



FULFEN
Primary School

Leading the way
to a brighter future

L Love of Learning... E Encouraging... A Adaptable... D Determination...

Phonics Policy

Last Reviewed: January 2026

Review Date: January 2027

Love of Learning...

- dream big, have a
thirst for learning and
achieve your ambitions...

Encouraging...

- to be supportive of
yourself and others and
value everyone's ideas...

Adaptable...

- being versatile,
creative and being
prepared to take risks...

Determination...

- being resilient when
the going gets tough...

1. Aims

At Fulfen Primary School, we recognise the importance of early reading and aim to create an inclusive, inspired and challenging curriculum which develops children's knowledge of Phonics, enabling them to become successful readers who develop a life-long love of reading.

We aim to give children the best possible start to their reading and writing journey by teaching them the essential phonological skills and knowledge to decode and encode words independently from the outset.

We recognise that the development of spoken language and the enjoyment and comprehension of quality literature go hand in hand to develop a life-long love of reading and aim to nurture and develop these attributes alongside the phonics programme.

We use the Rocket Phonics programme which is fully validated by the DfE. Rocket Phonics is a fully resourced, systematic synthetic phonics programme that provides us with everything we need to teach children to read and write. It provides a combination of digital and printed resources, and a fully matched series of decodable reading books.

At the heart of the programme are the digital 'Big Books', which consist of language-rich stories to teach all the target letter-sounds in context. These books are designed for use on an IWB at the front of the class. The programme enables us to ensure children develop essential literacy skills using a balanced approach that focusses equally on blending for reading, and segmenting for writing and spelling.

In preschool, the emphasis is first on developing children's speaking and listening skills. Children are taught to become attuned to the sounds around them and begin developing their oral blending and segmenting skills. Once they are ready, using Rocket Phonics resources, children are taught to make links between the alphabet letters and the first sounds of speech.

From the start of Reception and throughout year 1, children follow the progression stated within the Rocket Phonics programme. This ensures children build on their growing knowledge of the alphabetic code, mastering phonics to read and spell as they move through school. Staff model the application of the alphabetic code through phonics in shared reading and writing sessions, both inside and outside of the phonics lesson and across the curriculum.

Daily Phonics sessions continue beyond year 1, where necessary, in order to ensure that all children become successful readers.

2. Rocket Phonics Fundamentals

- Phonics is overseen by a dedicated Phonics leader. (Miss N Chapman)
- Phonics is taught for a minimum of 30 minutes per day (overall) from the start of Reception. By the end of Reception sessions will be longer (up to 1 hour) to consolidate previous learning, learn new content and practise and apply what they have learnt.
- All staff are supported with regular Phonics professional development training.
- A clear pathway is followed throughout the alphabetic code.
- Children are not asked to read texts by themselves that they can't yet read.



Phonics Policy

- The systematic synthetic Phonics teaching principles are taught explicitly. These are the; knowledge of the alphabetic code, skill of blending for reading, skill of segmenting for spelling and skill of handwriting.
- The teaching and learning cycle is followed.
- Children are supported to keep up, so they do not need to catch up.
- Phonics is taught at letter- sound, word, sentence and text levels.
- Core Phonics provision is distinguished from enrichment activities.
- Teachers have clarity about what, why and how they are teaching.
- Teachers focus on details, such as accurate modelling and pencil hold.

3. Teaching & Learning Cycle

Each Phonics lesson includes some direct teaching where children participate by listening and responding. Each lesson is interactive and is divided into the following sections:

- **Review** previously taught sounds
- **Teach** a new letter-sound correspondence /Common Exception word
- **Practise** reading and writing skills
- **Apply** knowledge and reading and writing skills

4. Rocket Phonics Resources

The following resources are used consistently throughout school:

- Story Big Books
- Flashcards -Designed for reviewing previously taught letter-sounds as well as introducing new letter-sounds.
- Pupil Practice booklets- These enable children to practise and apply blending and segmenting skills at letter-sound word, sentence and text levels.
- Friezes (displayed in classrooms and intervention rooms). These can be used as a visual reference to support letter-sound recognition, letter formation and spelling.
- Sound Mats (available for reference in classrooms and intervention rooms)

5. Decodable Reading Books

Collins Big Cat Books

We have invested in the Collins Big Cat (for letters and sounds) series to support us in securing a foundation for early reading success and establish a culture of reading for pleasure. The books are used for Guided Reading to consolidate our phonics teaching and learning, helping children to move from decoding words to reading fluently (with accuracy and automaticity) and reading with expression and for pleasure.

