Sounds progression and follows the progression of the phonics phases.

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.

Reading Fluency Journals

In year 2, once pupils are fully secure within phase 5, they will move onto the colour book banding system, as a decodable text, where most words can be recognised automatically or decoded quickly. Reading will then be taught using the Little Wandle Fluency levelled texts through a 'Reading Journal' approach to a whole-class text.

Each reading session will focus on a discrete reading skill and involve the rereading of chapters for fluency and understanding. These will include:

- Decoding, vocabulary and word meanings.
- Reading with fluency and prosody.
- Retrieval
- Sequencing.
- Inference
- Language for effect
- Themes
- Summary

Reading for Pleasure

We value reading for pleasure highly and work hard as a school to grow our Reading for Pleasure pedagogy and recognise that it is the most important influence to a child's success.

Each class has a school library system, where pupils are able to take home a book of their choice to share and rereads as a specific reading for pleasure book. This will be changed once a week and if a child chooses to take a book home they have previously chosen they are able to do this.

We read to children every day. We choose books carefully to ensure that children experience a wide range of books, including those that reflect the children at Randlay Primary School and our local community, as well as books that open windows into other worlds and cultures and enhance curricular themes.

Every classroom, from Nursery to Year 6, has an inviting book corner that promotes a love for reading. These areas are regularly accessed and continually refreshed by swapping across cohorts and also regular book collections from Shropshire Schools Library Service.

Whole School Reading Culture

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.

As the children progress through the school, they are encouraged to write their own comments and keep a list of the books that they have read.

Pupils who have read and recorded their responses the required number of times will be entered into the weekly reading raffle to win a their own book to keep from the reading vending machine.

Reception and key stage 1 also have 'Bears in a bag' which are awarded to a child in each class once a week in recognition of effort in an aspect of reading such as phonics, reading groups, reading for pleasure or home reading. The bear goes home in the bag with a selection of reading for pleasure books and a diary to record a brief review. Responses to the books are then shared with their class in school.

Children across the school have regular opportunities to engage with a wide range of Reading for Pleasure events, including book fairs, author visits and workshops, national events such as World Book Day.

Spelling

The progression of Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised covers the systematic teaching of how to segment words into sounds for spelling and the graphemes that are used to represent these sounds. These build up sequentially as part of the 'Grow the Code' charts which display all of the phoneme-grapheme correspondences used to spell a specific phoneme. Pupils are taught to recognise patterns of these as part of specific 'Grow the Code' sessions and these charts are always on display in classrooms and table mats are used to support all writing.

In addition to this, tricky word spellings are also discretely taught during phonics sessions and are regularly revisited and referred to.

There is a spelling element to every Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised lesson and so spelling is taught daily.

Spelling is taught in this way until pupils are secure with phase 5.

Following this, from year 2 onwards, spelling is taught through the Little Wandle spelling units programme.

Handwriting

Handwriting is taught discretely, outside of the phonics lesson.

In reception, the Little Wandle formation phrases are used as part of phonics teaching to emphasize the correct letter formation. All letters in reception are in a non-cursive font.

From year 1, cursive formation is introduced for handwriting. All font/ text to be read should not be displayed in a cursive print. Spelling and modelled writing will be modelled in cursive.

Whenever children are writing, within the phonics lesson, or outside of it, they are encouraged to ensure that they are using the correct posture and pencil grip as detailed in the handwriting policy.

Resources

We recognise the importance of a consistent approach to the use of resources throughout the school.

All classes, intervention groups and display areas use the same Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised resources. These are:

- Letter friezes (EYFS)
- Grow the Code display charts
- Complete the Code display charts
- Grow the Code/ Complete the Code table mats
- Flashcards
- Picture cards
- Word cards.
- Guided reading sets with texts, grapheme cards and word cards.

All resources are prepared and organised in advance of each lesson, so that the flow of the lesson is not disrupted by finding or preparing a resource. Care is also taken in handling resources to ensure good, rapid card control.

Key Strategies

To ensure consistency and pace of progress:

- Every teacher and teaching assistant 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.
- 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 and teaching assistants all have a consistent approach and structure for each lesson.
- The Reading Leader and SLT regularly monitor and observe teaching; they use the summative data to identify children who need additional support and gaps in learning. Children that are identified using assessment grids as being 'not on track' will receive additional keep-up and will be reassessed after 3 weeks.

Supporting the Lower 20%

Each class teacher identifies the lower 20% of readers within their class. These pupils receive additional support through:

- Targeting during the phonics session- seating position, monitoring, questioning.
- Planned, daily Keep-Up interventions.
- Additional reading practice of their decodable book and reading for pleasure texts.
- Vulnerable children who may not be engaging with reading at home will have additional opportunities to read with an adult, for pleasure and their decodable text, within the school day.

