



CLIFTON COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL

PHONICS POLICY

‘Enjoy and Achieve Together’

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Committee Responsible	Governing Board
Document locations	Staff shared Drive – Policies

Change History

Version	Date	Change Description	Stored
1	November 2019	Altered to incorporate the Intent / Implementation and Impact of the Phonics Curriculum	Co-ords / staff shared
2	March 2024	Updated to reflect the changes made to the teaching and learning of phonics.	Co-ords / staff shared
3	March 2025	Updated to reflect the changes made to the teaching and learning of phonics.	Co-ords / staff shared
4	September 2025	Updated that class teachers assess their children and organise the interventions within their classroom. Added Rosenshine’s Principles of Instruction	Google drive/ Curriculum/ Phonics
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CLIFTON PRIMARY SCHOOL

CURRICULUM POLICY FOR PHONICS

Mission Statement: 'Enjoy and Achieve Together'

'High quality teaching of phonics is the key to developing independent readers and is given the highest priority. We want 'every child to be a reader' and we implement a very rigorous and sequential approach to developing speaking and listening and teaching reading, writing and spelling through systematic phonics. Criteria for assuring high-quality phonic work' Ofsted: Reading by Six. 2012

Clifton Primary School has a consistent whole school approach to the teaching of phonics. At Clifton, we strive for the children to enjoy reading throughout their lives. Phonic skills need to be developed in a synthetic and systematic approach in order to help all children to 'achieve their potential'. We follow Read Write Inc (R.W.I.), which can be used throughout the school to support independence in phonological awareness and understanding.

Intent – what we will do

We want our children to:

- Apply the skill of blending phonemes in order to read words.
- Segment words into their constituent phonemes in order to spell words.
- Learn that blending and segmenting words are reversible processes.
- Read high frequency words that do not conform to regular phonic patterns.
- Read texts and words that are within their phonic capabilities as early as possible.
- Decode texts effortlessly, with fluency and expression, so all their resources can be used to comprehend what they read.
- Understand what they have read and talk about the story or information
- Spell effortlessly so that all their resources can be directed towards composing their writing.

Implementation – how we will do it

At Clifton Primary School, we focus on 'the 5 Ps and this is instrumental in achieving success with the R.W.I. phonics programme.

- **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 teachers put into the lesson that brings teaching and learning to life!
- **Participation** – A strong feature of RWI lessons is partner work and the 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)

Planning

Children work within ability groups, which are defined by their performance during R.W.I. assessments. Children are re-tested every half term and the groups are reorganised accordingly. The

RWI teachers follows the relevant handbooks in order to teach the lesson. Each R.W.I. teacher is provided with a 'sounds tracker' so they know which sounds each individual child knows and can plan accordingly to close the gaps. Each R.W.I. teacher has the 'What to Teach When' document to inform R.W.I. teachers of the children's next steps. Teachers and TAs will be responsible for planning/preparation for their R.W.I. groups, with the support of the R.W.I. Lead, as required.

Delivery of Phonics

- Sounds are to be taught in a particular order as set out in the R.W.I. programme. (Set 1, 2 and 3 sounds)
- Sounds taught should be 'pure' i.e. 'b', not 'buh' as this is central to phonic teaching and ability to recognise sounds in words.
- Blends are to be de-clustered. e.g. bl is two specific sounds.
- Children are to be taught that the number of graphemes in a word always corresponds to the number of phonemes. This greatly aids spelling.
- Letter names are to be introduced with Set 3.
- It is delivered to children in EYFS to Year 2 who are learning to read and write. It is also delivered to any children in KS2 that need to catch up rapidly.
- Silent signals are to be used across all lessons (MTYT – My Turn Your Turn, TTYP – Talk to Your Partner, 1 – 2 – 3 to move to the carpet and the table.)

