Where Learning Blossoms

Thorney Close Primary School

Phonics and Early Reading Policy

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'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)

Introduction

This policy outlines the teaching and learning of phonics and early reading skills at Thorney Close Primary school. The objective of this policy is to give direction to staff with regard to teaching children early reading skills.

At Thorney Close Primary School we use the Read, Write Inc. (RWI) programme, developed by Ruth Miskin. A consistent, rigorous and dynamic literacy program, it provides every child with the skills and knowledge needed to be able to read by the age of six. It enables our teachers to provide our children with a confident start to develop their literacy and language as evidence suggests that fidelity to a well-structured and systematic phonics scheme is the best, and fastest, way of teaching children to decode.

Read Write Inc., is a method of learning centred on letter sounds and phonics, blending them together to read words as well as using these learnt sounds to support their spelling when writing. Read, Write Inc. also supports children's ability to read high frequency, common exception words as well as teaching the skills required for effective comprehension of a text including vocabulary knowledge, reading fluency and inference and deduction skills.

1. Intent

At Thorney Close Primary School, our shared vision is that every child learns to read quickly and continues to read – widely and often as well as for pleasure. We want all children to be able to comprehend be fluent and demonstrate prosody when reading. We aim for all of our children to not just to meet the statutory requirements, but to develop an enjoyment of reading which will stay with children as they move on to the next stage of education and life.

Using Read Write Inc., we aim to teach children to decode texts effortlessly so that they can put all their energy into comprehending what they read. With this, we hope that every child will grow in confidence as well as develop true pleasure and enjoyment through reading. We understand that reading enables children both to acquire knowledge and to build on what they already know. We also understand that the skills of language are essential to participating fully as a member of society; only children 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 our younger children gain the phonics knowledge and language comprehension skills necessary to read as well as spelling effortlessly so that they can write fluently, accurately, and with confidence.

Through Read, Write Inc lessons children will:

- learn 70+ sounds and the corresponding letter/letter groups using simple picture prompts
- learn to read words using 'Fred Talk' (sounding words out) to start, then as they progress without 'Fred Talk'
- read stories featuring words they have learned to sound out
- show that they comprehend the stories by answering questions
- learn to write the letters/letter groups which represent 70+ sounds.
- learn to spell words by saying the sounds in 'Fred Talk'

- write simple and complex sentences

2. Implementation

The RWI scheme advocates that phonics lessons should be delivered using the 5 Ps:

- Pace – good pace is essential to the lesson
- Praise/Positive Teaching – children learn more effectively in a positive climate
- Purpose – every part of the lesson has a specific purpose
- Participation - a strong feature of RWI lessons is partner work (based on research which states that 70% of learning comes from partner talk)
- Passion – this is a very prescriptive programme.

3. Nursery

Beginning our rigorous phonics curriculum from an early age, we ensure children develop the skills and knowledge they need to become strong readers. Throughout Nursery (and into Reception), activities concentrate on developing our children's 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 texts. This phase paves the way for children to progress into our Read, Write Inc. scheme during the summer term of Nursery (for the majority of children).

4. Reception and KS1

Staff continue to work on pre-phonics skills begun in Nursery (e.g. rhyming and listening skills, etc.) on starting Reception, before quickly beginning the RWI programme. Children continue with this programme throughout Reception, Year 1 and into Year 2 (for some children).

In Read Write Inc. Phonics, children are taught to:

- 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 strong handwriting through focused grapheme formation.

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.

In Reception, the children rapidly learn sounds and the letter or groups of letters (diagraphs) 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. Throughout Reception and Year 1, children have daily phonics sessions so that learning is consolidated. Interactive, engaging phonics sessions are taught, wherever possible, to the whole class and children also have frequent practice in reading high frequency words with irregular spellings – common exception words. These sessions are then supported by smaller groupings, giving the children the opportunity to practise their grapheme formation, application of segmenting and blending for CVC/CCVC/CVCC words as well as oracy skills.

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.

Re-reading and discussing these books with the teacher supports their increasingly fluent decoding. Children then take these texts and/or additional book bag books from the same level, home to share with their grown-ups at home. 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.

In addition to the RWI texts, teachers read a wide range of stories, poetry and non-fiction books with their children and the children are provided with a text rich learning environment where imagination and creativity can be fuelled.

Once children know a number of sounds and are beginning to read short ditties and books provided by the RWI scheme, we make sure that books 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 and the belief that they are readers.

