

Abbey Hill Primary and Nursery School

Phonics and Reading Policy





Reading at Abbey Hill Primary and Nursery School

Curriculum Intent

We want our Abbeyhillians to:

be confident communicators

develop a strong sense of self

understand the wide diversity of people and cultures in modern Britain

acquire knowledge and understanding of the world

Reading Intent

We recognise and value reading as a crucial life skill and believe that reading should be at the heart of all we do. We make it a priority to ensure every child leaves Abbey Hill as a reader, aiming for them to read confidently, enjoy reading and choose to read often. We aim to increase children's vocabulary and to equip them with the tools they need to read independently, to understand what they read, and to read with meaning and pleasure.

We encourage children to see themselves as readers for both enjoyment and learning.

We offer children a wide range of books covering diverse themes to catch their interest and to widen and develop their knowledge of the world and to increase their cultural capital.

Because we believe teaching every child to read is so important, we have a Reading Leader who drives the early reading programme in school. This person is highly skilled at teaching phonics and reading, and they monitor and support our reading team, so everyone teaches with fidelity to the Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised programme.

Phonics – reading and spelling

We believe all pupils can become fluent readers and writers, and we encourage them to see themselves as readers for both pleasure and purpose. Reading is taught through Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised, a systematic synthetic phonics programme. We follow every aspect of this programme with fidelity to ensure pupils build their knowledge of the alphabetic code, mastering phonics as they move through school from their starting points in Nursery.

We aim that all pupils will be able to tackle any unfamiliar words as they read. We model the application of the alphabetic code through our teaching of phonics in both reading and writing, in phonics lessons and across the curriculum. We have a strong focus on language development because we know speaking and listening are crucial skills for reading and writing in all subjects.

Comprehension

We recognise and value reading as a crucial life skill. By the time pupils leave us, we aim for them to read confidently for meaning and enjoy reading for pleasure, choosing to read often. We aim to develop pupils' vocabulary at every opportunity to equip them with the tools they need to tackle unfamiliar words independently, to understand what they read, and to read with meaning and pleasure.

Reading Implementation

Foundations for phonics in Nursery

- Our aim is to ensure Nursery children are well prepared to begin learning grapheme-phoneme correspondences (GPCs) and blending in Reception.
- We provide a balance of child-initiated 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
 - high-quality interactions with children modelling and recasting language.
- Adult-led sessions based on Phase 1 Letters and Sounds phonics and supplemented by Little Wandle Foundations for Phonics activities, introduce children to aural blending and recognition of initial sounds in words. Games also develop vocabulary and boost attentions and listening.

Daily phonics lessons in Reception and Year 1

- We teach phonics for 30 minutes a day. In Reception, we build up rapidly from 10-minute lessons, with additional daily aural blending games, to the full-length lesson as quickly as possible.
- We are determined that children will start their journey to reading as soon as possible, and phonics teaching begins in the second week of the autumn term.
- 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 Phase 4 words with adjacent consonants 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

- Due to the impact of the pandemic on pupils' phonics skills, two daily lessons will be taught from Reception to Y2 where necessary, one at the correct stage for pupils' year and term, and one to fill in the gaps in their learning.
- We timetable daily phonics lessons for children in Year 2 and 3 who are not fully fluent at reading or have not passed the Phonics Screening Check. We use the Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised assessments to identify gaps in their phonic knowledge and teach to these using the Keep-up resources at pace.
- Children who need additional practice have daily individual or small group Keep-up support. Keep-up lessons match the structure of class teaching, and use the same procedures, resources and mantras, but in smaller steps with more repetition, so that every child secures their learning.
- In KS2 Rapid Catch Up 7+ is used to accelerate progress in the acquisition and application of phonic knowledge, through daily individual or small group sessions including phonics teaching and group reading practice.

Teaching reading: group reading practice sessions three times a week

- We teach children in Reception to Y2 to read through reading practice sessions three times a week. Everyone in class takes part in these sessions at the same time.
- Sessions are taught by fully trained teachers and TAs to small groups of 3 to 6 children.

- Books are matched to children’s secure phonic knowledge using the Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised assessments and book matching grids.
- Sessions 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 – blending to read words
 - Prosody – teaching children to read with understanding and expression
 - Comprehension – teaching children to understand the text
- In Reception these sessions start as soon as children have the social skills and attention to work in a small group and are able to blend phonemes to read words.
- We continue to teach reading in this way for any children in KS2 who still need to practise reading with decodable books.

Home reading

- The decodable group reading practice book is taken home to be shared with an adult.
- Children also take home a self-chosen reading for pleasure book from our school library.
- 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, both online and through workshops.

Additional reading support for vulnerable children

- Children in Reception and Year 1 receive additional phonic Keep-up sessions and those in KS2 take part in the Rapid Catch Up 7+ programme.
- Trained volunteers in school read with those children who rarely read at home to boost their reading mileage.

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 children’s cognitive load is reduced.
- Weekly content grids map each element of new learning to every day, week and term for the duration of the programme.
- Lesson templates, prompt cards and how to videos ensure all teachers and TAs have a consistent approach and structure for each lesson.
- The Reading Leader and SLT analyse summative data to identify children who need additional support in reading.

Reading beyond phonics

- As children become more fluent readers they move onto a wider range of books. For those requiring further support to decode, teachers will ensure children read the 95% decodable books from turquoise to white.
- Books from brown onwards are book banded.
- Where children in UKS2 have more complex needs in reading they are targeted to read regularly to an adult and may take part in a daily individual intervention such as Switch On or Precision Teaching.
- Whole class academic reading lessons are taught daily in KS2 and twice weekly in KS1. These are based on texts from the reading spine to reinforce learning in history and

geography projects, and in the wider curriculum. Teachers model expert reading of these texts which introduce children to high quality classic, modern and diverse fiction. In these lessons pupils explore the context of the text and its author, read short extracts and practise skills required to become confident readers, including fluency, vocabulary, comprehension and inference. These activities may be verbal or written.

Reading for pleasure

Research tells us reading for pleasure is the single most important indicator of a child's academic success. We value reading for pleasure highly and work hard as a school to grow our Reading for Pleasure pedagogy and culture.

- 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 our Abbeyhillian children and our local community, as well as books that open windows into other worlds and cultures.
- There is a strengthening Reading for Pleasure culture and regular updating of KS1 and KS2 libraries give pupils opportunities to read a wide range of high quality, contemporary, diverse texts they may not otherwise come into contact with. The school's reading squad promote reading in visits to classes, pupil voice and choices for the school libraries.
- Our school Patron of Reading runs assemblies and workshops half termly, and there is a weekly author focussed assembly in KS1 and KS2.
- The school library is made available for classes to use at allocated times but also whenever they would like to change their library book themselves.
- Children across school have regular opportunities to engage with a wide range of Reading for Pleasure events e.g. book swaps, book sales, World Book Day events.
- The school's own book delivery scheme targets children who have very few or no books at home and deliver books every month to their home.

Assessment

Phonics

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 five weeks to assess progress, to identify gaps in learning that need to be addressed, to identify any children needing additional support and to plan any support required.
- By SLT to narrow attainment gaps between different groups of children and so that any additional support for teachers can be put into place.

Reading

NFER reading tests are used as summative assessment for Y3 to Y5 and past SATs papers for Y6 and Y2 (when appropriate). These inform teacher judgement at three assessment points throughout the year, along with book bands and teacher judgement and knowledge.