

# ASKERN LITTLEMOOR

# INFANT ACADEMY



# Phonics & Early Reading

# Policy



Policy Updated	March 2020
Next Review	March 2022

# **ASKERN LITTLEMOOR INFANT ACADEMY**

## **PHONICS & EARLY READING POLICY**

'The most important thing a school can do for its pupils- and for society- is to teach them to read and write well.'

(Sir Kevan Collins, Chief Executive, Education Endowment Foundation)

### **Intent**

At Askern Littlemoor Infant Academy, our shared vision is that every child learns to read quickly and continues to read – widely and often. We are proud to offer the pupils a text rich learning environment where imagination and creativity can be fuelled.

Through our rigorous phonics curriculum, we ensure pupils develop the skills and knowledge they need to develop as confident readers who have a love of books. Through reading in particular, pupils have a chance to develop culturally, emotionally, intellectually, socially and spiritually. Literature, especially, plays a key role in such development. Reading also enables pupils both to acquire knowledge and to build on what they already know.

All the skills of language are essential to participating fully as a member of society; only pupils who learn to speak, read and write fluently and confidently are able to effectively participate in wider society.

To achieve this, we ensure that:

- there is a sharp focus on ensuring that younger children gain the phonics knowledge and language comprehension necessary to read and spell
- reading is prioritised to allow pupils to access the full curriculum offer
- a rigorous, sequential approach to the reading curriculum develops pupils' fluency, confidence and enjoyment in reading
- at all stages, reading attainment is assessed and gaps are addressed quickly and effectively for all pupils
- at the early stages of learning to read, read reading materials are closely matched to the learners' phonics

### **Implementation**

Throughout Early Years, activities concentrate on developing pupils' speaking and listening skills, phonological awareness and the key skills of oral blending, segmenting and manipulation. These experiences are intended to be used as part of a broad and rich language curriculum that has speaking and listening at its centre, links language with physical and practical experiences, and provides an environment rich in print and abundant in opportunities to engage with high quality books. This phase paves the way for pupils to make a good start when introduced to our *Read Write Inc.* Phonics programme.

### ***Read Write Inc. Phonics***

The programme is for:

- Children in F1/F2 to Year 2 who are learning to read and write

In *Read Write Inc. Phonics* children:

- 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
- Spell quickly and easily by segmenting the sounds in words
- Acquire good handwriting.

In addition, we teach children 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 children's poor articulation, or problems with blending or alphabetic code knowledge.

We group children homogeneously, according to their progress in reading rather than their writing. This is because it is known that children's progress in writing will lag behind progress in reading, especially for those whose motor skills are less well developed.

In F2 we emphasise the alphabetic code. The children 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 children at risk of making slower progress. This learning is consolidated daily. Children have frequent practice in reading high frequency words with irregular spellings – common exception words.

We make sure that children 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 children; they are soon able to read these texts for themselves.

Embedding the alphabetic code early on means that children 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.

Children write at the level of their spelling knowledge. Our aim is for children 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.

### **Professional development**

A key element of *Read Write Inc.* is consistent whole-school practice, underpinned by appropriate professional development. The head teacher, all the teachers and teaching

assistants are trained to teach reading. All staff have attended Phonics training (September 2019) and the trainer has returned to support us on subsequent development days. We hold at least one development day every year to ensure we are aware of up-to-date practice. The reading leader works with staff to monitor the quality of teaching and to provide coaching for staff (teachers and teaching assistants).

### **The role of the Reading Leader**

The reading leader has a critical role, driving the teaching of *Read Write Inc.* Phonics, ensuring that all children progress through the programme by the end of Term 1 Year 2.

Specific responsibilities include:

- Ensuring that our teaching of reading is of the highest quality and that all our children make progress.
- Ensuring children in the 'lower progress' group are making good progress and organising one-to-one tutoring for the children who need extra support
- Keeping the groups homogeneous, i.e. at the same reading level
- Providing further training (through masterclasses, coaching/ observation and face-to-face feedback)

### **Early reading**

As pupils start their reading journey they will be reading materials are closely matched to the learners' phonics knowledge. Take home reading books will mirror or supplement the phonics texts using in daily phonics lessons; these books are part of our ReadWriteInc phonics programme and will ensure that the children are presented with reading material to match their phonic knowledge and improve their fluency and reading confidence.

In this way, pupils will be encouraged to use their phonics skills and knowledge as their primary reading strategy. As pupils find that they can decode words quickly and independently, they will read more and more so that the number of words they can read automatically builds up. Increasing the pace of reading is an important objective. Pupils will be encouraged to read aloud as well as silently for themselves.

This process culminates in a shift from learning to read to reading to learn. Pupils then move on to reading both for pleasure and for information.

In the early stages of reading, children also take home stories and non-fiction that they cannot yet read for themselves but which adults can share with them.

### **Impact**

#### **Assessing and tracking progress**

Throughout the teaching sequence, teacher assessment is used to identify pupils who are not grasping 75-80% of new learning. These pupils are targeted for rapid intervention.

In Reception, pupils are assessed at least half-termly on the phonics progress they are making.

In Year 1, a mock phonics screening is carried out on a half-termly basis to identify individual gaps in knowledge and understanding, as well as any systemic gaps.

We use the RWInc Phonic Tracker from Reception to Year 2 to support our analysis of individual pupil's progress.

We assess all children following Read Write Inc. *Phonics* using the Entry Assessment. This gives us a very good indication of how well they are making progress relative to their starting points. We do this for all children, whenever they join us, so we can track all of them effectively.

We record their starting date on the programme 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 the majority of children to complete the programme by the end of the Autumn Term in Year 2.

As pupils begin to learn to read more fluently, they move to banded books and their progress through the bands is carefully tracked and analysed. PM Benchmarking is used to identify particular strengths and weaknesses and next steps.

### **National Phonics Screening**

All Y1 pupils sit a national phonics screening check which is carried out in June each year. Pupils who do not attain the national standard will repeat the screening in Year 2. This is to ensure that pupils have secured a secure foundation on which to build their reading skills.

### **Equality of Opportunity**

We will adjust and adapt the delivery of our reading programme to meet the needs of all learners and to ensure that every child gains the building blocks they need to become a successful reader.

Teachers set high expectations for all pupils. They will use appropriate assessment to set ambitious targets and plan challenging work for all groups, including:

- More able pupils
- Pupils with low prior attainment
- Pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds
- Pupils with SEND
- Pupils with English as an additional language (EAL)

Teachers will plan lessons so that pupils with SEN and/or disabilities can study every National Curriculum subject, wherever possible, and ensure that there are no barriers to every pupil achieving. Teachers will also take account of the needs of pupils whose first language is not English. Lessons will be planned so that teaching opportunities help pupils to develop their English, and to support pupils to take part in all subjects.

We recognise that each child has their own starting point upon entry to every year group and progress is measured in line with these starting points to ensure every child can achieve and celebrate success. Staff are fully aware of the differing groups of learners and vulnerable children in their class and teachers plan and teach personalised English lessons which focus on the particular needs of each child.

**Monitoring**

This policy is monitored by the governing body and will be reviewed bi-annually, or before if necessary.

The delivery of the English curriculum will be monitored by the English lead along with other SLT through drop in observations, book and work scrutiny and learning walks. Pupil attainment and progress will be monitored by the head teacher at termly pupil progress meetings with class teachers. Data will be analysed at cohort, class and pupil level by the English and Foundation leads and the Head teacher.