



Inspiring All to Excellence



Violet Way Academy

Phonics and Reading Policy

Document Control

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Version Control

Version	Date	Amended by	Comments
V2	January 2023	Michelle Kee	See below for changes
V3	January 2024	Michelle Kee and Natalie Nicholson	See below for changes

Section	Changes Made
V2 - Section 9 – Parents and Carers	Added information about our 'Reading Promises' including a link to the relevant area of the school website.
V3 - Section 3, Section 4, Section 7	3 - Additional information about read aloud sessions 4 – Information about whole class shared reading in Year 2 added 7 – Reading ambassadors and lunchtime book club information added Also edited website links to link to new website.

1. Rationale

As identified in 'The Reading Framework – Teaching the Foundations of Literacy', at Violet Way Academy we recognise that reading is fundamental to education and future success. As well as developing talk, listening skills, building vocabulary and developing a love of reading by sharing and enjoying high-quality texts, good-quality phonics teaching is a key element necessary for children to learn to read and spell.

At Violet Way Academy, we strive to teach children to read effectively and quickly using the Read Write Inc. Phonics programme (RWI) which is a government validated systematic, synthetic phonics programme. The RWI programme includes teaching systematic, synthetic phonics, sight vocabulary, decoding words, spelling and accurate letter formation.



2. Aims

We passionately believe that teaching children to read and write independently, as quickly as possible, is one of the core purposes of a primary school. These fundamental skills not only hold the keys to the rest of the curriculum but also have a huge impact on children's self-esteem and future life chances.

Through the provision of our daily RWI lessons, we aim to teach children to:

- decode (word reading) letter-sound correspondences quickly and effortlessly, using their phonic knowledge and skills
- read 'tricky' words on sight
- understand what they read
- read aloud with fluency and expression
- read words and texts matched to their phonic ability as early as possible
- encode (spell) with increasing confidence and accuracy, hearing the sounds within a word and writing the graphemes which represent those sounds (segmenting the sounds in words they hear or say)
- acquire correct letter formation

In addition, we teach pupils 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 pupils' poor articulation, or problems with blending or alphabetic code knowledge and extra effort is made to provide pupils with additional practice and support early on.

3. Phonics and Early Reading Development

Through the RWI programme, our children learn the English alphabetic code. The RWI programme enables pupils to rapidly learn sounds and the letter or groups of letters they need to represent them. Simple mnemonics help them to grasp this quickly and can be especially useful for pupils at risk of making slower progress. First, they learn one way to read the 40+ sounds and blend these sounds into words, then they learn to read the same sounds with alternative graphemes. Lively phonic books are closely matched to their increasing knowledge of phonics and 'tricky' (non-decodable) words so that, early on, they experience success and gain confidence that they are readers. Re-reading and discussing these books with the teacher supports their increasingly fluent decoding. Along with a thought-provoking introduction, prompts for thinking out loud and discussion, children are helped to read with a

storyteller's voice. Teachers also read a wide range of stories, poetry and non-fiction to children at story time and children have access to an attractive and well-resourced book corner, developing a passion for reading and books. Teachers read aloud a core set of books which are based upon Pie Corbett's reading spine for each year group. These read aloud (story time) sessions aim to improve pupils' prosody when reading aloud themselves, and also focus on extending the pupils' vocabulary.

Embedding the alphabetic code early on means that pupils quickly learn to write simple words and sentences. We encourage them to use their phonic knowledge to write dictated sentences and compose sentences aloud until they are confident to write independently. Pupils write at the level of their spelling knowledge, that is, they use their knowledge of the alphabetic code and the tricky words they have learnt. They can soon spell more complex words confidently and accurately. The quality of the vocabulary they use in their writing reflects the language they have heard in the books the teacher has read to them; they have also discussed what the words mean.

Our overall aim is for pupils to complete the RWI 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. By the end of Key Stage 1, our pupils are able to read aloud age-appropriate texts accurately and with sufficient speed. This means that we can focus on developing their comprehension, preparing them well for transition to Key Stage 2. Their good decoding skills mean that they have a sound strategy for decoding unfamiliar words when they come across them at whatever stage or in any subject.

Pupils who are making slower progress usually complete the programme by the end of Year 2. We support pupils who have identified special educational needs for however long it takes until they can read. We identify those who are at risk of falling behind their peers immediately – whatever their age – and ensure that they are provided with extra practice and support early on.

4. Teaching and Learning

The RWI programme's 'cycle of instruction' means that, after direct instruction and guided practice, the pupils teach another pupil. In this way they all rehearse and consolidate what they have been learning. This helps the pupils to make their understanding clear to themselves and helps the teacher deal with any misconceptions. 'Partner teaching' is a key assessment tool. We also use this approach very effectively in other subjects.

The RWI programme has detailed lesson plans. These give the teachers practical day-to-day guidance, but they work hard to build on these plans so that the lessons are matched carefully to the needs of their particular group. Every activity in every lesson is prepared thoroughly and has a very clear purpose. The teacher explains this at the beginning so that the pupils understand, during the activity, what they are learning and why.