The teaching of phonics in EYFS

Nursery: During autumn term and spring term, children develop a love of language and enjoy listening to, learning and joining in with carefully chosen stories, rhymes, poems and songs. Children develop their phonetic ability by completing activities based around the seven aspects of sound; environmental, instrumental, body sounds, rhythm and rhyme, alliteration, voice sounds and oral blending and segmenting. These activities are interwoven in order for the children to develop a deeper understanding and continually revisit these to embed the skills taught to them. They use this to role-play together, developing their vocabulary and building sentences orally and making up stories through planned talk experiences. Nursery teachers and TAs use 'Fred Talk' and Fred Games daily (saying words using pure sounds) with the children, with the expectation that the children will begin to encode the words. In the summer term, **when the children are ready**, they learn the picture side of the sound cards. Then they move onto learning the initial sounds and continue to do oral blending through 'Fred Talk' throughout the day. Children are also exposed to the correct letter formation using the R.W.I. mnemonics ensuring that children are using the correct pencil grip.

Reception: RWI is introduced after the first week, giving the children a short period of time to settle. Children in Reception are taught daily phonics lessons. We use the 'Making a Strong Start in Reception' document from RWI to track children daily. Any children that have not retained the sound, have 1:1 intervention on the same day to ensure that the children 'keep up'. In the first four weeks of Reception, the initial sounds (Set 1 Speed Sounds) are taught in class groups. After this period, children are individually assessed and grouped homogeneously according to their stage. Children receive daily phonics teaching in these groups, using the structured speed sounds lesson plan. It is our aim that all children leave Reception at green RWI band and know the first 6 Set 2 sounds to be on track to achieve the expected standard for the Year 1 Phonics Screening Check.

The teaching of phonics in Key Stage One

Children in Key Stage 1 continue to be taught phonics in small homogeneous groups, depending on their stage, not age. They have a daily R.W.I. lessons lasting 45 minutes. This lesson starts with a 10-

minute speed sounds lesson which teaches new speed sounds and revision of previous speed sounds, oral blending, decoding words, reading common exception words, decoding 'alien' (pseudo) words and spelling. Children then read and comprehend a book which is carefully matched to their phonics knowledge following a 3 day/5 day plan (depending on the stage). It is our aim that all children leave Year 1 at blue RWI band and know all Set 3 sounds and additional graphemes to be able to achieve the expected standard for the Year 1 phonics screening check. Children continue the R.W.I. programme into Year 2 developing their fluency and expression. It is our aim that children in Year 2 complete the RWI programme by end of the spring term in Year 2. All classrooms and teaching spaces across the school display the RWI Speed Sounds chart to support children with their reading and spelling.

The Teaching of Phonics in Key Stage 2

By the time children complete the transition from KS1 to KS2, we intend that they will have completed the R.W.I. phonics programme. Their phonic development will continue to be explicitly taught through the school's spelling programme.

Those children who have not reached the expected level by the time they leave KS1 will continue to access the RWI programme and receive additional targeted intervention to ensure they catch up with their peers.

Partnership with Parents

Support from parents and carers is paramount if a child is to become a successful and competent reader. At Clifton Primary, we are fully committed to a strong partnership working between home and school. All reception parents are invited in for a reading workshop where the EYFS Lead introduces how we teach reading and explains how to read with their child at home. Once ready, we send phonetically decodable reading books home and encourage carers to contribute to their child's reading development, welcoming comments in individual reading diaries. All children across the school also choose a 'reading for pleasure' book that they can share with their parent/carer. Parents/carers are informed each half term (via a letter) of which group they are in for RWI, whether they are 'on track' or 'not on track' and their child's next steps to support parents in their understanding of their child's reading journey.

