

Bryn St. Peter's C.E. Primary School



Phonics and Early Reading Policy

Reviewed by: S. Harrison

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Our School Vision

Together with God Building our Future

Guided by Christian values, with Jesus as our cornerstone, we set firm foundations for a life of flourishing, offering opportunities for all to develop in body, mind and spirit.

And in him you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by his Spirit.

Ephesians 2:22

We are committed to educating the whole person for life in all its fullness guided by Christian values.

We deeply value creativity and joy in learning that allows everyone to achieve and flourish.

We want everyone to feel included, accepted, loved and positively understand their value and potential in our community.

1. Introduction

This policy sets out the approach to teaching phonics and early reading at Firs Primary School. It provides clear guidance for staff on delivering high-quality early reading instruction using the Read Write Inc. (RWI) programme.

RWI is a structured, systematic phonics scheme designed to help children develop confident decoding, spelling, and early comprehension skills. The programme also supports children in reading common exception words, developing reading fluency, broadening vocabulary, and applying comprehension strategies.

2. Aims and Objectives

Through the Read Write Inc. programme, our aim is that all pupils become fluent and confident readers who can decode effortlessly, allowing them to focus on understanding and enjoying texts. A secure grasp of phonics provides the foundation for fluent, accurate writing and enables children to write with confidence.

By the end of their time on RWI, children will:

- Learn over 70 sounds and the associated letter or letter groups using clear visual prompts

- Apply phonics knowledge to read words, initially using 'Fred Talk' and later blending automatically
- Read RWI storybooks matched to their phonics stage
- Demonstrate comprehension skills through discussion and questioning
- Spell by segmenting words orally ('Fred Talk')
- Build confidence, accuracy and fluency in both reading and spelling.

3. Curriculum Intent

Our intent is to deliver a rigorous and consistent phonics curriculum that ensures every child gains the early reading skills necessary for success across the curriculum. The RWI programme is designed to build progression, support mastery, and develop a love of reading, enabling children to access all areas of learning with increasing independence.

4. Implementation

RWI sessions follow the programme's '5 Ps':

- **Pace** - lessons move briskly to maximise learning
- **Praise/Positive Teaching** - a supportive environment encourages success
- **Purpose** - each activity is carefully structured
- **Participation** - partner work is central to learning and collaboration
- **Passion** - enthusiastic teaching brings lessons to life

Daily one-hour RWI lessons are delivered to children at the early stages of reading, including those in Foundation Stage, KS1, and those in KS2 who are new to English or who require additional support. Children continue with RWI until assessments show they can confidently decode real and nonsense multisyllabic words using 70+ sounds.

Groupings

Pupils are placed in ability-grouped sets spanning Reception, Year 1 and Year 2, and in smaller groups in KS2 when needed. Assessment takes place half-termly, and the Reading Leader reorganises groups based on the outcomes. Children at risk of falling behind are taught by the most experienced staff.

Parental Involvement

Parents of Reception pupils are invited to an introductory meeting in Autumn Term explaining the RWI approach. Families are offered sound cards and word sets to support learning at home.

Interventions

Children not making expected progress receive additional 1:1 tutoring following the RWI intervention structure. The Reading Leader allocates children to interventions after each half-termly assessment.

5. Impact

The impact of the programme is seen through pupils' increasing fluency in reading and spelling, confidence in decoding, and enjoyment of reading. Successful engagement with RWI ensures children leave the programme ready for the next stage of English learning and able to read with comprehension, fluency and independence.

6. Planning and Progression

RWI follows a carefully sequenced progression of skills, with planning provided through the official RWI handbooks. Lessons build on prior knowledge and ensure pupils move through the programme when they are ready. Children begin learning Set 1 Speed Sounds in Reception class before progressing to Sets 2 and 3 and then on to storybook tasks.

7. Assessment and Monitoring

Assessment for learning is embedded within every lesson. Half-termly RWI assessments measure how well children can decode real and nonsense words and apply phonics knowledge. Teachers also assess pupils' ability to:

- Read grapheme charts
- Read green and red word lists
- Decode and comprehend stories
- Apply spelling strategies

Children who make rapid progress may be reassessed earlier and moved to a higher group if beneficial. New arrivals to school are assessed promptly to ensure quick placement.

Written work from speed sounds sessions goes into purple spelling books, with opportunities for self-assessment.

8. Role of the Subject Leader (Reading Leaders)

Reading Leaders are responsible for:

- Organising half-termly assessments and pupil groupings
- Allocating staff to teaching groups
- Conducting drop-ins to monitor teaching quality and group placement
- Providing coaching and modelling lessons
- Liaising with the Headteacher regarding provision and resources
- Organising development days and ongoing CPD
- Ensuring staff have appropriate training
- Auditing and ordering resources
- Monitoring marking and ensuring access to correct planning materials

9. Resources

Effective delivery of RWI requires:

- 'Fred' frog toy
- Speed Sound Cards (A4 and small, Sets 1-3)
- Red word and green word cards
- RWI storybooks, story green words and story red words
- IWB slides or printed equivalents
- Speed Sounds charts
- RWI handbooks with full planning

10. Inclusion and Equal Opportunities

RWI lessons are tailored to children's needs, with ability grouping ensuring appropriate challenge and support. Additional interventions or smaller groups are provided for pupils with SEND or those who require extra help. The use of visuals, mnemonics, partner work and direct instruction supports pupils with EAL and those who benefit from structured teaching approaches.

11. Parental and Community Links

The school actively supports parents in helping their child read at home through workshops, introductory meetings, and providing resources such as QR codes for access to learning at home videos. Parents are encouraged to reinforce phonics learning and reading habits as part of home-school partnership.

12. Review and Evaluation

This policy is reviewed annually by the Reading Leader to ensure it reflects current practice and meets the needs of pupils.

13. Linked Policies and Documents

- Writing Policy
- Marking and Feedback Policy