

# Phonics and Early Reading Policy

## Intent

At Colham Manor Primary School, we believe that every child has the ability to read accurately and fluently with good comprehension regardless of backgrounds, needs or abilities. We believe that it is essential that all children develop and embed the necessary skills to enable them to learn to read effectively and quickly and be able to transfer these skills to a broad range of situations and lifelong learning. This is why we teach Read Write Inc.

We are proud to offer the pupils a text rich learning environment where imagination and creativity can be fuelled. Through our rigorous Read, Write Inc phonics curriculum, we ensure pupils develop the skills and knowledge they need to develop as confident readers who have a love of books. As a result, all our children are able to tackle any unfamiliar words as they read. At Colham Manor Primary School, we also model the application of the alphabetic code through phonics in shared reading and writing, both inside and outside of the phonics lesson and across the curriculum.

We have a strong focus on language development for our children because we know that speaking and listening are crucial skills for reading and writing in all subjects. At Colham Manor, we consider reading as the gateway to all learning that will enable children to **'Aspire'**, **'Achieve'** and **'Thrive'**, ensuring equitable futures for all children.

## Implementation

### Foundations for Phonics - Early Reading Programme

We provide a balance of child-led and adult-led experiences for all children to 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
- attention to high-quality language.

**Rhyme Time:** At Colham Manor we recognise the importance of hearing and using rhyme, rhythm and repetition to help children develop early literacy skills. Rhyme time is a designated time of the day to share nursery rhymes, action songs and percussion music. It is fun, interactive and noisy! We encourage children to listen carefully to the sounds in words, honing their auditory discrimination skills and focus on sound repetition to encourage children to repeat sounds and patterns, reinforcing their grasp of word sounds.

**Story Sacks:** We use story sacks to stimulate language development and make reading an enjoyable, memorable and multi-sensory experience for all children. Each story sack contains an array of educational toys, puppets, masks, games and books. Story sacks provide an opportunity for play alongside reading and help bring stories to life. Incorporating these resources into learning and play helps us to promote language, listening, talking and attention skills especially in the Early Years.

**Let's Communicate:** We know that children's attainment in the early years can have a lasting impact on their future health and educational achievements. This is particularly important for children's communication & language development as this area underpins all other aspects of learning & development. We believe that language is at the heart of their thinking & learning and creates the foundations on which literacy is built upon. Our Let's Communicate programme supports the following skills;

- Attention & Listening
- Social & Interaction Skills
- Understanding Language
- Expressive Language through sentence building
- Vocabulary
- Speech Pronunciation and Fluency Skills

## Read Write Inc

Read Write Inc (RWInc.) is a Systematic Synthetic Phonics programme which helps all children learn to read fluently and at speed so they can focus on developing their skills in comprehension, vocabulary and spelling. The programme is designed for children aged 4-7. However, at Colham Manor we begin the programme in Nursery for children who are ready and will continue teaching RWInc. to children beyond the age of 7 if they still need support with their reading.

The RWInc. programme for early readers is strongly focussed on a rigorous and sequential approach to teaching phonics and is combined with a sharp focus on ensuring children acquire a wide vocabulary, addressing identified vocabulary deficit. This provides children with the foundations for future learning. At all stages, reading attainment is assessed and gaps are addressed quickly and effectively for all pupils. Reading books align closely to the phonics knowledge pupils are taught when they are learning to read. When children have proceeded beyond reading grey books which is the highest level of book within the programme, they will progress onto using the Accelerated Reader programme.

### *In RWInc. 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
- Spell quickly and easily by segmenting the sounds in words
- Acquire good handwriting

### *What might you typically see?*

Children are taught in homogenous groups by fully trained staff across mixed age groups. During daily RWInc. lessons, children are introduced to a new sound daily and practise reading and spelling words containing the new sound. Pupils have frequent practice in reading high frequency words with irregular spellings – common exception words to improve their sight-reading ability and children learn a simple alphabetic code followed later by a more complex code. Simple mnemonics help them to rapidly learn sounds and the letter or groups of letters they need to represent them, which is especially useful for pupils at risk of making slower progress. Children are introduced to fully decodable Story Books and given time to practise their phonics and decoding skills to inform their reading. A strong focus with these books is rereading for fluency and expression. Teachers model early comprehension skills and develop these through planned discussions. Fully decodable 'Book bag books' that match pupils' increasing knowledge of phonics and common exception words alongside Story Books read in RWInc. lessons are sent home to consolidate learning and help improve fluency.

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 at their own level of spelling knowledge every day. 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.

