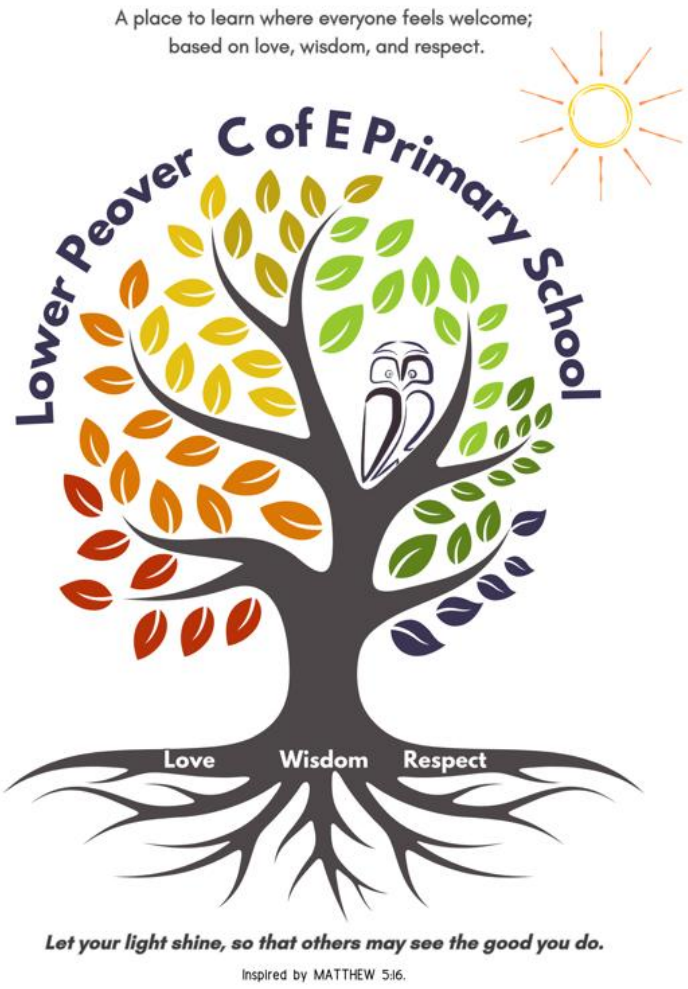

Phonics & Early Reading Policy

Review Date:	**October 2027**

It is essential that our approach to teaching phonics and reading is accessible to all learners, regardless of background.

Intent

At Lower Peover CofE Primary School, we believe that all our children can become fluent readers and writers. This is why we teach reading through *Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised*, which is a systematic and synthetic phonics programme. We start teaching phonics in Reception and follow the *Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised* progression, which ensures children build on their growing knowledge of the alphabetic code, mastering phonics to read and spell as they move through school.

As a result, all our children are provided with the tools to tackle unfamiliar words as they read. At Lower Peover, we also model the application of the alphabetic code through phonics in shared reading and writing, both inside and outside of the phonics lesson and across the curriculum. We have a strong focus on language development for our children because we know that speaking and listening are crucial skills for reading and writing in all subjects.

Comprehension

At Lower Peover we value reading as a crucial life skill. By the time children leave us, they read confidently for meaning and regularly enjoy reading for pleasure. Our readers are equipped with the tools to tackle unfamiliar vocabulary. We encourage our children to see themselves as readers for both pleasure and purpose.

Implementation

- We provide a balance of child-led and adult-led experiences for all children that meet the curriculum expectations for 'Communication and Language' and 'Literacy'. These include:
    - sharing high-quality stories and poems
    - learning a range of nursery rhymes and action rhymes
    - activities that develop focused listening and attention, including oral blending
    - attention to high-quality language.
- We ensure children are well prepared to begin learning grapheme-phoneme correspondences (GPCs) and blending in Reception.

Daily phonics lessons in Reception and Year 1

- We teach phonics for 30 minutes a day. In Reception, we build from 10-minute lessons, with additional daily oral blending games, to the full-length lesson as quickly as possible. Each Friday, we review the week's teaching to help children become fluent readers.
- Children make a strong start in Reception: teaching begins right from the first week in September.
- We follow the *Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised* expectations of progress:
- 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 Phase 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 who needs additional practice has daily Keep-up support, taught by a fully trained adult.

Teaching reading: Reading practice sessions weekly

- We teach children to read through reading practice sessions.
  These:
  - are taught by a fully trained adult to small groups of approximately six children
  - use books matched to the children's secure phonics knowledge using the *Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised* assessments and book matching grids on pages 11–20 of 'Application of phonics to reading'
  - 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
  - prosody: teaching children to read with understanding and expression
  - comprehension: teaching children to understand the text.
- In Reception these sessions start in Week 4. Children who are not yet decoding have daily additional blending practice in small groups, so that they quickly learn to blend and can begin to read books.
- In Year 2, we continue to teach reading in this way for any children who still need to practise reading with decodable books.

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, these are changed weekly by children choosing from the wide selection in each class.
  - We use the *Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised* parents' resources to engage our families and share information about phonics, the benefits of sharing books, how children learn to blend and other aspects of our provision.

Additional reading support for vulnerable children

- Children in Reception and Year 1, who are receiving additional phonics Keep-up sessions, read their reading practice book to an adult.

Ensuring consistency and pace of progress

- Every teacher 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.
- Adaptions can be made to ensure we get the best results from our children, whilst staying in line with the Little Wandle scheme.
- Weekly planning 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 all have a consistent approach and structure for each lesson.
- The English & Phonics Leads, and SLT use the audit and prompt cards to regularly monitor and observe teaching; they also use the summative data to identify children who need additional support and gaps in learning.

Ensuring reading for pleasure

'Reading for pleasure is the single most important indicator of a child's success.' (OECD 2002)
'The will influences the skill and vice versa.' (OECD 2010)

We value reading for pleasure highly and work hard as a school to grow our 'Reading for Pleasure' pedagogy.

- We read to children every day. We choose these books carefully as we want children to experience a wide range of books, including books that reflect the children at Lower Peover, and our local community, as well as books that open windows into other worlds and cultures.
- Every classroom has an inviting book corner that encourages a love of reading. We curate these books and talk about them to entice children to read a wide range of books.
- In Reception, children have access to the reading corner every day in their free flow time and the books are continually refreshed.
- All children from Reception onwards have a Boom Reader app home reader account, that allows parents/carers to record reading at home and add comments to share with staff in school.

Impact

Assessment

Assessment is used to monitor progress and 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** is used:
  - 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.
  - by SLT and scrutinised through the *Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised* assessment tracker, to narrow attainment gaps between different groups of children and so that any additional support for teachers can be put into place.
- The *Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised* placement assessment is used:
- with any child new to the school to quickly identify any gaps in their phonics knowledge and to plan and provide appropriate extra teaching.

Statutory assessment

- Children in Year 1 sit the Phonics screening check. Any child not passing the check re-sits it in Year 2.