

# **WALBOTTLE VILLAGE PRIMARY PHONICS POLICY**

## **School Vision**

**Our vision for Valour Academy is that all children will feel loved, happy and safe.**

**We will provide each child with many and varied opportunities to develop their character to feel accepted; to develop a sense of belonging; to be driven and resilient and to be inspired and be inspiring.**

Updated September 2025

## **PHONICS**

### **Introduction**

Read Write Inc. (RWI) Phonics is an inclusive programme designed for all children learning to read. The programme teaches children the 44 common sounds in the English language and how to blend these sounds to read and spell. It incorporates both a reading and writing focus to provide a well-rounded literacy foundation.

Reading is the key to unlocking the entire curriculum, making the ability to efficiently decode words essential for academic success. RWI sessions are scheduled daily without exception, as the continuity and pace of the programme are crucial to accelerating children's reading development and ensuring consistent progress.

### **Aims and Objectives**

The aim of Read Write Inc. is to teach children to:

- Apply the skills of blending phonemes to accurately read words.
- Understand that blending and segmenting words are reversible processes.
- Recognise and read high-frequency words that do not follow regular phonetic patterns.
- Read texts and words that are within their phonics capabilities as early as possible to build confidence.
- Decode texts effortlessly, allowing them to focus all their cognitive resources on comprehending what they are reading.
- Spell words effortlessly, so that all their resources can be dedicated to composing their writing.

Teaching of Read Write Inc will:

- The phonics instruction is pitched at the appropriate level for each child, ensuring that every pupil is sufficiently challenged while also making clear and measurable progress.
- Learning is designed to excite and engage children through active, enjoyable activities that foster a sense of achievement and progress.
- Phonics, reading, and writing skills are integrated, allowing each aspect to support and reinforce the others.
- Consistency in teaching and learning across the school is encouraged to ensure a coherent approach to phonics and early literacy development.
- Read Write Inc. accelerates children's literacy learning, leading to improved attainment, both in relation to the Phonics Screening Check in Year 1 and across the school.

RWI is designed to help children develop accuracy, fluency, and comprehension as they learn to read, providing them with the essential skills for continued literacy success.

### **Accuracy**

Children learn to:

- read new sounds and review previously taught sounds
- sounds out the names of characters and unfamiliar words
- understand the meanings of new words
- read the story

### **Fluency**

Children learn to;

- read the words in the stories speedily
- track the story
- read stories with increased speed

### **Comprehension**

Children learn to;

- predict the outcome
- discuss and compare key moments in stories
- read the story with a storytellers voice
- answers questions about stories

### **Writing**

- To teach children to develop knowledge of transcription, and composition.

### **Outcomes**

By the end of Key Stage 1, the vast majority of our pupils are able to read age-appropriate texts accurately and with sufficient fluency. This strong foundation enables us to focus on developing their comprehension skills, ensuring they are well-prepared for the transition to Key Stage 2.

The pupils' strong decoding skills equip them with a reliable strategy for tackling unfamiliar words, regardless of the stage they are at or the subject area they encounter across the curriculum. This solid phonics foundation supports their ongoing literacy development throughout their education.

### **Subject Organisation**

#### **Teaching and Learning Style**

Read Write Inc is based on 5 Ps

Praise: Children learn quickly in a positive climate.

Pace: Good pace is essential to the lesson.

Purpose: Every part of the lesson has a specific purpose.

**Passion:** This is a very prescriptive programme. It is the energy, enthusiasm and passion that the teachers put into the lesson that brings the teaching and learning to life.

**Participation:** A strong feature of Read Write Inc lessons is partner work and the partners 'teaching' others.

### **Planning**

Planning for Read Write Inc. (RWI) is directly derived from the official RWI handbooks. This planning outlines the specific phonics, ditties, storybooks, and activities for each session, all tailored to the current attainment levels of the children. Lessons follow a structured routine and established timings to ensure consistency across all groups.

Support staff are responsible for planning and delivering the phonics lessons within their designated RWI groups, with guidance and support from class teachers and the Read Write Inc. leader as needed. To ensure effective planning and delivery, support staff are allocated preparation time for their RWI lessons. This approach ensures high-quality, focused instruction for all learners.

### **Assessment**

Formal phonics assessments are conducted once per half-term by class teachers. These assessments evaluate each child's ability to recognise and articulate individual sounds, blend sounds together, and read both real and nonsense (alien) words. The assessments are carried out on a 1:1 basis to ensure accuracy and support targeted teaching.

The results of these assessments are used to group children according to their phonics stage, not age, ensuring that children are placed with peers at a similar level of development. Read Write Inc. promotes the grouping of children based on their individual stage of progress to best meet their needs. Although assessments are scheduled at the end of each half-term, children demonstrating advanced attainment may be assessed earlier.

Phonics grouping at WVPS is flexible and is regularly reviewed to ensure it reflects the ongoing needs of the children.

In addition to formal assessments, teachers continually observe and assess children's decoding, blending, comprehension, and writing skills to inform daily teaching and provide ongoing support for all learners.

### **Role of Subject Leader**

The Subject Leader is responsible for improving the standards of teaching and learning in Phonics through:

Monitoring and evaluating Phonics by;

- Ensuring children are assessed regularly (half-termly) and grouped appropriately by their reading level to allow for best outcomes.
- Pupil progress – this is done using the pupil tracker and follow up progress meetings
- Lesson Observations
- Taking the lead in policy development
- Auditing and supporting colleagues in their CPD
- Purchasing and organising resources
- Keeping up to date with recent Phonics developments

## **Parental Involvement**

Parents are encouraged to actively support their child's reading and writing development at home. Home-school reading diaries serve as a key communication tool, enabling parents and teachers to share progress, successes, and any areas for support.

