

## **Rationale for Reading**

### **Intent**

At Bramley C of E (VA) Infant and Nursery School, we view early reading as the pinnacle of the National Curriculum. We promote a love of reading and this is at the heart of everything we do. Early success can lead to greater prospects in adulthood, preparing children for a variety of paths and walks of life. With this in mind, we aim to build confident and motivated readers - readers who feel passionate about books, readers who immerse themselves in storytelling and readers who are enthused by the texts they see.

To achieve this, our reading curriculum follows the systematic synthetic phonics program, *Read Write Inc. Phonics*. The teachings and theory of the program underpin our approach to decoding text, reading comprehension, application to spelling and early writing skills.

### **Implementation**

#### **Phonological awareness**

Prior to teaching phonics, children in Nursery focus on stories, rhymes, songs, poems and jingles. They also enjoy rhythmic and musical activity.

Once in Pre-school, children follow a structured program of phonological awareness. This is based on phase one of the Letters and Sounds (2007) publication by Primary National Strategy. Starting with sound discrimination, children explore environmental sounds, instrumental sounds and body percussion. Rhythm and rhyme help children to recognise word similarities and differences. Alliteration explores word structure, as well as a focus on voice sounds. The final aspect of phonological awareness is oral blending and segmenting, stepping towards reading skills.

#### **Phonics**

The *RWI Phonics* scheme teaches three progressive sets of sounds through Reception and Year 1. Set 1 is mainly made from single graphemes, moving to digraphs and trigraphs in set 2 and set 3.

In every lesson, we aim to improve the decoding skills of every learner. This is done through the teaching of new graphemes, review of learnt graphemes and application to text. Lessons promote the use of partner work and peer learning, particularly as children move onto decodable storybooks (fiction and non-fiction).

RWI have a clear set of signals and routines that can be utilised in other subjects/school life. *Fred Talk* and *Pinny Times* are continuously done throughout the school day to help children keep up with their peers.

Phonics lessons begin in Reception as soon as the baseline assessment is complete, starting with 20-minute sessions. This progresses to 60 minutes by the end of the year, delivered in small inputs across the day. In Year 1, lessons are 55-65 minutes. Once off scheme in Year 2, children progress onto *Rigby Star* and *National Geographic* comprehension schemes.

#### **Common Exception Words (CEWs)**

CEWs are introduced early in Reception and continue to expand through the RWI storybooks. Some words are considered CEWs until further sounds are learnt (e.g. 'for').

#### **Grouping**

Children are grouped according to *RWI phonics* assessments and taught within their own year groups. Groups are homogenous so children can progress quickly. SEND children and lower attaining children are taught in small groups with broken down steps. They have

regular access to direct teaching from the class teacher, and practise/rehearse with support staff.

### **Decodable books and school library**

Following advice in *The Reading Framework (July 2021)*, the school's decodable library is organised to match the *RWI Phonics* scheme.

“...Schools should invest in books that have been carefully structured in cumulative steps for children learning to read, so that they can decode every word as their knowledge of the alphabetic code increases. These books are often referred to simply as ‘decodable’ books”. *The Reading Framework (July 2021)*

All *RWI storybooks* are decodable by learnt grapheme-phoneme correspondence and CEWs. The storybooks are used as a part of classroom phonics teaching, providing a further link to reading at home. The school's extended library is also matched to the decodable sounds and sets, to give further enrichment and exposure to other styles of texts. These include fiction and non-fiction varieties.

In addition to decodable books, children also take a *sharing book* home. This is to be read by an adult, fostering a love of reading and introduction to new vocabulary.

### **Sharing books, reading spine and vocabulary**

To develop a love of reading and to extend vocabulary knowledge, children are read to every day in school by an adult. The texts are both poetry and prose, usually extended further than children's decoding attainment, which is why we call them *sharing books* throughout the school.

To ensure this exposure is progressive, each year group follows a core reading spine. These books include texts that are: narratively complex, non-linear time sequences, archaic language, figurative/symbolic or resistant. They are also diverse in context, to ensure children are exposed to a variety of races, cultures and families.

These story times are interactive, questioning children what they predict will happen next, inferring what is meant by a statement, or summarising what has happened. The words explored, help to strengthen tier 2 and tier 3 vocabulary knowledge.

### **Reading for Pleasure**

To create readers who are passionate about books, we aim to instil a love for reading as soon as a child enters the school. We dedicate time within our curriculum and play to explore children's interests and passions in books. We open up new worlds, by facilitating character role-play, exploring different themes, and establishing interactive storytelling. In turn, this helps children to understand and develop their identity and awareness of the world around them.

### **Lowest 20% and SEND**

The *RWI phonics* scheme emphasises the need to “keep up, not catch-up”, in line with *The Reading Framework (July 2021)*. With this in mind, the 20% lowest attaining children are given directed teaching by their highly trained class teachers, followed up with rehearsal with well-trained teaching assistants.

For the lowest 20% in Reception, one-to-one tutoring is delivered daily, rooted in the *RWI phonics* systematic process. For KS1, the *Literacy for All* intervention and tutoring program produced by Surrey County Council is implemented with the lowest 20%. It is designed to assess frequently and target phonic skills, sight vocabulary and reading fluency. For consistency, this is delivered daily.

For children who are not ready for phonics, the *NELI* program is delivered (in Reception), focussing on phonological awareness and literacy. For children in Pre-school, we track

speaking and listening development, supporting the lowest 20% with the *Early Talk* boost intervention scheme.

### **Drama**

Communication and language skills are an integral part to reading and understanding the world around us. This is why we also implement opportunities for drama throughout EYFS and KS1. Through improvisation, devising, and script work, children begin to share, respond and develop strong comprehension skills.

### **Impact**

The school's teaching of reading is measured and assessed in a variety of ways. This informs the impact of our work and continuous reflection moving forward.

### **Assessment**

We review data from statutory assessments; The Reception Baseline Assessment and The Phonics Screening in Year 1. In addition, we perform RWI phonics assessments every half term. This determines teaching groups and progression targets through the scheme. They also provide data on fluency and comprehension.

### **Observations**

To ensure the teaching of reading is consistent across the school, we observe phonics lessons and group reading in each class. This is a collaborative process, where teachers can voice if things work or do not work for their particular cohort. Pupil engagement also forms a part of observation, where some are asked to explain what they have learnt and what they need to do next.

### **Pupil Voice**

To enrich our curriculum design, we ask children for feedback. Each term, we meet with a selection of children from each year group. Children tell us the things they enjoy about reading and things they might like to try moving forward.