

School policy on the teaching of Phonics and Early Reading.

Intent

The ability to read is fundamental to many aspects of life, and is central to general progress & developing an understanding in a wide range of areas of the curriculum. The teaching of Phonics and Early Reading is to be given a high priority by all Bishops Down staff. Success in reading is crucial in developing children's self-confidence and motivation to learning in general.

Throughout the school week students will have the opportunity to engage in high quality phonics and begin to use phonetic approaches in reading and writing alongside a range of other reading and writing strategies. Spoken Language is also a focus and should reflect our school wide focus on the promotion of effective and functional communication.

As such, we will create a supportive environment which encourages a love of reading and develops core phonics skills enabling students to reach their potential in reading. We will support staff to feel confident in delivering an exciting and enriching curriculum which inspires students and builds on core skills.

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

The ***Read Write Inc. Phonics*** programme is for:

- Pupils in Year R to Year 2 who are learning to read and write
- Any pupils in Years 2 and Key stage 2 who need to catch up rapidly

In *Read Write Inc.* Phonics pupils:

- 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

From Reception class, 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.

We ensure 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.

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. This helps children to enjoy reading and to recognise its value.

The quality of the vocabulary used also reflects the language they have heard in the books the teacher has read to them; they have also discussed what the words mean in lessons.

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.

Outcomes for children

Assessing and tracking progress

We assess all pupils following Read Write Inc. *Phonics* using the Sound and Word Entry Assessment. We use this data to assign them to *Read Write Inc.* groups. 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 tracker to monitor the rate at which they are making progress. We can also easily identify those who joined the programme later.

We aim for all children to be accurate and speedy readers by the time they enter Key Stage 2.

We have high expectations of our pupils' progress.

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 minutes every day, using the *Read Write Inc.* programme. For some children with special educational needs and / or disabilities they require a specific whole word reading programme such as 'Words First' to support them in developing their reading skills. If a child arrives in Key Stage 2 reading below their chronological age or with English as an additional language they are taught *Read Write Inc.* Phonics until they too catch up with their peers.

By the end of Key Stage 1, most our pupils are able to read aloud age-appropriate texts accurately and with sufficient speed for comprehension. This means that we can focus on developing their comprehension, preparing them well for transition to Key Stage 2. Their good decoding skills mean

that they have a sound strategy for decoding unfamiliar words when they come across them at whatever stage or in any subject, even into secondary school.

We know from our tracking that our pupils who are eligible for the pupil premium have made progress in line with that of our other pupils or are catching up quickly.

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.

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). Slower progress pupils and those with specific SEN are taught in small teaching groups.

Reading at Home

We support pupils to select appropriate books to take home, depending on what support they might receive at home. Stories and new vocabulary are explained and discussed so all pupils have access to the books they read. Pupils take home familiar picture books so that they can re-tell the story out loud and recall details and vocabulary. Parents are made aware of the schools' expectations regarding daily reading at home which supports Early Reading as well as Reading for Pleasure.

Quality of teaching and pupils' progress

The Headteacher and Reading Leader monitor pupils' progress together until every child can read. No child is left behind to struggle.

We may record lesson observations and provide individual feedback and support where necessary. We also ensure our staff have access to high quality coaching and training to ensure skills are maintained.

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Shared vision

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

The role of the reading leader is critical. Alongside the headteacher, the reading leader drives the teaching of *Read Write Inc.* Phonics.

The reading leader's roles include:

- ensuring that our teaching of reading is of the highest quality and that all our pupils make progress.

- ensuring pupils in the 'lower progress' group are making good progress and organising one-to-one tutoring for the pupils who need extra support.
- Grouping of the children for some activities, including phonics, i.e. at the same reading level
- providing further training (through master classes, coaching/ observation and face-to-face feedback) Teachers alert the reading 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 may teach a small group of pupils at the same reading level.

Parents and Carers

Parents are made aware of how we teach phonics and Early reading through workshops available on the schools private YouTube channel. Individual support can also be given if requested.

Equal Opportunities

We will ensure all children have equal access to the curriculum, regardless of gender, race or ability. Children with specific reading needs (such as speech and hearing difficulties) will be identified and supported through intervention programmes in school. The books which our children read will be chosen carefully so that issues related to equal opportunities are handled sensitively. The interests of individual children will be taken into consideration when reading activities and materials are selected. We will ensure that the books and literature available to children represent as wide a range of cultures as possible.