

# Wardley CE Primary School

## Early Reading Policy



Name of Reviewer	Kari Walker
Date of Approval of Governing Body	February 2026
Signature of Chair	<i>Alan Johns</i>
Signature of Head	<i>Kari Walker</i>
Date Due for Review	February 2027

### **EQUALITY STATEMENT**

As a school we welcome our duties under the Equality Act 2010. The general duties are to:

- eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- advance equality of opportunity
- foster good relations

We review all policies and procedures we operate to ensure there are no negative equality impacts based on the following protected characteristics: age, disability, ethnicity & race, gender (sex), gender identity & reassignment, pregnancy & maternity, sexual orientation, religion & belief and non-belief as outlined in the Equality Act 2010. If you feel, on reading this policy that there may be a negative equality impact, please tell us about this. Please also let us know if you need to access this policy in a different format. You can do this by contacting the school office.

## **Our school vision**

We are a Church of England school that values and recognises the uniqueness of each individual child and acknowledges their fundamental right to be educated to their full potential in a safe, secure and caring environment. Our ethos is built on Christian foundations and drives our belief that we can do all things.

Wardley CE Primary School is committed to continual improvement to ensure that what we do today is even better tomorrow. We provide a happy, secure and supportive learning environment where the children develop independence and work hard to make the most of their talents, and that 'We can do all things' within a deep and rich curriculum.

*We can do all things through Christ who strengthens us. Phillipians 4:13*

## **Practical ways in which we attempt to carry out our school vision**

### ***Through the Christian value of respect:***

- Having strong ethics to underpin our decision making and actions.
- Creating an environment which promotes the Christian ethos of trust, respect and honesty to enable people to flourish.
- Promoting a sense of justice.
- Creating a strong moral purpose which underpins everything we do

### ***Through the Christian value of friendship:***

- Having an inclusive ethos to create a school in which everyone is welcome and everyone is equal.
- In celebrating diversity we value the strengths of all and embrace differences.
- Engaging stakeholders within and beyond the school.

### ***Through the Christian value of trust:***

- Having a strong sense of teamwork amongst all members of the school community.
- No matter how small, we value every contribution and support each other to reach our goals.
- In respecting each other, we strive to not let each other down.
- In feeling valued and empowered people have a desire to go the extra mile.

### ***Through the Christian value of courage***

- Recognising, supporting and developing everyone's potential.
- Nurturing skills and promoting opportunities.
- Creating an environment for people to think positively and take risks.

### ***Through the Christian value of perseverance:***

- Through continual enhancement we are constantly striving to achieve high standards, we never stand still.
- All improvements are underpinned with high aspirations.
- When problems arise, we must hold on to our vision and find solutions.
- We inspire and innovate and we support others to do the same.

# **Phonics and Early Reading**

Our pupils learn to read and write effectively and quickly using the Read Write Inc. Phonics programme.

## **Read Write Inc. Phonics**

The programme is for:

- Pupils in Year N to Year 2 who are learning to read and write
- Any pupils in Years 2, 3 and 4 who need to catch up rapidly

In Read Write Inc. Phonics pupils:

- Decode letter-sound correspondences quickly and effortlessly, using their phonic knowledge and skills
- Read common exception words on sight
- Understand what they read
- Read aloud with fluency and expression
- Write confidently, with a strong focus on vocabulary and grammar
- Spell quickly and easily by segmenting the sounds in words
- Acquire good handwriting.

In addition, we teach pupils to work effectively with a partner to explain and consolidate what they are learning. This provides the teacher with opportunities to assess learning and to pick up on difficulties, such as pupils' poor articulation, or problems with blending or alphabetic code knowledge.

We group pupils homogeneously, according to their progress in reading rather than their writing. This is because it is known that pupils' progress in writing will lag behind progress in reading, especially for those whose motor skills are less well developed.

In the Foundation stage we emphasise the alphabetic code. The pupils rapidly learn sounds and the letter or groups of letters they need to represent them. Simple mnemonics help them to grasp this quickly. This is especially useful for pupils at risk of making slower progress. This learning is consolidated daily. Pupils have frequent practice in reading high frequency words with irregular spellings – common exception words.

We make sure that pupils read books that are closely matched to their increasing knowledge of phonics and the common exception words. This is so that, early on, they experience success and gain confidence that they are readers. Re-reading and discussing these books with the teacher supports their increasingly fluent decoding.

Alongside this, the teachers read a wide range of stories, poetry and non-fiction to pupils; they are soon able to read these texts for themselves.

