



Phonics and Reading



At FisherGate, we believe that reading is at the foundation of the entire curriculum and is an essential life skill, integral to the future learning of our pupils. We believe that all our children can learn to read, regardless of their background, needs or abilities. Through our curriculum, we aim to inspire a love of reading by creating an ethos of reading for pleasure and providing opportunities for children to develop their reading skills in a variety of contexts. We strive to create an environment where children are immersed in a rich culture of vocabulary, storytelling and shared reading experiences, both within school and at home, by working closely with parents and carers.

The development of early reading skills is prioritised from the time our children enter nursery and is underpinned by a coherent and systematic phonics scheme, which is taught daily throughout EYFS and Key Stage 1. We currently use Pearson's *Bug Club* books, alongside Letters and Sounds. From September 2022, we will use *Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised* as our phonics scheme.

Our phonics provision has the following key features:

- direct daily teaching through a multi-sensory approach in frequent, short bursts
- consistency of approach
- secure, systematic progression in phonics learning, where pupils learn the main grapheme-phoneme correspondences of English in a clearly defined, incremental sequence
- maintaining pace of learning
- providing repeated practice
- application of phonics using matched decodable books
- early identification of children at risk of falling behind, linked to the provision of effective keep-up support.

Implementation

Early Years

At FisherGate, we are committed to using systematic, synthetic phonics to teach reading. In Early Years, our part-time children begin the foundations of reading by introducing Phase One phonics into their story and song circle time sessions. This adult-led teaching begins to take place in the spring term once our nursery children have settled into the routine of sitting and listening together. Phase One activities are also embedded in our language-rich provision where adults supporting play can encourage the oral segmenting and blending of familiar words.

As our nursery children become full-time in Reception, we begin to introduce daily Phase Two phonics from the start of the Autumn term. These sessions are short to begin with but as the children's concentration and understanding of the routines embed, they become longer adult-led focused sessions as the academic year progresses, to prepare them for learning expectations of Year One.

During the teaching of Phase Two phonics, the children will learn at least 19 letters and move children on from oral blending and segmenting to blending and segmenting with letters. By the end of the phase many children should be able to read some VC and CVC words and to spell them. During the phase they will be introduced to reading two-syllable words and simple captions. They will also learn to read some high-frequency 'tricky' words: the, to, go, no.

Continuing on, in Reception children progress onto the teaching of Phase Three phonics. They will learn another 25 graphemes, most of them comprising two letters, so the children can represent each of about 42 phonemes by a grapheme. Children will also continue to practise CVC blending and segmenting in this phase and will apply their knowledge of blending and segmenting to reading and spelling simple two-syllable words and captions.



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Finally, the majority of children in Reception consolidate their knowledge of graphemes in reading and spelling words containing adjacent consonants and polysyllabic words by completing Phase Four phonics.

During the teaching of each discrete phonics session, the following sequence is applied: there is a revisit and review of previously learned letters and graphemes. The children are taught a new letter or grapheme, before being allowed the opportunity to practise and apply their new phonic knowledge in both reading and writing.

Decodable reading books are introduced once a child demonstrates that they are able to correctly recognise the first three sets of letters learnt in the Bug Club scheme (s/a/t/p/i/n/g/o/c/k) and they can demonstrate they are able to blend using these letters. The book is read in school daily to practitioners over the course of a week and then the following week the book is taken home to share with parents/carers and is consequently read more than once to encourage a child's fluency in reading.

Children's progress in their ability to recognise and blend letters and graphemes taught is continually monitored when listening to them during their daily one to one adult reading. Our decodable reading scheme corresponds directly with the sequence in which letters and graphemes are taught during phonic sessions. This allows children to access reading resources, which provide an opportunity for phoneme and grapheme consolidation and thus encourage a child's confidence in reading, as well as providing a child with an appropriate level of challenge on their next set of phonemes and graphemes to learn and practise.

Reading planners are provided as a tool for communicating with parents/carers with respect to their child's reading progress. Additionally, sets of high-frequency tricky words are stuck into planners as an additional tool for parents/carers.

During the school holidays, children are provided with additional Bug Club books to encourage them to continue practising their daily reading at home.

Key Stage 1

In Key Stage 1, we build upon the foundations built in EYFS by recapping the digraphs and trigraphs taught previously, as well as introducing Phase 5 sounds, including split digraphs and alternate ways of reading the same sound. Our aim is for children to complete the phonics programme as quickly as possible and once secure within Phase 5, children will begin to learn Phase 6 reading and spelling strategies such as rules for adding prefixes and suffixes.

Just like in EYFS, we ensure that pupils read books which are matched to their phonic knowledge and recognition of common exception words. Progression in phonics and early reading is closely monitored and the use of phonetically decodable books ensures the application and consolidation skills. The development of children's reading is monitored through their progression within book bands and phonic stage trackers. At the end of Year 1, children undertake a Phonics Screening Check to assess their progress. Children read their reading books three times before changing them; rereading develops fluency in decoding and confidence. So that parents and carers feel confident about supporting their children with reading, each phase of school offers a tailored Reading and Phonics workshop in the Autumn term. Every pupil has a planner which also acts as a home/school reading record in which adults in school and carers can note observations and communicate about children's progress. Throughout school, we use a number of parent, community and student volunteers to hear children read. Volunteers are given guidance which outlines strategies to support pupils when they are reading, and how to use planners to offer constructive feedback. We recognise that our parents and carers are invaluable in providing additional opportunities for children to develop accuracy and fluency.

Children take part in a daily Guided Reading carousel which ensures that each child is read with daily for 20 minutes by a teacher or teaching assistant, as well as having a daily 20 minute Phonics and class story session. In Year 1, children focus on decoding words using their phonic knowledge and blending sounds. They then begin to develop their sight reading



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abilities and recognition of common exception words, in order to develop fluency and expression. Within Year 2, pupils begin to focus on their comprehension skills, through the use of Reading VIPERS.

With Reading VIPERS, children are taught the key aspects of comprehension through the following:

- focusing on new vocabulary by ensuring comprehension, finding synonyms and using words in the appropriate context
- making inferences by using evidence from the text
- predicting what will happen next based on the information given
- explaining thoughts and opinions about the book
- retrieving information
- sequencing the key events from the story