



## Endleigh Holy Child VC Academy

### Policy on phonics and the teaching of reading and writing

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

#### **The *Read Write Inc.* Phonic programme**

The programme is for:

- pupils in Foundation Stage to Year 2 who are learning to read and write
- any pupils in Years 2, 3 and 4 who need to catch up rapidly.

We teach pupils to:

- decode letter-sound correspondences quickly and effortlessly, using their phonic knowledge and skills
- read ‘tricky’ 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 early Foundation Stage we teach phonological awareness and discrimination between sounds in preparation for moving onto letters.

In 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 – ‘tricky words’.

We make sure that pupils read books that are closely matched to their increasing knowledge of phonics and the ‘tricky 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.

Pupils write at the level of their spelling knowledge; that is, they use their knowledge of the alphabetic code and the tricky words they have learnt. They can soon spell more complex words confidently and accurately. 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.

Alongside this programme, children are listened to read individually at other opportunities during the week. Parents are expected to listen to children reading at home on a regular basis.

Pupils in Key Stage 1 read during guided reading lessons, with a greater focus on comprehension skills. Bug Club – an online reading comprehension package, is used to complement the skills taught in school and the children are encouraged to access this at home.

## **Achievement in our school**

### **Assessing and tracking progress**

We assess all pupils from Foundation Stage to Year 2 on the *Read Write Inc.* Sound and Word Entry Assessment and we use these data to assign them to either *Read Write Inc.* Phonics groups give 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.

Our figures show that around 60% of our pupils complete the phonics programme by the end of Year 1 and around 90% of our pupils complete the programme by the end of the autumn term of Year 2. We aim for all children to be accurate and speedy readers by the time they enter Key Stage 2.

Pupils who are making slower progress usually complete the programme by the end of Year 2. 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 15 regularly, 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, additional teaching is given using Read Write Inc. strategies.

### **Phonic screening check**

We have high expectations of our pupils' progress. In the June 2014 phonic screening check, 79% of our pupils reached the threshold, and in June 2015 79% and in June 2016 78%. We attribute this to the programme and to the expectations it builds in.

### **Impact across the curriculum**

Our teachers are enthusiastic about using the *Read Write Inc.* programme because they can see how well pupils learn from it and the progress they make, not just in English but across the curriculum.

1. Data is used effectively to ensure gaps are closing between all groups – in particular those eligible for the pupil premium (*Read Write Inc.* assessment and tracking, standardised reading tests, phonics screening check).
2. 80-90% of pupils complete *Read Write Inc.* Phonics by end of Year 2 Term 1.
3. Slower progress pupils and those with specific SEN are taught in small homogeneous teaching groups and receive *Read Write Inc.* one-to-one tutoring.
4. Around 79% of pupils achieve 32/40 on the phonics screening check and around 90% achieve 25/40.

### **Quality of teaching in our school**

The programme's '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.

Assessment is a critical element of our programme. The teachers assess:

- pupils' phonic knowledge
- the speed at which pupils are able to read the text
- their understanding of the stories they read.

We record the results from the Sound and Word Assessments, which take place every eight weeks, on the Assessment Tracker. These data allow 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.

The homogeneous groupings allow the teachers to focus on all pupils for the whole lesson. This means that all the pupils are engaged, with a positive impact on their behaviour. They learn to participate fully: we agree with them 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.* programme has 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 in every lesson is prepared thoroughly and has a very clear purpose. The teacher explains this at the beginning so that the pupils understand, during the activity, what they are learning and why.

Simple teaching strategies and a lively pace ensure that all the pupils participate fully— there is no chance for them to lose concentration and miss key elements. In addition, because all 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 help us to focus the teaching and ensure pupils make very good progress.

### **Feedback and marking**

We emphasise constructive feedback. For example, we praise pupils for what they do well; such as displaying the behaviour they all need for their learning to be successful. Teaching partners are praised for their effective teaching.

### **Reading at home**

The support of parents with home reading is crucial and we value working together to ensure children make maximum progress. We help pupils to select appropriate books to take home, depending on what support they might receive out of school. Pupils who receive little help take home books that they have already read in the Read Write Inc. lesson. This means that they are confident to read at home, even if

their parents cannot read with them. Pupils also take home stories and non-fiction that they cannot yet read for themselves but that have been read to them. Stories and new vocabulary are explained and discussed so all pupils have access to the books they read. Pupils also take home familiar picture books so that they can re-tell the story out loud and recall details and vocabulary.

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

The Deputy Head and English leader monitor all pupils' progress. No child is left behind to struggle. The Senior Leadership Team record lesson observations to monitor whether there is a correlation between the quality of the teaching and the progress pupils make.

1. Close grouping for reading is maintained – pupils are moved on quickly.
2. The purpose of each activity is clear to both teachers and pupils.
3. Planning and marking is thorough.
4. Pupils read books at home that closely match their word reading, as well as familiar stories and texts beyond their word reading.
5. Teaching is monitored thoroughly (see Leadership and Management).

### **Behaviour and safety in our school**

Pupils have very positive attitudes to the programme. Their good behaviour contributes to the progress they make.

Praise for hard work and good behaviour is fundamental to pupils' progress. The values of courtesy, consideration and kindness are at the heart of every lesson, taught through the programme and embedded in other lessons. All the staff use the same positive strategies for behaviour management across the school. Working well together, as part of a team, is at the core of the school's work – for staff and pupils.

### **Leadership and management in our school**

#### **Shared vision**

The school's shared vision is that every pupil learns to read quickly and continues to read – widely and often. The Deputy Head works with all the staff to ensure that this happens. In particular, she works closely with the SLT to monitor the quality of teaching and to provide coaching for staff who need it (teachers and teaching assistants).

The roles of the RWI leader and English leader are critical. Alongside the SLT, the RWI leader drives the teaching of *Read Write Inc.* Phonics, ensuring it is taught with

fidelity so that all the pupils complete the programme as quickly as possible, and develop a love of reading.

The Read Write Inc. Leader and English leaders' roles include:

- liaising to discuss provision and progression across the school
- 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 RWI groups homogeneous, i.e. at the same reading level
- ensuring that our teaching of Read Write Inc. Phonics is of the highest quality and that all our pupils make progress.
- ensuring high quality texts are available for all pupils and opportunities for reading are created whenever possible

Teachers alert the Read Write Inc. leader to any pupil whose progress is faster or slower than the rest of their group.

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.

### **Professional development**

A key element of *Read Write Inc.* is consistency from all those who deliver the programme, underpinned by appropriate professional development.

### **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 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.

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