### ***How the school intervenes swiftly to help those having difficulty to make sure that they keep up.***

Children are assessed regularly to identify any gaps in their learning. The Phonics Leader is responsible for identifying children who are not making expected progress and planning for appropriate interventions to help them to keep up this may include;

- Afternoon 10-minute 1:1 or small group speed sound sessions
- Fast Track Tutoring Sessions for identified children working below age related expectations
- Spotlight positioning in class
- Targeted conversation with parent signposting and supporting with resources that can be used at home
- Pupils are provided with extra practice reading books for use at home and in school
- The same procedures, resources and mantras, but in smaller steps with more repetition, so that every child secures their learning.

### ***What opportunities are there for consolidating knowledge and skills?***

Each lesson reviews previously taught sounds and checks retention through reading and spelling. Every RWInc. lesson involves whole group word level reading of new vocabulary before reading decodable phonics Story Books with partners. Reading teachers listen to all children read with their partner for informal assessment of skills. We expect discussions between the reading teacher and the Phonics Leader to start as soon as any concerns are raised and for the reading leader to work closely with the reading teacher to plan interventions quickly.

### ***Making a Strong Start in Reception***

Children will read daily in their Read Write Inc, Phonics lesson from day one in Reception. At least once a week they will share a new book, revise their sounds and their reading pack individually with their teacher. When the RWInc. programme begins in September, lessons are 20 minutes long and taught in whole class groupings in the Reception classes and involve small groups where letterformation and oral blending is taught. Teachers will use the 'Strong Start Tracker' to track pupils progress in sound recognition. Identified pupils working below expectation will receive intervention from the Autumn Term.

Children will be grouped according to their ability across their year group, once they have settled into Reception after the Autumn half term. In January, Reception children will mix with their peers in KS1.

### ***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.
- Every teacher has their own set of resources and a space to teach their group
- The phonics leader is present during phonics sessions and supports teaching
- The phonics leader provides training sessions to ensure staff are well trained and consistency is evident across the teaching of phonics.

## Home Reading:

Each week every child in Reception - Year 2 (who are still on the phonics scheme) will take home the following:

- Coloured Story Book
- Book Bag Book
- Reading for Pleasure Book

Weekly Virtual Classroom links for at home phonics lessons are also sent home on Seesaw Weekly. Pupils in Year 1 and those in Year 2 resitting the Phonics Screening check are also provided with additional phonics support to practise at home. Pupils who have completed the phonics programme will take home a reading for pleasure book and a book in line with their ZPD (please see information about our Accelerated Reading Programme).

## Additional reading support for vulnerable children and the lowest 20%:

- Children who are receiving additional phonics Keep-up sessions read their reading practice book to an adult daily.
- Pupils who are in the lowest 20% of reading in each year group are read to an adult daily.

## Talk Through Stories & Vocabulary Time

As part of our whole school phonics programme (RWInc) we teach Talk Through Stories and Vocabulary Time in Reception to the Autumn term in Year 2. Talk Through Stories is for four to six-year-old children. It is especially for children who do not come from a language-rich home. We use Talk Through Stories to extend and deepen children's comprehension and vocabulary.

In Story week, we help children to get to know the story well: the plot, the characters, and their actions and motives. In Vocabulary week, we focus on eight words from the story. These are words that children are unlikely to hear in everyday conversation but are likely to come across in stories. Children's understanding of each word is then developed in the context of their everyday lives.

## Reading for Pleasure

- 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 the children at Colham Manor 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 EYFS and KS1, children have access to the reading corner every day in their free flow time and the books are continually refreshed.
- The school library is made available for classes to use. Children across the school have regular opportunities to engage with a wide range of Reading for Pleasure events (book fairs, author visits and workshops, national events etc).

## Impact

### Formative Assessment

The Phonics Leader conducts regular learning walks to identify those children whose progress has either slowed or accelerated, allowing for fluidity between groups. Any child whose progress has slowed will be identified for extra intervention to allow them to keep up with their group, daily within class to identify

children needing Keep-up support and weekly in the Review lesson to assess gaps, address these immediately and secure fluency of GPCs, words and spellings.

### **Summative Assessment**

At the end of every half term, every child is assessed to assess progress, to identify gaps in learning that need to be addressed, to identify any children needing additional support and to plan the Keepup support that they need.

Mock phonic screening completed at regular intervals for early identification of pupils requiring Phonics intervention. People who do not meet the required standard in the Year 1 phonic screening check will continue to receive intensive phonic intervention and be rescreened in Year 2. Assessment assesses the child's understanding of:

- Recognition of graphemes
- Recognition of split digraphs
- Ability to orally blend
- Ability to blend and read words (including alien words)
- Ability to use instant blending for reading with fluency

For non-verbal pupils or pupils with SEND, RWInc. 'Small Steps Tracker' is used to assess and monitor progress.

### **Statutory Assessment**

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