



# Mawgan-in-Pydar School's Phonics and Early Reading Policy

## The context of our school

At our school, we are immensely proud of our dedicated subject leaders and teachers, who continuously strive to deepen their expertise and maximise pupil outcomes across all areas of the curriculum — academically, socially, and emotionally. We are committed to ensuring that our approach to teaching phonics and reading is inclusive and accessible to all learners, regardless of background, so that every child has the opportunity to succeed and develop a lifelong love of reading.

## Intent

### Phonics (reading and spelling)

At Mawgan-in-Pydar 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 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, at Mawgan-in-Pydar school all our children are equipped with the skills to confidently decode unfamiliar words as they read. We consistently model the application of the alphabetic code through phonics during shared reading and writing activities, both within dedicated phonics lessons and across the wider curriculum. We place a strong emphasis on language development, recognising that speaking and listening are foundational skills that support reading and writing across all subjects.

### Comprehension

At Mawgan-in-Pydar School 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. Because we believe teaching every child to read is so important, we have a Reading Leader who drives the early reading programme in our school. This person is highly skilled in 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.

## Implementation:



### Daily phonics lessons in Reception and Year 1

- We teach phonics for 40 minutes a day. In Reception, we build from 10-minute lessons, with additional daily oral blending games, to full-length lessons 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 in week 2 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 words with adjacent consonants (Phase 4) with fluency and accuracy.
  - Children in Year 1 review Phases 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 in Reception and Year 1 who needs additional practice has Daily Keep-up support and is taught by a fully trained adult.
- Daily Keep-up lessons follow the Little Wandle progression and use the same procedures, resources and mantras, but in smaller steps with more repetition so that every child secures their learning.

### Daily phonics and spelling in Year 2

- Year 2 begins by using assessment to ensure that children have completed the Little Wandle Year 1 progression. Any gaps in teaching are addressed through daily phonics lessons until the programme is completed. Corresponding summative assessments are carried out to ensure this content is secure.
- Once all Year 1 content has been taught and assessed, we teach a five-week Phase 5 review. This ensures that children secure the trickier elements of Phase 5 and can apply this alphabetic knowledge in both reading and spelling.
- We use the Phase 5 review assessment before teaching in Year 2 to identify any children who may need more support when teaching. We reassess after teaching the Phase 5 review.
- Once the Phase 5 review is secure, children have 4 taught comprehension sessions each week and are explicitly taught the skills of reading (outlined in the National Curriculum and the KS1 and KS2 test domains) through the use of VIPERS. Children are encouraged to choose books around their suggested ZPD level that appeal to them. The children are then encouraged to read for pleasure and to understand what they have read. Their understanding of the text is evaluated by taking a short quiz at the end of each book they have read. Children are motivated by reaching their targets and collecting points for different books read. Progress is monitored by regular star reading assessments which evaluate aspects of the children's reading ability such as reading age and oral fluency.



- Children with larger gaps in their phonic knowledge than their peers have daily phonics teaching and follow the Rapid Catch-up programme.

### Children in Year 2 to Year 6: Rapid Catch-up

- We timetable daily phonics lessons for any child in Year 2 and above who is not at age-related expectations for reading or has not passed the Phonics Screening Check. These children urgently need to catch up, so the gap between themselves and their peers does not widen.
- These short, sharp lessons last 15 to 20 minutes daily and have been designed to ensure children quickly catch up to age-related expectations in reading.
- We assess children who are new to our school, new to the country or new to English using the Rapid Catch-up assessments to quickly identify their needs.
- We use the Rapid Catch-up assessments to identify the gaps in children's phonic knowledge and teach these using the Rapid Catch-up resources – at pace.
- We assess children every four weeks using the Rapid Catch-up summative assessments to assess progress and inform teaching.

### Teaching reading: Reading practice sessions three times a week

- In Ks1, we teach reading practice sessions three times a week. These sessions:
  - are taught by a fully trained adult to small groups of approximately five children
  - use books matched to the children's secure phonic knowledge using the *Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised* assessments and book matching grids on pages 11 to 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: teaching children to use phonic knowledge to read words
  - prosody: teaching children to read with understanding and expression
  - comprehension: using dialogic talk to help children to understand the text.
- In Reception, these sessions start in week 4 of teaching at the latest. Initially, children will read wordless books. In these sessions, children review GPCs and are taught blending using teacher-led blending. Once children can blend, they progress onto decodable books matched to their secure phonic knowledge.
- Children read each book three times to develop phonemic awareness, vocabulary and comprehension as well as book behaviours.
- In Year 2, we ensure children complete reading the core programme decodable books (up to Phase 5 Set 5). To exit the programme, we complete the final fluency assessment to ensure children can read with adequate speed and accuracy: approximately 60 words per minute with 90%+ accuracy.



- Reading in Rapid Catch-up lessons mirrors the core programme. Children following the Rapid Catch-up programme are taught to read using the 7+ fully decodable books. These follow the same progression as the core programme but are more appropriate for older readers.

### Home reading

- The decodable reading practice book is taken home to ensure success is shared with the family.
- Reading for Pleasure (RfP) books also go home for parents to share and read to children. We share the research behind the importance and impact of sharing quality children's books with parents through workshops, leaflets and the [Everybody read!](#) resources.
- 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 who are receiving additional phonics Daily Keep-up sessions read their reading practice book regularly to an adult in school.
- We prioritise children who may not have reading support at home or who may not have access to books. We ensure that they have individual reading times with volunteers and staff to share quality children's literature to promote a love of reading.

### 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.
- Weekly content 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 Reading Leader and SLT use checklists and templates to regularly monitor and observe teaching; they use the summative data to identify children who need additional support and have 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 highly value RfP and work hard as a school to grow our RfP pedagogy.

- We read aloud to children every day. We choose these books carefully as we want children to experience a wide range of books, including those that reflect the children at Mawgan-in-Pydar 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 for 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.
- Children choose from our range of carefully chosen books to take home and share with an adult. We keep a record of the children's choices, so we get to know them as readers.
- As children progress through school, we take time to get to know them as readers and ensure that we engage in meaningful conversations about the books that they have read. By doing this we can recommend authors and genres of books to expand their interests.
- Children across the school have regular opportunities to engage with a wide range of RfP events (book fairs, author visits and workshops, national events, etc.).
- We use the Everybody read! resources to grow our teachers' knowledge of current books, the most recent research and to grow our own RfP practice.

## 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 (AfL)** is used:
  - daily within class to identify children who require Daily Keep-up support, as well as words and GPCs that need additional teaching
  - to plan repeated practice throughout the day to ensure all children secure learning
  - weekly in the Friday review lesson to assess gaps, address these immediately and secure fluency of GPCs, words and spellings.
- **Summative assessments** are uploaded onto the Assessment tracker for Reception and Year 1. These are used:
  - to generate visual reports (pupil heatmaps, pupil trends and books levels, and a summary analysis) for individual children, classes and whole year groups



- by teachers, Reading Leaders and SLT who drill down and look at the data at GPC, word, tricky word and sentence level
- by SLT to scrutinise and plan how to narrow the attainment gaps between different groups of children and to put in place any additional support for teachers.

We assess:

- every six weeks to assess progress and to identify gaps in learning that need to be reviewed or retaught
- to establish if learning is secure for more than 70% of children before new content is taught
- to identify any children needing additional support and to plan the Daily Keep-up support that they need.

Every three weeks, we reassess every child who is not on track.

### **Statutory assessment**

- Children in Year 1 sit the Phonics Screening Check. Any child not passing the check resits it in Year 2.