Children who are at an early stage of reading (either due to their age, developmental level, lack of prior schooling on entry to the school in KS2 or if they are new to English), will take part in daily, one hour long Read, Write Inc. lessons. Children continue to access Read, Write Inc. lessons until assessment shows that they are confidently using 70+ sounds to decode and read both real and 'nonsense' words of multiple syllables.

5. Impact

The impact on children's reading will be monitored in a variety of ways, both formative and summative:

- Children are targeted for rapid intervention during their daily phonics sessions. For those children who staff notice are struggling with specific phonics sounds or to 'keep up' with the rest of their phonics group, short bursts of intervention are given to the children, 1:1 where possible, on the same day.
- Children are assessed using specific RWI assessments every 6 or 7 weeks (at the end of each half term). Children are then regrouped within their classes as a result of these assessments. We use the RWI Phonic Tracker from Reception to Year 2 to support our analysis of individual pupil's progress.
- 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 (See Appendix A). For those children who do not complete the phonics program before the end of KS1, children are supported through our Lightning Squad intervention program.

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.

6. Inclusion

Thorney Close Primary School is committed to providing an inclusive, high quality education for all children. We actively seek to remove barriers to learning, including reading, and to ensure that all children make progress. Our teachers will utilise a range of factors to help all

children access learning. Children with additional needs are taught in very small phonics groups when required.

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. Our team are fully aware of the differing groups of learners and vulnerable children in their class and, although we follow a rigid scheme for phonics, teachers plan and teach personalised phonics lessons which focus on the particular needs of each child where appropriate, for example using the Visual Phonics programme to support our Hearing Impaired children.

Appendix 1 Read Write Inc Teaching Progression

Read Write Inc Teaching Progression

If children are progressing at expected levels, they will learn the following:

	Reception	Year 1	Year 2
Autumn 1	• Teach Set 1 sounds: m a s d t i n p g o c k u b f e l sh h r j v w x y z th ch qu ng nk	• Teach Set 2 sounds: ay ee igh ow oo oo ar or air ir ou oy • Teach reading of words containing these Set 2 sounds. • Build speed of reading words containing Set 1 sounds.	• Continue to teach Set 3 sounds • Teach reading of multisyllabic words containing all sounds. • Build speed of reading words containing Set 3 sounds.
Autumn 2	• Recap any single letter alphabet gaps from the sounds above. • Teach children to blend using single letter alphabet sounds.	• Review all Set 2 sounds • Teach reading of words containing these Set 2 sounds. • Build speed of reading words containing Set 1 sounds, particularly WT 1.6-1.7	• Recap any missing sound gaps and build fluency when reading stories. • Children should complete the programme at end of Aut 2: Children can read stories and passages at a pace of 100 words per minute. They can read all sounds in words, including multisyllabic words, with little or no hesitation.
Spring 1	• Recap Set 1 Special Friends: sh th ch qu ng nk • Secure blending of cvc words using single letter alphabet sounds (WT 1.1-1.5).	• Teach Set 2 sounds, particularly: ar or air ir ou oy • Teach reading of words containing these Set 2 sounds. • Build speed of reading words containing ay ee igh ow oo oo.	
Spring 2	• Recap Set 1 Special Friends: sh th ch qu ng nk • Secure blending of words containing these sounds (WT 1.4-1.6).	• Teach Set 3 sounds: ea, a-e • Teach reading of words containing these Set 3 sounds. • Build speed of reading words containing all Set 2 sounds.	
Summer 1	• Recap Set 1 sound gaps. • Teach blending of words containing consonant blends (WT 1.7).	• Continue to teach Set 3 sounds • Teach reading of words containing these Set 3 sounds. • Build speed of reading words containing all Set 2 and Set 3 sounds.	
Summer 2	• Teach Set 2 sounds: ay ee igh ow oo oo ar or air ir ou oy • Teach reading of words containing these Set 2 sounds. • Build speed of reading words containing Set 1 sounds.	• Continue to teach Set 3 sounds • Teach reading of words containing these Set 3 sounds. • Build speed of reading words containing Set 3 sounds.	
End of Year Expectations	Children can read all Set 1 sounds and some Set 2 sounds in words, including words with consonant blends. They have built speed of reading some of these words and can read them without hesitation.	Children can read all Set 1, 2, 3 sounds in words and can read Set 1 and 2 sounds in words at speed. They can read some Set 3 sounds in words without hesitation. They can read at a pace of 60 words per minute.	