



Dovecotes Primary School

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Phonics and Early Reading Policy

The Context of our School

At Dovecotes Primary School we have a significant proportion of pupil premium pupils (over 50% of the school's total population). Additionally, we have 14% of pupils as SEND and 31% as EAL. Attendance across the school is in line with National Averages. We therefore recognise that it is essential that our approach to teaching phonics and reading is accessible to all learners, regardless of background for our children to be successful throughout their education and future lives.

Our approach to reading is designed to enable all pupils to develop a love of reading through rich and purposeful reading experiences so that they become successful life-long readers. Success as a reader underpins learning in all areas of the curriculum and wider life and therefore is highly valued and prioritised across the curriculum.

Our approach is in line with the aims for English in the national curriculum which promotes high standards of language and literacy by equipping pupils with a strong command of the spoken and written word, whilst developing their love of literature through widespread reading for enjoyment.

At Dovecotes Primary School, we value reading as a crucial life skill. By the time children leave us, they read confidently for meaning and 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.

Because we believe teaching every child to read is so important, we have a Reading Leader who drives the early reading programme in our school. This person is highly skilled at teaching phonics and reading, and they monitor and support our reading team, so that everyone teaches with fidelity to the *RWI* programme.

Intent

Phonics (reading and spelling)

At Dovecotes Primary School we believe that all our children can become fluent readers and writers. We teach reading through *Read Write Inc*, which is a systematic and synthetic phonics programme. We start teaching phonics in Reception and follow the *RWI scheme*, 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 children can tackle any unfamiliar words as they read. At Dovecotes 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. *RWI* offers a consistent approach to phonics teaching, meaning that all pupils see effective, high-quality modelling so that they gain a knowledge of the 44 sounds, and can both read and write them. It provides pupils with texts that are closely matched to their phonic abilities. The Early Reading Leader assess pupils on a half-termly basis, ensuring that

children who require further support receive targeted intervention and those who need stretch and challenge are effectively planned for. The scheme also ensures that the highest number of pupils as possible pass the Phonics Screening Check and can fluently read age-appropriate texts and access and make progress in all curriculum subjects.

Developing Fluency

- During reading sessions, sometimes the children read independently, or in pairs. They will repeat readings of texts to help develop fluency. At times children read paragraphs aloud or read a sentence at a time (oral reading) and sometimes the adults read the text aloud or play an audio version of the text. Children will have the opportunity to read whole texts but will also develop specific skills through carefully chosen extracts.
- We also provide opportunities to read material linked to our wider curriculum, such as Irresistible Learning. This is particularly effective for children who are currently working below age related expectations as it means they are taught in advance some of the vocabulary linked to other curriculum areas.
- We encourage children to read widely across both fiction and non-fiction to develop their knowledge of themselves and the world in which they live, to establish an appreciation and love of reading, and to gain knowledge across the curriculum.

Comprehension

- At Dovecotes Primary School, reading lessons are based around the **DERRIC** models, where D stands for decoding, E is explain (which is centred around vocabulary and word meaning), R is retrieve (where children find information stated in the text), the second R is review and includes skills like summarising and sequencing, I stands for interpret which involves inference skills and C stands for author choice, where pupils are challenged to consider why authors have chosen the techniques that they have.

Implementation

Laying the 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
 - learning a range of nursery rhymes and action rhymes
 - activities that develop focused listening and attention
 - attention to high-quality language.

Daily phonics lessons in Reception and Year 1 and 2

- We teach RWI for 50 minutes a day. In Reception, we build from 10-minute lessons, to the full-length lesson as quickly as possible.
- Children make a strong start in Reception: teaching begins in Week 2 of the Autumn term.
- We follow the [Read Write Inc scheme](#):
 - Children in Reception are taught to read and spell words using Set 1 sounds, and later in reception, Set 2 sounds.
 - Children in Year 1 review Set 2 sounds and are taught to read and spell words using Set 3 sounds.
 - Children in Year 2 review Set 3 sounds and once the child has passed the fluency assessment, they finish the programme.
 - In addition to reading, children complete a range of activities, including sentence writing, comprehension skills and edit and improve.

Phonics next steps

- As soon as children have completed the RWI programme they then move onto 1 hour of whole class reading, focussing on DERRIC skills but never losing the high-quality knowledge of phonics gained in RWI.
- The skills from RWI are carried through in whole class reading and throughout all other lessons.
- We timetable children into daily phonics lessons/interventions for any child in Year 2, 3 or 4 who is not fully fluent at reading or who 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 *RWI* assessments to identify gaps in their phonic knowledge and teach these during their daily lessons and ensure they are taught in small, focussed groups.
- If any child in Years 5 and 6 have gaps in their phonic knowledge when reading or writing, they access *Fresh Start* lessons taught by highly trained RWI/*Fresh Start* teachers. The children are assessed half termly on fluency and once they are ready, they are reintegrated back into whole class reading.

Daily class reading lessons for those children not in RWI

In order to read fluently, children must employ many skills. Good readers use a range of strategies when reading text. Children who are learning to read, or who are having difficulties acquiring this skill, often get 'stuck' when they rely on one or two strategies only. Children need to be taught these different methods in shared reading sessions or when heard by an adult.

- These whole class reading sessions are designed to explicitly develop reading fluency and comprehension for all pupils whilst enjoying a text together. These sessions will support pupils to develop fluent reading capabilities alongside teaching reading comprehension strategies, through modelling and supported practice.
- 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 key reading skills:
 - Decoding and teaching children to read with understanding and expression
 - comprehension: teaching children to understand the text.