To further strengthen early reading development, workshops are offered to parents of children in the Early Years. These sessions provide guidance on how to support phonics and early literacy at home, ensuring that children receive the best possible start to their reading journey.

## **Provision**

Phonics provision is adapted to meet the needs of different year groups and phases, ensuring appropriate progression and support for all learners.

## **Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS)**

At WVPS, we place a strong emphasis on the alphabetic code, ensuring that pupils develop a secure understanding of the relationship between spoken sounds and the letters or groups of letters that represent them. Pupils rapidly learn to recognise sounds and their corresponding graphemes, enabling them to decode words accurately.

To support early reading development, children are provided with books that are closely matched to their phonics knowledge and include 'tricky' words appropriate to their level. This ensures that from the outset, pupils experience success in reading, building their confidence and fostering a positive reading identity. Regular re-reading and discussion of these books with teachers support the development of fluency and comprehension.

Read Write Inc. (RWI) is fully implemented in the Foundation Stage. However, children are not placed into phonics groups until they have been taught the initial Set 1 sounds. Once this phase is complete, assessments are conducted to determine appropriate groupings based on each child's phonics knowledge.

In the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), daily Read Write Inc. sessions are delivered as follows:

- **At the beginning of the year:** Speed Sound Sessions take place for twenty minutes.
- **Once children are familiar with Set 1 sounds:** They are grouped for daily phonics sessions lasting 30 minutes.
- These sessions are led by either the class teacher or a trained member of support staff. Group sizes vary but are generally smaller than full-class teaching to provide targeted support. Children are assessed on a half-termly basis to ensure appropriate progression and group placement.

## **Key Stage 1 Phonics**

Phonics sessions for Key Stage 1 take place daily from 10:30-11am. Children are grouped by attainment to ensure that teaching is appropriately matched to their current level of phonics knowledge. Some groups may include a mix of Year 1 and Year 2 pupils. These groups are led by class teachers and trained support staff to provide high-quality, focused instruction.

All Key Stage 1 children are assessed at least once per half-term by their class teacher to monitor progress and inform future teaching. Read Write Inc. (RWI) reading books are used during these sessions, with book colours aligned to each child's attainment level.

### **Key Stage 1 Spelling**

Spelling lists are provided to children on a weekly basis and are tailored to their phonics attainment group. These spellings are aligned with their current learning and may include words from their reading books, Green or Red Word lists, or the next words from the high-frequency word lists for Reception, Year 1, and Year 2. This structured approach ensures that spelling practice reinforces phonics knowledge and supports reading fluency.

### **Key Stage 2**

Children identified as working below the national average in phonics and reading will receive additional support through targeted Read Write Inc. (RWI) intervention sessions. These sessions will be delivered regularly by a trained member of support staff and will include focused phonics instruction alongside reading practice using Read Write Inc. books. This targeted approach ensures that pupils receive the necessary support to develop their phonics skills and reading fluency.

### **SEND Children**

SEND pupils are fully included in Read Write Inc. (RWI) lessons, as all children are grouped according to their phonics ability. Teaching is carefully tailored to match the pace of progress within each group, ensuring that all pupils receive appropriate support and challenge.

Where additional support is required, 1:1 tuition may be provided outside of the designated phonics session. The need for this intervention will be identified by class teachers in collaboration with the Read Write Inc. Leader to ensure targeted and effective support.

### **Additional Support**

The Read Write Inc. (RWI) Leader is responsible for identifying children who are working below age-related expectations in phonics. These children will receive targeted additional support through 1:1 or small group phonics interventions delivered by support staff within the classroom. The timing and frequency of these sessions will be determined at the teacher's discretion to ensure minimal disruption to core learning.

Children who are significantly below expected attainment are regularly assessed to monitor progress and inform intervention strategies, ensuring that support is responsive to their individual needs.

### **Handwriting**

At WVPS, the primary focus of Read Write Inc. (RWI) phonics instruction is the development of sound knowledge, reading skills, and fluency. While Phonics and Literacy should complement each other, it is essential that children first develop familiarity with print, as all reading books are presented in print. To support early reading development, children will initially learn to recognise and identify single sounds, digraphs, and trigraphs in print before being introduced to cursive writing.

Cursive letter formation will be introduced at an appropriate stage in the phonics programme, from Set 3 – Pink Book 5 onwards/Orange. This approach ensures a structured and developmentally appropriate transition, allowing children to secure their phonics knowledge before progressing to cursive writing. RWI

resources have been adapted to facilitate this progression, with digraphs and trigraphs presented in a way that supports both reading fluency and handwriting development.

All teaching staff will have access to both print and cursive sound cards to support this transition.

In all other areas of the curriculum, cursive writing should continue to be modelled during whole-class teaching to provide consistent exposure and reinforcement. Handwriting sessions should be adapted to reflect each child's stage of development, ensuring that they are practising either print or cursive as appropriate. For some children, handwriting instruction may continue to focus on precursor skills before progressing to letter formation.

This approach aligns with the school's commitment to high standards of presentation and handwriting while ensuring that phonics instruction remains focused on the core skills of decoding, blending, and reading fluency.