Staff Subject Knowledge and Training.

All staff have been trained using the Little Wandle Letters and Sounds training materials. This training is completed on induction to the school and all staff are encouraged to regularly access the 'How to' support videos to ensure they are using the required approach. Feedback will be provided following this.

For staff requiring additional support the Reading Leader regularly completes lesson monitoring, coaching and support to ECTs or other staff as and when support is requested or needed. The focus for lesson coaching priorities will be identified through assessment data and classroom observations.

SEND

Attainment and progress across all phases and stages is continually monitored and where learners are developing gaps in their knowledge of sounds, are having difficulties with specific skills such as blending or segmenting or any other issue that creates a barrier to learning then specific Keep-Up interventions are put into place immediately. The lowest 20% in reading are always identified in each class and receive additional support.

These may include:

- Keep- Up Interventions
- Precision teaching
- Additional 1:1 or group reading sessions.
- Use of additional resources
- Use of coloured backgrounds or overlays.
- Group intervention lessons.
- Taking sounds home to learn.
- Any specific recommendations from outside agencies.
- Following the SEN Little Wandle programme.

Key Stage 2

Where children are not fully secure with their phonics knowledge in key stage 2, they will complete the 'rapid-catch-up' assessment to determine their starting point on the rapid catch-up programme. This will be delivered three times a week by a fully-trained member of staff to support pupils to rapidly close gaps. This is supported by the three guided reading practice sessions using 7 + Little Wandle phonetically decodable texts, matched to the phonics phases in an age-appropriate format.

Where children have a secure phonic knowledge but need to develop fluency, they will complete a fluency assessment to establish the correct fluency level and will then access the Little Wandle fluency texts through a guided group approach.

Assessment and Tracking

Statutory Assessment

In the summer term in Year 1 children undertake the statutory phonics screening check. Learners that are unable to access this will be identified and disapplied in agreement with the class teacher, headteacher and their parents.

Learners who do not reach the expected standard will receive additional intervention and retake the check at the end of year 2.

Monitoring and tracking

The Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised programme includes an assessment period 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:

- takes place 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.
- The phonics lead using the data from assessment points to create tracking grids using the Little Wandle assessment website. Children's gaps and specific areas of difficulty are identified and tracked on the grid. Any children identified as not on track will receive 'Keep-Up' intervention and be reassessed after three weeks to check progress.
- Whole-class data will be analysed. Any GPCs or words that between 70%-80% of the class are secure with will be added to the revisit and review part of the lesson. Any GPCs or words that less than 70 % of the class are secure with will be retaught.
- When children require smaller steps to track their progress, two week targets will be used to identify a specific attainment target to be achieved after 2 weeks, which will then be checked and reviewed.
- From phase 5.3 onwards, fluency assessments are used throughout Key Stage 1 and key stage 2 to track reading fluency to ensure children are accessing the correct bookband- either phonetically decodable or the colour banded scheme.

New arrivals

Any new arrivals to the school in reception, year 1, year 2 or year 3 will complete an initial Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised placement assessment to determine their phonics phase on entry. This may also be used in KS2 if additional phonics support will be required.

The Role of Parents and Carers

We highly value the role of our parents and carers as their child's first educator and we aim to keep them up to date with our systems and their child's progress.

We encourage parents to be actively involved in their child's learning journey and ask that they share books with their child and listen to them read from the start of reception.

We have a continual daily dialogue with parents at the start and end points of the school day and reading diaries are used for ongoing written communication.

Where children require additional practice with specific sounds or words, parents may be asked to support with additional practise of these at home.

Induction meetings are held for parents of children prior to starting school and information sessions linked to phonics, reading and the phonics screening check are regularly held when possible.

Letters are used to inform parents about any updates and reading events and the winners of the weekly reading raffle are always given on the newsletter.

Every effort is taken to engage parents in their child's reading progress and where a child may not be reading at home, the class teacher will promote a dialogue with parents to see if there is any support that can be provided from school to help with this.

Impact

Through embedding a rigorous and consistent approach to teaching phonics and reading our learners are empowered to become fully-fluent, confident readers who can access a range of texts for both pleasure and learning. They will also have a secure knowledge of spellings and their associated rules and patterns which can confidently be applied in all aspects of writing.

This will be reflected through their attainment by:

- Reaching expected outcomes for the reading Early Learning Goals at the end of reception.
- Passing the phonics screening check. We aim for a pass rate of at least 95 %.
- Achieving end of year age-expected outcomes in reading, writing and spelling.
- Achieving the expected outcomes in the end of Key Stage 2 reading, writing and spelling assessments.