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.
- Teachers in reception and KS1 deliver short sharp burst of 'sound review' during 'pinny time' throughout the school day so that children have that consistent exposure to sounds in short, sharp bursts.
- The reading leader is always available for team teach and lesson support.
- The RWI portal videos ensure teachers all have a consistent approach and structure to follow each lesson. These videos are assigned to individuals for their own CPD.
- The Reading Leader and SLT regularly monitor and observe teaching; they use the summative data to identify children who need additional support to address gaps in their learning.
- The reading leader uses set assembly time to deliver group coaching, with specific focuses based on what she has observed during phonics teaching.
- The reading leader delivers whole school early reading training, to ensure all teachers are aware of strategies used in RWI to support decoding and fluency.
- The reading leader ensures all RWI teachers are aware of sounds previously taught and what sounds need to be taught within that colour group – the reading leader then vigorously monitors this is being achieved to a high standard.

Ensuring reading for pleasure – Reading Escape: Developing a love for reading as well as competency

'Reading for pleasure is the single most important indicator of a child's success.' (OECD 2002)

‘Teach a child to read and keep that child reading and you will change everything.’ (Ruth Miskin)

‘The quest to get every child reading for pleasure is not just an optional extra – it’s an imperative.’ (Ruth Miskin)

- We value reading for pleasure highly and work hard as a school to grow our Reading for Pleasure pedagogy.
- Reading starts with enjoying stories. We aim to develop a love of reading in all pupils whether for pleasure or to broaden their knowledge. We will emphasise the importance of books and literature in enabling children to become confident, happy and enthusiastic readers and writers, with all the benefits this brings from the earliest age.
- To further develop a “love of stories” there will be dedicated time every day from Reception to Year 6 where teachers will share and read a text, modelling how to read expressively, highlighting features and prompting thought and curiosity skills with skilfully scaffolded questions.
- We have a carefully chosen spine of literature which outlines a range of books and authors that children will have read to them in each year group, in addition to the rich range of stories and books that teachers select. We choose these books carefully as we want children to experience a wide range of books, including books that reflect the diversity of Dovecotes children and our local community and books that open windows into other worlds and cultures, as well as poetry and nonfiction texts.
- Every key stage has an inviting book collection 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 Nursery/Reception, children have access to the reading corner every day in their free flow time and the books are continually refreshed.
- Children from Y1 onwards have a home reading record. The parent/carer records comments to share with the adults in school and the adults will review these on a regular basis to ensure communication between home and school.
- As the children progress through the school, they are encouraged to write their own comments and keep a list of the books/authors that they have read through the same online platform.
- The school library is made available for classes to use at protected times, including lunch times. Children across the school have regular opportunities to engage with a wide range of Reading for Pleasure events (book fairs and national events etc).

What about the children who find reading difficult?

Readers who are not yet proficient are supported in a range of ways to enable them to develop their fluency and comprehension. The lowest 20% of readers progress is rigorously monitored using adaptations to Quality First Teaching and implementing phonic intervention daily, with a real sense of urgency.

- We aim to ensure every child is challenged at their level. That means, for children who struggle to read, we adapt the activity so they can still meet the lesson objective.
- We have high expectations for all children and would scaffold and support in the short term, putting interventions in place to ensure they do not fall behind their peers in the longer term and so prevent the gap widening.
- In addition to Quality First Teaching, we ensure each child’s needs are catered for through the use of specific and effective programmes. These are used to further support the development of fluency and comprehension:
- Wellcomm - an Early Years and Primary toolkit that enables practitioners to quickly and accurately identify emerging speech and language difficulties. It is a highly effective and responsive intervention that meets the individual needs of the child.
- RWI 1:1 – a high quality, systematic phonics programme which teaches reading and spelling for struggling readers.
- Fresh Start- a ‘fresh’ reading intervention for pupils in Years 3 to 6 who have fallen behind at reading. A highly qualified adult delivers this support programme to help them to develop independent reading and comprehension skills so that they can make faster progress and catch up with their peers.

Home reading

- A decodable reading book (RWI book bag book) is taken home to ensure success is shared with the family.
- Children from Year 1 onwards have a home reading record. The parent/carer records comments to share with the adults in school; the adults will review these on a regular basis to ensure good communication between home and school.
- Reading for pleasure books also go home for parents to share and read to children, the children select these books themselves and book talk is encouraged during this process.
- We use regular workshops 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, using social media, the school website and through taught workshops.

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 support
 - weekly monitoring by the Reading Leader to identify children needing additional support from reading teachers
- **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 support that they need.
 - at the end of each term to identify a reading age for each child.
 - by SLT, and scrutinised through the *RWI* 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

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

Intended Impact

Pupils will engage and listen to high quality and diverse texts. They will display a love of reading and choose to read for pleasure. The impact of our reading curriculum will be evident across all curriculum subjects. Pupils will make progress in reading assessments and secure the essential skills needed to transition to the next phase of their education. Those pupils needing additional support will be identified quickly and actions will be put into place. Staff will enthusiastically share texts, both fiction and non-fiction, and share a love of reading. Staff will champion reading and become role models and instrumental in pupils making good progress in reading. Pupils will have a rich and varied vocabulary because of the texts they have been exposed to.