Simple teaching strategies and a lively pace ensure that all the pupils participate fully. In addition, because all the pupils are grouped across the school in terms of their reading ability, they are reading at an appropriate decoding level every day.

Our RWI Phonics programme delivery is based on the '5 Ps':

PRAISE - Children learn quickly in a positive climate. Teachers praise the children constantly throughout the teaching sessions. Children learn more quickly when they are praised for what they do well. The

children are encouraged to praise each other and as a school we have developed several 'Praise Phrases' and 'Praise actions'.

PACE - No time is wasted during teaching sessions! Children are active and involved in a fun and creative way. The aim is for the children to complete the programme as quickly as possible.

PURPOSE - Every part of the lesson has a specific purpose.

PASSION - Our staff team is passionate about our teaching and the benefits of the RWI programme. We love teaching the sessions and this enthusiasm rubs off onto the children.

PARTICIPATION - All children take part in all parts of the lesson. Full participation is gained through 'no hands up' varied response techniques and partner work. A strong feature of RWI lessons is partners 'teaching' each other (based on research which states that we learn 70% of what we talk about with our partner and 90% of what we teach).

Assessment is a critical element of our programme. The teachers and teaching assistants assess:

- pupils' phonic knowledge;
- the speed at which pupils are able to read the text;
- and their understanding of the stories they read.

They are responsive to this information, providing any necessary additional instruction and addressing any misconceptions.

RWI Phonics lessons take place daily for all pupils. We group pupils homogeneously, according to their progress in reading rather than their writing. This is because it is known that pupils' progress in writing generally develops at a slower pace than their reading, especially for those whose motor skills are less well developed. The homogeneous groups help us to focus the teaching and ensure pupils make very good progress.

Children in Reception, Y1 and Y2 will read RWI books in line with their current phonic knowledge. In addition, they can choose Rigby Star books, matched to their current phonic ability to ensure that they are exposed to different types of texts, including non-fiction.

Once children complete the RWI programme, they will move onto Whole Class Shared Reading lessons where children will read a range of extracts and some whole texts (for example, from Reading Detectives and Rigby Star books). In the Whole Class Shared Reading lessons, children practise and refine their performance voices when reading aloud and further develop comprehension skills through various strategies, such as summarising, predicting and inferring. Pupils are enthused and engaged through 'The Reading Theatre' and develop their fluency further through echo and choral reading. Pupils are assisted in becoming confident and enthusiastic readers and unknown vocabulary is explained and discussed in the lessons.

5. Assessing and Tracking Progress

We assess pupils on the RWI Assessments and we use this data to assign them to Phonics groups and track progress. This gives us a very good indication of how well they are making progress relative to their starting points. We do this for all pupils, whenever they join us, so we can track all of them effectively, including those eligible for the pupil premium. Children are assessed every eight weeks and will move groups as appropriate. The Reading Leader is responsible for assessment and tracking of pupils for RWI and keeps all relevant records and information. In addition, we use a standardised reading assessments (PM Benchmark and PiRA) so that we can ensure that the gains our pupils are making are age-

appropriate. Assessment information allows us to identify if pupils are making accelerated or slower progress. As a result, we can intervene in appropriate ways. For instance, we quickly move pupils to another group if they are progressing faster than their peers. Those who continue to struggle have one-to-one phonics intervention so that they keep up.

5.1 Expectations of Phonics Progress

The following grids show expectations of progress in phonics. This is for guidance only – some children make faster progress.

RECEPTION	Set 1	Ditties	Red	Green	Pink	Orange	Yellow	Blue	Grey	Off RWI
End of Term 1										
End of Term 2										
End of Term 3										
YEAR 1	Set 1	Ditties	Red	Green	Pink	Orange	Yellow	Blue	Grey	Off RWI
Baseline Year 1										
End of Term 1										
End of Term 2										
End of Term 3										
YEAR 2	Set 1	Ditties	Red	Green	Pink	Orange	Yellow	Blue	Grey	Off RWI
Baseline Year 2										
End of Term 1										

Reading Stage	Rigby Star levels	RWI levels	Sounds to be taught	Red Words	Expectations
1	Pre-book band (lilac)	Assisted blending	Set 1 + ll, ff, zz, mp, ck, ss	-	Reception
2	Pre-book band (lilac)	Independent blending	Set 1 + ll, ff, zz, mp, ck, ss with word time	-	Reception
3	Pink	Red / Ditty	Revisit tricky set 1 sound	put the I no of for my he	Reception
4	Red	Green	Set 2	said your you be are to go me baby paint	End of Reception ELG
5	Yellow	Pink	Set 2	all I've like call her want we she washing some so	Year 1
6	Light blue	Pink	Set 2	25 HFW	Year 1
7	Green	Orange	Set 3	do they what old was	Year 1
8	Orange	Orange	Set 3	50 HFW	Year 1
9	Turquoise	Yellow	Set 3/4	Saw watch school watches small their were one where tall who brother I'm there any fall wall	End of Year 1 EXPECTED
10	Purple	Blue	Set 4	Does two other ball could wash water would anyone over wasn't once son through people whole	Year 2
11	Gold	Grey	Set 4	Come should many mother above father here bought buy another great someone walk caught everyone worse talk thought love wear	Year 2 (End of Autumn 1)
12	White	-	Set 4	Next 200	End of Year 2 EXPECTED
13	Lime	-	Suffix Multi-syllabic compound	Next 200	Year 2
14	Chapter Books	-		Next 200	Year 2

6. Reading Roles

The school's shared vision is that every pupil learns to read quickly and continues to read, widely and often. The Headteacher works with all the staff to ensure that this happens. In particular, she works closely with the Reading Leader to monitor the quality of teaching and to provide coaching for staff who need it (teachers and teaching assistants).

