



St Mary Magdalene C of E School
with
Christ Church C of E Primary School

PHONICS POLICY

This policy was:	Written in	April 2022
	Updated in	
	Review date	September 2023

School Context

The Koinonia Federation consists of two schools over three campuses: St Mary Magdalene C of E (primary phase) in Woolwich, St Mary Magdalene All Through C of E on the Greenwich Peninsula and Christ Church C of E Primary in Greenwich.

Intent

Phonics (Reading and Spelling)

In the Koinonia Federation we believe that all of our children can become fluent readers and writers. This is why we teach reading through *Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised*, which is an accredited systematic and synthetic phonics programme (SSP).

We start teaching phonics in Nursery/ Reception and follow **Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised**, 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 are able to tackle any unfamiliar words as they read. At the Koinonia Federation 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.

Comprehension

At the Koinonia Federation we value reading as an essential 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 unfamiliar vocabulary. We encourage our children to see themselves as readers for both pleasure and purpose.

We believe that teaching every child to read is vitally important, therefore we have designated Phonics and English Leads at each campus who drive the early reading programme in across the federation. These people are highly skilled at teaching phonics and reading, and they monitor and support our teaching staff to ensure that everyone teaches with fidelity to the *Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised* programme.

Implementation (Please see appendix at the end of the policy)

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. In Reception, we build from 10-minute lessons, with additional daily oral blending games, to the full-length lesson as quickly as possible. Each Friday, we review the week's teaching 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) with fluency and accuracy.
 - Children in Year 1 review Phase 3 and 4 and are taught to read and spell words using Phase 5 GPCs with fluency and accuracy.

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 regular phonics lessons for any child in Year 2 or 3 who is not fully fluent at 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 *Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised* assessments to identify the gaps in their phonic knowledge and teach to these using the keep-up resources – at pace.

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 fully decodable books matched to the children's secure phonic knowledge using the *Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised*
 - are monitored by the class teacher, who rotates and works with each group on a regular basis.
- 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 that they quickly learn to blend and can begin to read books.
- In Year 2 and 3, we continue to teach reading in this way for any 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 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 Lower-Attaining Children:

- Children in Reception and Year 1 who are receiving additional phonics keep-up sessions have increased opportunities to read their book with an adult.
- If any child in Year 3 to 6 has gaps in their phonic knowledge when reading or writing, we plan phonics 'catch-up' lessons and interventions to address specific reading/writing gaps.
- If there is a particular need or area of concern identified, SEN support will be provided.

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 reading so that we 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 all have a consistent approach and structure for each lesson.
- Teaching is regularly monitored and observed to ensure consistent delivery of high-quality lessons.
- Summative data is used to identify children who need additional support and gaps in learning.

Ensuring Reading for Pleasure:

'Reading for pleasure is the single 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 the Koinonia Federation and our local community as well as books that open windows into other worlds and cultures.

- Every classroom has an inviting book corner 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 Nursery/Reception onwards have a home reading record. The parent/carer records comments to share with the adults in school and the adults will write in this 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.
- Spending time in a library is encouraged, whether that be the library in the classroom, the school library (depending on the campus) or the local public library.
- We aim to ensure that children across the school have regular opportunities to engage in a wide range of Reading for Pleasure activities. These can include, but are not limited to: sharing a class text, book fairs, author visits, workshops etc.

Impact

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 Keep-up support
 - weekly in the Review lesson to assess gaps, address these immediately and secure fluency of GPCs, words and spellings.
- **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 Keep-up support that 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.
- The *Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised* **placement assessment** is used:
 - with any child new to the school to quickly identify any gaps in their phonic knowledge and plan 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 Catch-Up:

- Children in Year 2 to 6 are assessed through:
 - their teacher's ongoing formative assessment
 - the *Little Wandle Letters and Sounds* placement assessment
 - the appropriate half-termly assessments.

Appendix 1:

Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised is currently in the early stages of implementation across the Koinonia Federation. Please see the timeline below for the different stages each campus.

Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised should be fully embedded across the federation by Spring 2023.

	Christ Church	St Mary Magdalene (Pen)	St Mary Magdalene (Woolwich)
Funding Granted	October 2021	January 2022	January 2022
Resources Purchased	November 2021	January 2022	January 2022
Welcome Briefing attended by member of SLT	November 2021	February 2022	February 2022
Resources organised and stamped	November 2021	February 2022	February 2022
Initial Training of English and Phonics Leads	December 2021	March 2022	March 2022
Training of EYFS and KS1 Staff	December 2021– February 2022	April – June 2022	April – June 2022
Training for all other staff	Summer 2 2022	Summer 2 2022	Summer 2 2022
Implementation of LW phonics lessons	Spring Term 2022	Summer Term 2022	Summer Term 2022
Implementation of LW Reading Sessions	Summer Term 2022	Summer 2 2022	Summer 2 2022
Interim Learning Walks	Ongoing from end of initial training session		
Phonics Surgery for Teachers	Summer 1 2022	Summer 2 2022	Summer 2 2022
Refresher Training for Year Group Teachers	September 2022	September 2022	September 2022
Training for Teachers new to the Federation	September 2022	September 2022	September 2022