The books cover all aspects of reading; phonics, vocabulary and language and comprehension. They are well structured and are cumulatively progressive. They are organised in colour coded bands and are closely



Phonics Policy

matched to children's phonics knowledge so they can practise what they know and can become confident readers.

We only ever send home books children can read independently without an adults support (95% word accuracy). In school, we choose books for our children at an instructional level that is 90% word accuracy. Collins big cat reading assessments are used to establish the appropriate band of books for children to read.

Target Practice Rocket Phonics Reading Books

The Target Practice reading books provide focused practice of small groups of target letter-sounds. The books are fully decodable and fully aligned with the programme. They can be used for whole-class, group guided, one-to-one and independent reading.

Rocket Phonics Reading Books

The Rocket Phonics range of reading books are fully aligned to the programme and can be used as soon as all the letter-sounds in a particular colour band have been taught.

6. Group Arrangements

Children are taught in high-quality class or group sessions. Children are taught in small groups or one to one for intervention sessions to assist them to keep up.

7. Half Termly Expectations

	Aut 1	Aut 2	Spr 1	Spr 2	Sum 1	Sum 2
Preschool	Speaking & Listening	Speaking & Listening	Oral Blending & Segmenting s, a, t, i, p, n	Oral Blending & Segmenting m, d, g, o, c, k	Oral Blending & Segmenting e, u, r, h, b, f	Oral Blending & Segmenting l, j, v, w, x, y, z
Reception	s, a, t, i, p, n	M, d, g, o, c, k, ck, e, u, r, h, b	F, ff, l, ll, ss, j, v, w, x, y, z, zz, qu	ch, sh, th, ng, ai, ee, igh, oa, oo, oo	ar, or, ur, ow, oi, ear, air, ure, er	Revise
Common Exception Words	I, no, go, to, the, into		he, she, we, me, be, was my, you, her, they, all, are		some, one, said, come, do, so, were, have, there, out, like, little, what	
Year 1	wh, ph, ay, a-e, a, e-e, ie, ea	i, l-e, ie, y, o-e, ow, oe, o, y, ey	u, u, u-e, u-e, ue, ew, ew, er, ir, ou, oy	au, aw, ou, oul, a, al, ear, or, eer, ere	are, our, ore, oor, augh, c, g, ea, se	ce, ch, dge, ge, o + Revise
Common Exception Words	some, one, said, come, do, so, were, have, there, out, like, little, what	oh, their, people, Mr, Mrs, looked, called, asked, could, water, where	who, again, thought, through, many, laughed, because, any, eyed, friends, once, please	oh, their, people, Mr, Mrs, looked, called, asked, could, water, where	oh, their, people, Mr, Mrs, looked, called, asked, could, water, where	who, again, thought, through, many, laughed, because, any, eyed, friends, once, please
Year 2	le, ed, mb, kn, gn, wr, tch, s, si, ge, ture, y, sc, st, a, ti, ci, ssi					
Common Exception Words	Oh, their, people, Mr, Mrs, looked, called, asked, could, water, where, who, again, thought,					



Phonics Policy

	through, many, laughed, because, any, eyed, friends, once, please					
--	--	--	--	--	--	--

8. Supporting the lowest 20%

Teachers are expected to:

- Ensure every adult working with the class knows who these children are.
- Assess, observe and evaluate the possible reasons for slower progress.
- make the child known to the SENCo without delay if they have specific concerns.
- not use a different intervention programme. Continue to expose the child to the main class teaching but adjust the expected outcomes, e.g. the child may achieve some but not all of the Pupil Practice Booklet activities, (however, they may return to complete the activities with adult support later in the day and week).
- Strategically position the children where they have a clear line of sight to the teacher and can be supported during the lesson, e.g. at the front of the class.
- Build in additional sessions targeted to specific needs, e.g. an afternoon session revisiting content at a slower pace or focusing on one skill at a time.
- Build in opportunities for 'little and often' practice through the day, e.g. flashcards whilst lining up for lunchtime; five minute 1:1 targeted intervention sessions.
- Provide children with their own pack of materials that can be taken home, e.g. their own sets of flashcards; Pupil Practice Booklets for use at home; additional decodable reading books.
- Work as closely as possible with parents and carers.
- Be specific about small measurable targets, e.g. This week we will make sure we know the letter-sounds p, n, m.
- Provide additional support during sessions, e.g. use individual sets of selected grapheme tiles to enable children to select graphemes rather than writing them.
- Print and laminate Sounds Mats in A4 and A3 sizes for support during phonics lessons and during wider curriculum lessons.
- Check that visual displays are accessible, e.g. large enough, at a suitable height e specific difficulty, e.g. letter-sound retention; ability to blend/segment; letter reversals.