The role of the Reading Leader is crucial in driving the teaching of RWI Phonics, ensuring it is taught with fidelity so that all the pupils complete the programme as quickly as possible.

The RWI Leader's roles include:

- organising and keeping records of all RWI assessment and tracking data,
- keeping the groups homogeneous, i.e. at the same reading level,
- ensuring pupils in the 'lower progress' group are making good progress and organising one-to-one interventions for the pupils who need extra support,
- providing further training (through demonstration, coaching, monitoring),
- ensuring that our teaching of reading is of the highest quality and that all our pupils make progress,
- ensuring that our reading for pleasure offer is fulfilled.

The reading team is made up of a team of teachers and teaching assistants who each teach a group of pupils at the same reading level. Teachers and teaching assistants are responsible for the delivery of the RWI phonics scheme to their assigned group of pupils. They are responsible for alerting the Reading Leader to any pupil whose progress is faster or slower than the rest of their group.

7. Reading at Violet Way Academy

We know that there is very strong evidence that reading is fundamental to children's success at school and in their lives beyond school (Ritchie and Bates, 2013). We believe that it is important to teach our children early phonics as soon as possible because fluent readers will learn more as they can read and gain knowledge for themselves. We want to give our children a good foundation by building their phonic knowledge and reading skills. Reading for pleasure is also given a high priority. It is recognised that children who read for pleasure improve their life chances, not just in education, but in mental well-being and social relationships. At Violet Way, we ensure children have the opportunity to hear, share and discuss a wide range of high-quality books, as part of the curriculum and beyond, to develop a love of reading and broaden their vocabulary. We want all children, regardless of background, to read early, build on their success and become confident, independent readers.

Additionally, 'Reading Ambassadors' have been selected in Year 2 to help the staff to promote reading for pleasure across the school. They help to run the Lunchtime Book Club every Thursday and recommend books to their peers. Another of their roles is to read books to the younger children during the Friday story time session.

To ensure our children read fluently and with understanding we:

- Teach the phonological skills required to decode texts in our daily phonics Read Write Inc (RWI) lessons in Reception and Y1. Children in Y2 will have a daily phonics/reading lesson (moving from RWI books to Whole Class Shared Reading by the end of the Autumn term)
- Assess children's phonic knowledge to check progress from their starting points and re-group accordingly

- Ensure that, whilst children are learning to read, they read from books carefully matched to their developing phonic knowledge
- Ensure that teachers and teaching assistants are aware of the children in their class that are making the slowest progress (the lowest 20%) and provide extra practice through the day for them
- Carefully plan the English learning journey, including key texts, ensuring opportunities for children to talk about the texts they read and develop their understanding
- Build upon prior knowledge and teach reading strategies
- Ask and answer questions about our key texts and class stories
- Plan opportunities for 1:1 reading

To promote reading for pleasure and a love of reading we:

- Develop children's engagement with, and understanding of, key texts when reading as part of our English lessons, wider curriculum and class stories
- Create a reading rich learning environment, including inviting reading areas
- Visit the school library at least once per week
- Read books to children daily in story time
- Offer reading workshops for parents
- Offer library sessions with parents
- Invite an author or poet into school at least once per year
- Encourage and motivate children's independent reading through our reading reward scheme
- Ensure that children are exposed to a range of fiction and non-fiction texts
- Record, praise and celebrate children's reading across the curriculum
- Hold a Lunchtime Book Club run by the Reading Ambassadors
- Recommend books to the pupils
- Have a Focus Author Display each half-term in the hall to improve the pupils' knowledge of different authors

8. Professional Development

A key element of the RWI Phonics programme is consistent whole-school practice, underpinned by appropriate professional development. We have RWI trained staff in school who ensure that all staff receive regular refresher training and support in class i.e. team teaching, modelled lessons.

9. Parents and Carers

In line with our commitment to developing every child as a reader, we created our 'Reading Promises' document, which outlines the promises teachers, parents and children should make in order to support every child's journey to becoming a reader. Our Reading Promises, can be viewed on our 'Home Reading' page of our school website [Violet Way Academy - Home Reading](#)

We invite parents and carers to workshops to show how they can help their children read at home and provide information about phonics on our website with links to videos, pronunciation guides and practice sheets. We would like them to help their children, but we also recognise that teaching phonics is challenging. It is our job to teach children to read and we provide parents with relevant information to help them understand how we teach phonics at school and how they can support their child at home. Further information can be found on the English page of our school website, which can be accessed [here](#).