Embedding the alphabetic code early on means that pupils quickly learn to write simple words and sentences. We encourage them to compose each sentence aloud until they are confident to write independently. We make sure they write every day.

Pupils write at the level of their spelling knowledge. The quality of the vocabulary they use in their writing reflects the language they have heard in the books the teacher has read to them; they have also discussed what the words mean.

Our aim is for pupils to complete the phonics programme as quickly as possible. The sooner they complete it, the sooner they will be able to choose books to read at their own interest and comprehension level.

## **Outcomes for children assessing and tracking progress**

We assess all pupils following Read Write Inc. Phonics using the Entry Assessment. We use this data to assign them to the correct Read Write Inc group. This gives us a very good indication of how well they are making progress relative to their starting points. We do this for all pupils, whenever they join us, so we can track all of them effectively, including those eligible for the pupil premium.

For those on the Read Write Inc. Phonics programme, we record their starting date and entry point on the tracker to monitor the rate at which they are making progress. We can also easily identify those who joined the programme later.

In addition, we use a standardised reading test (FFT Reading Assessment) so that we can ensure that the gains our pupils are making are age-appropriate.

We support pupils who have identified special educational needs for however long it takes until they can read. For example, we identify those who are at risk of falling behind their peers immediately – whatever their age. Highly trained staff tutor them for 5/10 minutes every day, using the Read Write Inc. One-to-one tutoring programme. If a child arrives in Key Stage 2 reading below their chronological age or with English as an additional language they are taught Read Write Inc. Phonics until they too catch up with their peers.

By the end of Key Stage 1, our pupils are able to read aloud age-appropriate texts accurately and with sufficient speed for comprehension. This means that we can focus on developing their comprehension, preparing them well for transition to Key Stage 2. Their good decoding skills mean that they have a sound strategy for decoding unfamiliar words when they come across them at whatever stage or in any subject, even into secondary school.

## **Quality of teaching, learning and assessment**

The programmes' 'cycle of instruction' means that, after direct instruction and guided practice, the pupils teach another pupil. In this way they all rehearse and consolidate what they have been learning. This helps the pupils to make their understanding clear to themselves and helps the teacher deal with any misconceptions. 'Partner teaching' is a key assessment tool. We also use this approach very effectively in other subjects.

In Read Write Inc. Phonics, because the pupils are grouped across the school in terms of their reading ability, they are reading at an appropriate decoding level every day. The homogeneous groups in the Phonic lessons help us to focus the teaching and ensure pupils learn to read quickly. Staff teaching Read Write Inc. Phonics record the results from the Assessments 1 and 2, which take place every half term. This data allows us to intervene in different ways. For instance, we quickly move pupils to another group if they are progressing faster than their peers. Those who continue to struggle have one-to-one tutoring so that they keep up.

All the pupils are engaged, with a positive impact on their behaviour. They learn to participate fully: we agree with them on the rules for working in a group or discussing with a partner. We discourage 'hands up' for answering questions because we believe that all pupils should answer every question. The teacher selects pupils to answer.

The Read Write Inc. programmes have detailed lesson plans. These give the teachers practical day-to-day guidance, but we work hard to build on these plans so that the lessons are matched carefully to the needs of their particular group. Every activity is prepared thoroughly and has a clear purpose. The teacher explains this at the beginning so that the pupils understand, during

the activity, what they are learning and why.

## **Additional support for lower-attaining pupils learning to read**

Pupils in the 'lowest' attaining group have the widest variety of needs. This is therefore the least homogeneous group. In order to give these pupils the same carefully targeted teaching as all the other groups, some of these pupils have daily one-to-one tutoring for 5/10 minutes, in addition to their group session in the morning. This tutoring helps us to meet their individual needs. Once these pupils have learnt to read they will receive additional support when learning to spell.

## **Homework**

### **Reception Homework**

1. Once a week, the Reception children are sent home with a reading activity.
2. Eventually, they will take home a reading book which matches their phonetic ability.

### **Year 1 Homework**

1. Once a week, each child is given a reading book to take home which matches their phonetic ability.
2. Each child is also given access to a digital copy of the RWI book they have been reading in class. The book includes: activities, comprehension questions and a quiz.
3. Once a week, each child is given a sound and words to practise Fred talking and blending at home.

### **Year 2 Homework**

1. Once a week, each child is given a reading book to take home which matches their phonetic ability.
2. Each child is also given access to a digital copy of the RWI book they have been reading in class. The book includes: activities, comprehension questions and a quiz.
3. When the child has completed the reading programme, once a week they will take home a post-decodable book.

