



EVERY CHILD MATTERS ACADEMY TRUST
WELLGATE PRIMARY SCHOOL
Early Reading & Phonics Policy

The terms Trust and School (and levels within e.g., governors and trustees) are interchangeable and apply to all schools within the Trust

INTRODUCTION

Our pupils learn to read and write effectively and quickly using the Read Write Inc. Phonics programme. Once children have been assessed as ready to move off the Read Write Inc. programme they access Guided Reading and Spelling activities appropriate to their level of comprehension.

The programme is for:

- Pupils in Foundation 2 to Year 2 who are learning to read and write
- Any pupils in Years 2, 3 and 4 who need to catch up rapidly
- Struggling readers in Years 5 and 6 follow Read Write Inc. Fresh Start.

AIMS

Using the Read Write Inc. Phonics programme pupils are taught to:

- 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.

PHONICS

Our youngest children are taught to recognise sounds in the environment and explore different sounds in words. They are immersed in Nursery Rhymes and high-quality texts to provide them with rich vocabulary and prepare them for accessing the Phonics programme. In Foundation 1 children are introduced to the pictures connected with the Read Write Inc. programme alongside oral blending games.

In Foundation 2, 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.

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

Throughout the Read Write Inc. Phonics programme, 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 notice difficulties, such as pupils' poor articulation, or problems with blending or alphabetic code knowledge.

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.

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 programme expectations are that pupils should be off the programme by the end of the Spring Term of Year 2. The sooner they complete it, the sooner they will be able to choose books to read at their own interest and comprehension level.

ASSESSMENT & TRACKING

We assess all pupils following Read Write Inc. Phonics using the Entry Assessment. We use this data to assign them to the appropriate Read Write Inc. Phonics 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 Assessment tracker, which is updated after every assessment period. This allows us to monitor the rate at which they are making progress. We can also easily identify those who joined the programme later. These assessments are saved in an individual folder on the Shared drive to enable all staff to access them, refer to gaps and monitor progress.

One of the trained Assessment Team assesses pupils every six weeks, or sooner if a Reading Teacher feels a child is ready to progress to the next group. All progress is tracked on the Assessment Tracker so the Reading Leader can easily identify children who are making slower progress or are working below the expectations for their year group. Children in receipt of tutoring are also identified on the tracker.

Pupils who are identified as making slower progress receive daily Fast Track One-to-one tutoring delivered by a highly trained member of staff.

QUALITY OF TEACHING, LEARNING & 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 their year group 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, 2 or 3 which take place every six to eight weeks. 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 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 reading 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.

Alongside the Phonics programme children are exposed to high tiers of vocabulary through repeated reads of carefully selected texts. Vocabulary is introduced and explained to children through story time and topic work.

We ensure that staff remain refreshed in their training through regular coaching and practice sessions with the Reading Lead. All staff have access to exemplar films using the Ruth Miskin Portal.

RESOURCES

All staff have the resources required to deliver the Read Write Inc. programme i.e. Speed Sound charts, sound and word cards, Fred frogs. These resources are monitored by the Early Reading Lead and replenished as appropriate. Books are stored centrally, accompanied by packs containing the Get Writing resources and pre-prepared story green word cards. Staff are expected to return the resources to the central location once they have been used.

THE ROLE OF PARENTS/CARERS

Parents and Carers play a vital role in helping children learn to read. Children take home the Read Write Inc. book they have been reading in their lessons. In addition to this, they take home a 'Book Bag' book that is closely linked to the sounds and words they have been reading. All children are encouraged to take home a picture book to share with their parents/carers. Parents/Carers are asked to make comments in their child's reading journal.

SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

Children with special needs are identified through regular teacher assessment. They are then supported through the procedures detailed in the school's SEN policy.

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, in addition to their group session in the morning. This tutoring helps us to meet their individual needs.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

We regard the achievement of every group of pupils to be of equal importance. This is reflected in the curriculum we teach. We value and reward the achievements of all pupils equally. We have



high expectations of behavior for every group in school. We aim to involve parents from every background and believe this is a significant benefit to the school.

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