



# Thorpepark Academy

## Phonics Policy



1	Summary	Phonics Policy			
2	Responsible person	Rio Spendlow			
3	Accountable SLT member	Caroline Knight Executive Principal			
4	Applies to	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> All staff <input type="checkbox"/> Support staff <input type="checkbox"/> Teaching staff			
5	Who has overseen development of this policy	Zoe Rucroft			
6	Who has been consulted and recommended policy for approval	Executive Principal and governors			
7	Approved by and date	Caroline Knight Executive Principal, September 2025			
8	Version number	3			
9	Available on	Every	<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N	Trust website Academy website SharePoint	<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Y <input type="checkbox"/> N
10	Related documents (if applicable)				
11	Disseminated to	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Trustees/governors <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> All staff <input type="checkbox"/> Support staff <input type="checkbox"/> Teaching staff			
12	Date of implementation (when shared)	September 2025			
13	Consulted with recognised trade unions	<input type="checkbox"/> Y <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> N			



## Contents

1. Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised .....	4
2. Aims and Objectives .....	4
3. Phonics Ambition .....	4
4. Planning.....	4
5. Phonics intent.....	4
6. Phonics implementation.....	5
7. Phonics impact .....	8
8. Role of the subject leader .....	9

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## 1. Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised

At Thorpepark Academy, we follow *Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised* phonics programme across EYFS, Key Stage 1 and for those children who require phonics teaching in Key Stage 2. Our principal aim is to develop children's phonological awareness, ability to decode, ability to segment and blend words and read tricky words on sight; to become fluent readers.

## 2. Aims and Objectives

The national curriculum for English aims to ensure that all pupils:

- read easily, fluently and with good understanding.
- develop the habit of reading widely and often, for both pleasure and information.
- acquire a wide vocabulary, an understanding of grammar and knowledge of linguistic conventions for reading, writing and spoken language.

## 3. Phonics Ambition

Our ambition is to enable all pupils to be able to read with fluency and prosody; and comprehend what they have read.

- Pupils develop strategies that will enable them to become fluent readers.
- Pupils develop and build their speaking and listening skills to prepare them for learning to read and the development of their phonic knowledge and skills.
- Pupils are proficient in reading using fluency and prosody.
- Pupils show a love of reading and reading for enjoyment.
- Pupils demonstrate a wide vocabulary.

## 4. Planning

Phonics and early reading plans follow the Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised teaching sequence. Books are phonically decodable and are matched to current phonics learning.

## 5. Phonics intent

### Phonics (reading and spelling)

At Thorpepark Academy, we believe that all our children can become fluent readers and writers. Therefore, we teach reading through *Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised*, which is a systematic and synthetic phonics programme.



High quality phonics sessions are taught daily from the earliest point. Foundations for Phonics is taught throughout Nursery and concentrates on developing children's speaking and listening skills and their ability to orally blend and segment. This lays the foundations for phase two. In Reception, we 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, all our children can tackle any unfamiliar words as they read. At Thorpepark Academy, 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.

### Comprehension

At Thorpepark Academy, 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.

The Phonics and Early Reading leaders continually monitor and provide support to all staff, so everyone teaches with fidelity to the *Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised* programme.

## **6. Phonics implementation**

### Foundations for Phonics in Nursery

We provide a balance of child-led and adult-led experiences for all children that meet the curriculum expectations for 'Communication and Language' and 'Literacy'. These include:

- sharing high-quality stories and poems within the Nursery setting and at home through our 'Bedtime Reading' scheme
- learning a range of nursery rhymes and action rhymes
- activities that develop focused listening and attention, including oral blending
- attention to high-quality language
- Implementing the Foundations for Phonics programme through Little Wandle's Rhyme Time
- Introduction of phase 2 phonics where readiness is shown, particularly for those pupils who spend 4 and 5 terms in the Nursery



We ensure Nursery children are well prepared to begin learning grapheme-phoneme correspondences (GPCs) in Reception.

### Daily Phonics lessons in Reception and Year 1

- We teach Phonics for 30 minutes a day. 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 with fluency and accuracy.
  - Children in Year 1 review Phase 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 who needs additional practice has daily Keep-up support, taught by a fully trained adult. Keep-up lessons match the structure of class teaching, and use the same procedures, resources and mantras, but in smaller steps with more repetition, so that every child secures their learning. If gaps remain persistent, those specific children are given daily Catch-up intervention using the Little Wandle guidance.