Impact - what we can do now:

Assessment and Reporting

Formative Assessment

- Children are assessed throughout every lesson. Every time partner work is used, the teacher assesses the progress of their children. The teacher assesses how children:
 - Read the sounds
 - Read green and red words
 - Decode the ditty/story
 - Comprehend the story

Summative Assessment

Summative Assessment is carried out half-termly by the class teacher using the R.W.I. assessments on the online portal. This allows for achieving homogeneity within each group. Children are able to move from one group to another depending on their progress. Individual children may be reviewed again

during the half term, where appropriate, after discussions between RWI teachers and the RWI Lead. Any new children starting at Clifton Primary, will be assessed on their first day, where possible, and placed into the correct R.W.I. group. The R.W.I. Lead and class teachers track all children. They identify the children that are 'on track' and 'not on track'. Any children who are 'not on track' have additional 1:1 Fast Track Tutoring to ensure that these children keep up and don't have to catch up. This is organised by the class teacher, where needed.

National Phonic Screening Check: All children in Year One will be screened using the National Assessment materials in June. If a child in Year One has not met the expected standard, they will retake the Phonics Screening Check in Year 2. This data will be submitted to the Local Authority and is reported to parents in the summer term.

Monitoring

The class teacher:

- Assesses their own children every half term. This is done on the RWI portal.
- Identifies the children that are 'not on track' and organises an intervention as soon as possible to close the gap

The R.W.I. lead:

- Analyses the data and designates the children to the correct group.
- Assigns teachers/TAs to groups to meet the needs of the children
- Coaches during R.W.I. lessons to support R.W.I. teachers, gives advice and informally checks that children are in the correct groups
- Undertakes regular training sessions with staff
- Where necessary, models lessons
- Attends up-date meetings/reads updates on the R.W.I. portal when they occur and reports back to the R.W.I. teachers to develop their practice
- Informs the Head Teacher of children's progress
- Works with the RWI Facilitator during RWI development days to support the teaching of phonics.

Rosenshine's Principles of Instruction

At Clifton, our teaching across all subjects is underpinned by Rosenshine's Principles of Instructions. These research-based principles support effective teaching and learning by promoting clear modelling, guided practice and regular review. Teachers ensure that new content is introduced in small steps, with frequent questioning and checks for understanding to prevent cognitive overload, support long-term retention and to help address misconceptions promptly. Through a consistent focus on retrieval practice, scaffolding and opportunities for independent application, we help all children build secure foundations and make sustained progress. These principles are embedded in our planning, delivery and assessment processes across the curriculum.

Safeguarding, Inclusion and Equal Opportunities:

At Clifton, we have high aspirations and expectations for all children. Children learn and thrive when they are healthy, safe and engaged. In all subjects, we are committed to safeguarding children and as such, we maintain an ethos where children feel safe, encouraged to talk and are listened to. We

ensure that children know they can approach and talk to adults if they are worried or in difficulty. We support children with their emotional wellbeing and health, recognising that subjects may sometimes be sensitive for children. Clifton Primary believes in inclusion and equal opportunities meaning that all children should have access to a broad and balanced curriculum, including phonics, which enables them to make the greatest progress possible according to their individual abilities. We provide learning opportunities that are matched to the needs of the children making reasonable adjustments where needed. Lessons are planned in advance addressing any potential areas of difficulty and barriers to the children achieving are removed. We will ensure that expectations do not limit pupils' achievements, supporting where there is a need and extending children's learning who need further challenging.

Protected Characteristics

In adherence to the Equality Act 2010, the staff at Clifton Primary are not only aware of the protected characteristics but accept fully that it is unlawful to discriminate against anyone on the grounds of disability, age, race, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, religion or belief, sexual orientation, marriage or civil partnership or sex. Furthermore, at Clifton, it is the responsibility of all teachers to ensure that all children's protected characteristics are fully recognised and that irrespective of SEN, gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, LGBTQ+, social circumstance and ability (including gifted and able children), ALL have access to the curriculum and make the greatest progress possible. We also ensure that, where possible, materials utilised in lessons are broad and reflective of the diverse society we are a part of.

Review:

This policy will be reviewed annually by the phonics curriculum leader.