



**A COMPLETE PHONICS RESOURCE
TO SUPPORT CHILDREN**

Phonics and early reading policy

The context of our school

At Horsley C of E Primary School, our children start their phonics journey in Reception. We follow the 'Little Wandle – Letters and Sounds' scheme as a school. This ensures consistency in the teaching of phonics throughout the school. As a result, our Systematic, Synthetic Phonics Program (SSP) is high quality and robust in its purpose. A clear, structured route allows pupils to meet or exceed the expected standard.

We wholeheartedly believe that our rigorous program is the key that unlocks our children's success in early reading. Our approach to teaching phonics and reading must be accessible to all learners, regardless of background.

Intent

Phonics (reading and spelling)

At Horsley C of E Primary School, we believe all our children can become fluent readers and writers. This is why we teach reading through *Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised*, a systematic and synthetic phonics programme. We start teaching Phonics in Nursery/Reception and 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 unfamiliar words as they read. At Horsley C of E Primary School, we also model the application of the alphabetic code through phonics in shared reading and writing, both inside and outside the phonics lesson and across the curriculum. In addition, we strongly 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 Horsley C of E Primary School, reading is 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



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unfamiliar vocabulary. We encourage our children to see themselves as readers for 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 everyone teaches with fidelity to the *Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised* programme.

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
 - learning a range of nursery rhymes and action rhymes
 - activities that develop focused listening and attention, including oral blending
 - attention to high-quality language.
- We ensure Nursery children are well prepared to begin learning grapheme-phoneme correspondences (GPCs) and blending in Reception.

Daily phonics lessons in Reception and Year 1

- We teach phonics for 30 minutes a day. For example, in Reception, we build from 10-minute lessons, with additional daily oral blending games, to the full-length lesson as quickly as possible. In addition, we review the week's teaching each Friday 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 (Phase 4) fluently and accurately.
 - Children in Year 1 review Phases 3 and 4 and are taught to read and spell words using Phase 5 GPCs fluently and accurately.



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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.
- We timetable daily phonics lessons for any child in Year 2 and above who is not fully fluent in 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 Rapid Catch-up assessments to identify the gaps in their phonic knowledge and teach these using the Rapid Catch-up resources – at pace.
- These short, sharp lessons last 15-20 minutes daily and have been designed to ensure children quickly catch up to age-related expectations in reading.

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 using the *Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised* assessments and book matching grids on pages 11–20 of 'Application of phonics to reading'.
 - They are monitored by the class teacher, who rotates and works with each group regularly.
- 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 in Week 4. Children who are not yet decoding have daily additional blending practice in small groups so they quickly learn to blend and can begin reading books.



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- In Years 2 and 3, we continue to teach reading this way for children who still need to practise reading with decodable books.

Home reading

- The decodable reading practice book is taken home to ensure success is shared with the family.
 - Reading for-pleasure books also go home for parents to share and read to children. We share the research behind the importance and impact of sharing quality children's books with parents through workshops, leaflets, and the [Everybody Read!](#) Resources.
 - 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 receiving additional phonics Keep-up sessions read their reading practice book to an adult daily.

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 to 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 have a consistent approach and structure for each lesson.
- The 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.



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Ensuring reading for pleasure

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

'The will influences the skill and vice versa.' (OECD 2010)

We value reading for pleasure highly and work hard as a school to grow our Reading for Pleasure pedagogy.

- We read to children every day. We choose these books carefully as we want children to experience a wide range of books, including books that reflect the children at Horsley C of E Primary School and our local community and books that open windows into other worlds and cultures.
- Every classroom has an inviting book corner that encourages a love for reading. We curate and talk about these books to entice children to read a wide range of books.
- In the Nursery/Reception, children have access to the reading corner daily in their free time, and the books are continually refreshed.
- Children from Nursery/Reception onwards have a home reading record. In addition, the parent/carer records comments to share with the adults in school and the adults will write in this regularly to ensure communication between home and school.
- As the children progress through the school, they are encouraged to write their comments and keep a list of the books/authors they have read.
- Each class visits the local library every half term.



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- The school library is made available for classes to use at protected times. It must be booked via the school booking system. Children across the school have regular opportunities to engage with a wide range of Reading for Pleasure events (book fairs, author visits and workshops, national events, etc.).
- We use the Everybody Read resources to grow our teachers' knowledge of current books, the most recent research and our Reading for Pleasure practice.

Impact

Assessment

Assessment is used to monitor progress and identify any child needing additional support as soon as needed.

- **Assessment for learning** is used:
 - daily within the class to identify children needing Keep-up support
 - weekly in the Review lesson to assess gaps, address these immediately and secure fluency in GPCs, words and spellings.
- **Summative assessment** for **Reception** and **Year 1** is used:
 - Every six weeks, assess progress, identify gaps in learning that need to be addressed, identify any children needing additional support, and plan the Keep-up support they need.
 - By SLT and scrutinised through the *Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised* assessment tracker to narrow attainment gaps between different groups of children and so that any additional support for teachers can be put into place.
- **Fluency assessments** measure children's accuracy and reading speed in short one-minute assessments. They are used:
 - In Year 1, when children are reading the Phase 5 set 3, 4 and 5 books
 - With children following the Rapid Catch-up programme in Years 2 to 6, when they are reading the Phase 5 set 3, 4 and 5 books
 - to assess when children are ready to exit their programme. For Year 1 children, this is when they read the final fluency assessment at 60–70+ words per minute. Older children can exit the Rapid Catch-up programme when they read the final fluency



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assessment at 90+ words per minute. At these levels, children should have sufficient fluency to tackle any book at age-related expectations. Therefore, after exiting their programme, children do not need to read any more fully decodable books.

- A **placement assessment** is used:
 - With any child new to the school in [Reception](#) and [Year 1](#), quickly identify gaps in their phonic knowledge and plan and provide appropriate extra teaching.
- The [Rapid Catch-up assessment](#) is used
 - with any child new to the school in Year 2 and above to quickly identify gaps in their phonic knowledge and plan and provide appropriate extra teaching.

Statutory assessment

- Children in Year 1 sit the Phonics screening check. Any child not passing the check
Re-sits it in Year 2.

Ongoing assessment for Rapid Catch-up in Years 2 to 6

- Children in Years 2 to 6 are assessed through:
 - the Rapid Catch-up initial assessment to quickly identify any gaps in their phonic knowledge and plan appropriate teaching
 - the Rapid Catch-up summative assessments to assess progress and inform teaching
 - the Rapid Catch-up fluency assessments when children are reading the Phase 5 set 3, 4 and 5 books for age 7+.
- The fluency assessments measure children's accuracy and reading speed in short
One-minute assessments. They also assess when children are ready to exit the Rapid Catch-up programme when they read the final fluency assessment at 90+ words per minute.