9. Extending and Challenging

Teachers are expected to:

- Ensure that adults understand that children may be ready for extension and challenge in some but not all areas, e.g. a child may read at a level beyond the main class teaching but may have gaps in code knowledge or be weak in any of the phonics skills or sub-skills.
- In general, keep faster-to-learn children working at the same pace and progression as the rest of the class and extend them within the lesson.



Phonics Policy

- Provide early exposure to more of the alphabetic code through visual display of Frieze, e.g. That's right Alice, in your name you can hear /s/ but it is spelled with this grapheme (adult points to ce on Frieze). There are lots of other great words with that spelling, like dance, prince and palace.
- Engage in discussion about vocabulary and the ways in which words are spelled, e.g. Yes, you can hear /j/ at the beginning of giraffe, but in that word the /j/ is spelled with this letter (adult points to g).
- Use letter names to relay spellings when children are confident with letter names, e.g. That's right, you need the /ai/ sound in the word snail, and in that word it is spelled with the letter a and the letter i.
- From time to time, ask children to practise with a partner using an extension activity supplied by the teacher.
- Encourage children to sometimes practise independently without close supervision, thereby taking more responsibility for their own practice.
- Encourage children to self-dictate by reading a sentence, holding it in their heads, then writing it down from memory.
- Encourage children to compose and write their own sentences in addition to those dictated to them.
- Be diligent about accuracy and attention to detail – children who are faster to learn can have a tendency to rush and form unhelpful habits, e.g. incorrect pencil hold and letter formation.
- Provide additional enrichment reading books that may contain words beyond the taught code but are accessible to faster-to-learn children who can read them at a level of 95% independence.

10. Handwriting

In preschool, children undertake pre-writing activities which seek to develop children's finger strength, eye hand co-ordination, wrist movement and strength.

Once it is developmentally appropriate, children are taught to hold their pencil in a tripod grip. To support the correct modelling to children staff use letter formation scripts.

In Preschool, once children are ready and able they practise forming different letters using a variety of media and materials.

In Reception, children are taught to use a pencil effectively to print individual lower case and capital letters accurately with clear start and finish points. Children learn to position their letters accurately along on a line. They practise letter formation daily.

In year 1, children are taught to join letters together once they have mastered forming the letters in print accurately.

11. Homework

From preschool onwards, children are asked to complete work at home each week which is directly linked to what has been taught in Phonics in school.

12. Year 1 screening check



Phonics Policy

All year 1 children take the 'Phonics Screening Check'. Those who do not meet the 'pass' mark are given support and intervention in year 2, to provide them with sufficient knowledge and understanding to re-take the 'Phonics Screening Check' and obtain a pass mark.

Those children who do not obtain the required level set by the 'Phonics Screening Check' in year 2 continue to receive daily phonics interventions/lessons in Key Stag2.

13. Assessment

Baseline Assessment

At the start of each year, all children are assessed to see what they know and can do.

Formative assessment

Formative assessments are ongoing throughout daily and weekly teaching. Teacher's provide additional support where necessary (the same day/week) to ensure children 'keep up' wherever possible.

Rocket Phonics Summative assessment

Summative assessments are completed each half term. These assessments are used to inform subsequent teaching. Teachers ensure that taught content is revisited where necessary.

In each end of half term assessment, the following knowledge and skills are assessed:

- Knowledge of letter-sound correspondences
- Skill of blending for reading
- Skill of segmenting for spelling
- Skill of letter formation for handwriting
- Reading and writing common exception words.

In preparation for the Year 1 screening test, year 1 pupils undertake practice papers from the Spring term onwards.

14. Supporting Parents to assist their child at home

- Workshops are delivered for parents at the start of each academic year. This ensures that parents are aware of details of the Rocket Phonics Programme; what is taught, how they could provide extra practice to develop accuracy and fluency and how the school will support children to keep up from the start through extra practice.
- Phonics presentation for reference for parents on the website.
- Flash cards shared with parents.
- Sound Mats are sent home.
- Letter formation scripts are shared with parents.
- Instructional videos are available for parents on the school website/Tapestry/Seesaw.

The implementation of this policy is seen as the responsibility of all staff. Its use and effectiveness will be supported and monitored by the Literacy Subject Leader in conjunction with the Head of Early Years, on behalf of the Head Teacher and Governors.