## **Transition**

The transition from Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) to Year 1 in reading, involves a progression from learning to read to reading to learn. During the EYFS, children are exposed to a range of texts and involved in a range of activities that help them to develop their phonological awareness, letter recognition, and decoding skills. This sets the foundation for them to become independent readers in Year 1.

During Year 1, children continue to develop and build on their phonological awareness and decoding skills. The focus shifts to developing comprehension skills where children are taught to understand what they read and make connections to their own experiences and prior knowledge. Teachers use a range of strategies to help children develop their comprehension skills, such as asking questions, encouraging discussion and explicitly teaching the strategies required for answering questions.

In Year 2, children continue to develop their reading skills to become more confident and fluent readers who can comprehend text quickly and accurately. The focus is on helping children become more independent in their reading and to develop a love of reading for pleasure. Teachers will use a range of strategies to encourage this, such as creating a supportive and engaging reading environment where

children are exposed to a wide range of texts, both fiction and nonfiction, so they can develop their own preferences for what they like to read.

In summary, the transition from EYFS to Year 2 in reading, is a gradual process that builds on previous learning and supports children in developing the skills and strategies they need to become confident, competent and enthusiastic readers who are able to use their reading skills to learn and grow.

The transition from Year 2 to Year 3 in reading, builds on the progress that children have made in the previous years of their education. In Year 3, the focus shifts towards helping children become more advanced readers with a stronger emphasis on comprehension and critical thinking skills. Teachers will continue to support children in reading a wider range of texts, both fiction and nonfiction, and supporting children to use their own reading skills to support their learning in other subjects, such as history, science and geography.

In summary, the transition from Year 2 to year 3 in reading, is to help children continue to grow as readers and support them in becoming confident and critical users of the text. This will lay the foundation for their future academic and personal success.

### **Quality of teaching and pupils' progress**

The head teacher and reading leader monitor pupils' progress together until every child can read. No child is left behind to struggle.

We record lesson observations and any subsequent coaching alongside the 'teacher tracker' so that we can see if there is a correlation between the quality of the teaching and the progress pupils make.

1. The Read Write Inc. 'cycle of instruction' is embedded across the curriculum – MTTT, TTPP. Pupils do not raise their hands to answer questions.
2. Close grouping in Phonics is maintained – pupils are moved on quickly.
3. The purpose of each activity is clear to both teachers and pupils.
4. Planning and marking is thorough.
5. In Phonics, pupils read books at home that closely match their word reading ability
6. y. Teaching is monitored thoroughly (see Leadership and Management).

### **Effectiveness of leadership and management**

The school's shared vision is that every pupil learns to read quickly and continues to read – widely and often. The head teacher works with all the staff to ensure that this happens. In particular, she/he works closely with the reading leader/ Literacy and Language leader to monitor the quality of teaching and to provide coaching for staff (teachers and teaching assistants).

The role of the reading leader is critical. Alongside the head teacher, the reading leader drives the teaching of Read Write Inc. Phonics.

The reading leader's roles include:

- ensuring that our teaching of reading is of the highest quality and that all our pupils make progress
- ensuring pupils in the 'lower progress' group are making good progress and organising one-to-one tutoring for the pupils who need extra support
- keeping the groups homogeneous, i.e. at the same reading level

- providing further training (through master classes, coaching/ observation and face-to- face feedback).

The reading team is made up of a team of good teachers and teaching assistants (TAs) who each teach a group of pupils at the same reading level. Our TAs generally teach small groups of four to eight.

## **Professional development**

A key element of Read Write Inc. is consistent whole-school practice, underpinned by appropriate professional development. The head teacher, all the teachers and teaching assistants are trained to teach reading. All staff have attended two-day Phonics training and the trainer has returned to support us on subsequent development days. We hold at least two Development Days every year to ensure we are aware of up-to-date practice. Literacy and Language teachers have had an additional two-day training and are also supported through Development Days.

## **Parents and carers**

We invite parents/carers to an initial meeting and we hold workshops regularly to show how they can help their children read at home. We would like them to help their children, but we also recognise that some are not well-placed to do this. If they don't, their children won't suffer; it is our job to teach their children to read.

We organise repeat meetings for those who do not or cannot attend. We ensure that pupils whose parents do not attend keep up with their peers. We check that they make good progress in lessons, we give them extra one-to-one lessons, and we encourage them to read to themselves and to siblings at home.

We use the resources on the **parent page** on the Ruth Miskin Training website: <http://www.ruthmiskin.com/en/parents/>