We timetable daily phonics lessons for any child in Year 2 who is not fully fluent at 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. We use the Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised assessments to identify the gaps in their phonic knowledge and teach to these using the Keep-up and Catch-up resources – at pace.

If any child in Year 3 to 6 has gaps in their phonic knowledge when reading or writing, we plan phonics 'catch-up' lessons to address specific reading/writing gaps. These short, sharp lessons last 10 minutes and take place at least three times a week.

If any child has a specific learning difficulty which prevents them from learning to read using a phonics approach, a specialist programme is implemented under the guidance of the SENDCo. These sessions focus on multi-sensory approaches with more opportunities for learning words by sight. These lessons are planned and delivered by trained staff and overseen by the phonics lead.

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

We teach children to read through reading practice sessions three times a week.



These:

- are taught by a fully trained adult to small groups of approximately six children.
- use books matched to the children's secure phonic knowledge.
- 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
- prosody: teaching children to read with understanding and expression
- comprehension: teaching children to understand the text.

In Reception, these sessions start after their first assessment or when they show readiness. Children who are not yet decoding have daily additional blending practice in small groups, so that they quickly learn to blend and can begin to read books.

#### Teaching reading: Reading fluency sessions

In Year 2 and Key Stage 2, we continue to teach reading in this way for any children who still need to practise reading with decodable books. A fluency assessment is used at the end of Year 1 and for those who have finished their phonic journey in Year 2 and Key Stage 2 to ascertain if pupils are ready to exit the Little Wandle phonics programme and related reading cycle. Once a suitable level of fluency and accuracy has been shown through assessment, pupils will then move on reading sessions with fluency books then onto whole class guiding reading sessions.

#### Home reading

Practice books are taken home to ensure success is shared with the family.

- Homework is sent home each week to consolidate and practise the GPCS taught that week at home.
- Weekly pronunciation and blending videos recorded and shared with parents.
- Reading for pleasure books also go home for parents to share and read to children, as part of our 'Bedtime Reading' scheme.
- 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 Keepup sessions read their reading practice book to an adult regularly.
- Daily 1:1 reading support session for those children who need it, including the lowest 20% and children with SEN.

### Ensuring consistency and pace of progress

- Every teacher and support staff 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 Early Reading Leader and SLT use the Audit and Prompt cards to regularly monitor and observe teaching; they use the summative data to identify children who need additional support and gaps in learning.

All children have access to a wide range of phonetically decodable home/school reading books, both online and in hard copy.

## **7. Phonics 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 is used:
  - daily within class to identify children needing Keep-up support.
  - weekly in the Review lesson to assess gaps, address these immediately and secure fluency of GPCs, words, and spellings.
- Summative assessment is used:
- every six weeks to assess progress, to identify gaps in learning that need to be addressed, to identify any children needing additional support and to plan the Keep-up and Catch-up support that they need.
- by SLT and scrutinised through the Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised online assessment tracker, to narrow attainment gaps between different groups of children and so that any additional support for teachers can be put into place.

### Statutory assessment Phonics Screening Check

- Children in Year 1 sit the Phonics Screening Check.



- Any child not passing the check re-sits it in Year 2.

### Ongoing assessment for catch-up

- Children in Year 2 to 6 are assessed through their teacher's ongoing formative assessment as well as through the half-termly Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised summative assessments.

## **8. Role of the subject leader**

It is the responsibility of the subject leader to:

- Monitor and evaluate phonics and early reading provision across the school to include: lesson observations, learning walks, pupil interviews, monitoring of decodable books, managing resources, staff support
- Pupil progress meetings
- Analysis of data
- Taking the lead in policy development
- Auditing and supporting colleagues in their CPD
- Leading CPD
- Regular meetings with other phonics and early reading co-ordinators
- Purchase and organise resources, keeping up to date with recent phonics and early reading developments and disseminating to staff
- Termly meetings with the link Governor for phonics and early reading

The subject leader produces an annual action plan for the development of Phonics and also reviews impact termly; identifies next steps and any CPD needs. This working document is shared with Governors annually. The subject leader will also produce and narrate a presentation about their subject for the Governors bi-annually.

This policy will be reviewed as and when required.