



Phonics Policy



"Learning letter–sound relationships enables children to read words they have not seen before."
(Based on Ehri, 2005)

Reviewed by Governors: Summer 2026

To be reviewed: Summer 2027

Rationale and Intent

At Dothill Primary School we recognise the importance of phonics in making our pupils enthusiastic and confident readers and writers. We believe that phonics provides the foundations of learning to make the development into fluent reading and writing easier. To allow our children to develop a strong phonic awareness and to have effective blending and decoding skills, we have chosen to use a synthetic phonics programme called Read, Write, Inc. produced by Ruth Miskin.

Read Write Inc. is a method of learning centred around letter sounds and phonics, blending sounds together to read and spell words and applying these skills across the curriculum. 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.

Our principle aims, following the National Curriculum in England for phonics are:

- For all children to be confident and fluent readers and writers
- Put reading at the heart of our curriculum
- For all children to appreciate our rich and varied literary heritage
- Inspire our pupils to develop an ethos of 'reading for pleasure'
- Provide children with the opportunity to discuss and understand what they have read and to apply that understanding. They should be able to elaborate and explain clearly their understanding and ideas

The core of our phonics curriculum is the National Curriculum for England, which is supplemented by Read Write Inc.

We passionately believe that teaching children to read and write independently is one of the core purposes of a primary school enabling them to access a broad and exciting curriculum and ensuring they flourish as learners throughout their time at our school. Using Read Write Inc., the children learn to read fluently so that they can put all their energy into comprehending what they read. These key skills are taught through daily, systematic and consistent high quality phonics teaching, children learn to segment words to support their spelling ability, and blend sounds to read words.

The curriculum has been specifically sequenced in a logical progression to ensure that new knowledge and skills build on what has been taught before, this continues from EYFS until children have mastered the basic skills to be able to blend and begin to read fluently.

Teaching and Learning

Read Write Inc lessons are taught in a very systematic way and follow the same structure.

- Learn a new sound
- Practice learnt sounds
- Orally blend words with new sound
- Read words with our new sound and identify 'special friends'
- Write words with our new sound and identify 'special friends'
- Read a book using our Phonics knowledge to decode
- Complete a writing activity

Foundation Stage

We begin, in EYFS, by teaching the children set 1 sounds. Children can start blending sounds into words as soon as they know a small group of letters well. Once the children have been taught the first 5 sounds (m, a, s, d, t), they are then taught assisted blending using the sounds that they know. During lessons children are taught to hear sounds and blend them together in sequence to make a word (CVC words). We start with blending oral sounds, then progress to reading the letters and blending them together to read the word. In Read Write Inc phonics the individual sounds are called 'speed sounds' – because we want children to read them effortlessly. Set 1 sounds are the single letter sounds and set 1 special friend sounds. They are taught in the following order;

m, a, s, d, t, i, n, p, g, o, c, k, u, b, f, e, l, h, sh, r, j, v, y, w, th, z, ch, qu, x, ng, nk.

There are 12 Set 2 'speed sounds' that are made up of two or three letters which represent just one sound, e.g. ay as in play, ee as in tree and igh as in high. These are called 'special friend' sounds. When children are taught Set 2 sounds they will learn:

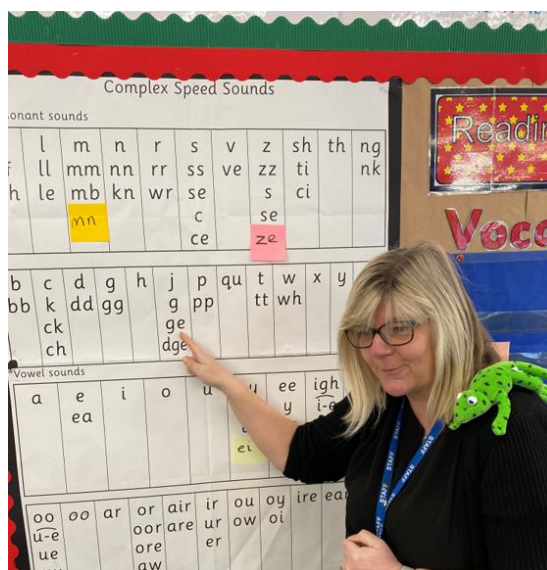
- a simple picture prompt linked to the sound
- a short phrase to say e.g. may I play
- the letters that represent a sound (special friends) e.g. ay

Each sound has a list of green words linked to it, so that the children have the opportunity to sound out and blend words containing the new sound they have been taught, for example, s-p-r-ay = spray. Green words are decodable words that children can use their 'Fred Talk' to sound out and blend. They feature the sound that the children have been learning that day. In a phonics lesson, children cover up to 5 or 6 new green words to support their reading of a new sound. When learning Set 3 speed sounds the children will be taught alternative sounds/graphemes, e.g. ee as in tree and ea as in tea.

The tables below show each sound, the associated phrase and example green words for set 1 special friend sounds, set 2 and 3 sounds and additional sounds that are taught.

Set 1 'Special Friend' Sounds

Sound	Phrase	Green words
sh		Ship, shop,
th		Thing, thin,
ch		Chip, chop, champ,
qu		Queen, quack, quest
ng	Thing on a string	Thing, string, ring, king
nk	I think I stink	Stink, think, link, sink



Set 2 Sounds

Sound	Phrase	Green words
ay	May I play?	Day, say, play, tray, today
ee	What can you see?	See, feel, need, sleep, three
igh	Fly high	Night, fight, flight, high
ow	Blow the snow	Show, blow, flow, snow
oo	Poo at the zoo	Zoom, moon, food, cool
oo	Look at a book	Look, book, good, hood
ar	Start the car	Star, bar, car, start, cart
or	Shut the door	Sort, short, worn, horse
air	That's not fair	Fair, hair, chair, stair
ir	Whirl and twirl	Whirl, twirl, shirt, skirt
ou	Shout it out	Mouth, found, shout, loud
oy	Toy for a boy	Toy, boy, employ, joy

Set 3 Sounds

Sound	Phrase	Green words
a_e	Make a cake	Make, cake, flake, bake
ea	Cup of tea	Neat, real, clean, please
i_e	Nice smile	Hide, shine, white, nice
o_e	Phone home	Phone, bone, home, spoke
u_e	Huge brute	Tune, rude, June, perfume
aw	Yawn at dawn	Saw, law, raw, straw
are	Share and care	Bare, spare, scare, flare
ur	Nurse with a purse	Burn, turn, hurl, burp, lurk
ow	Brown cow	Howl, down, brown, frown
oi	Spoil the boy	Join, coin, voice, choice
ai	Snail in the rain	Paint, train, rain, pain

knowledge of real words and instead have to use their letter-sound knowledge. This is an important part of the phonics screening check that the children complete at the end of year 1.

We make sure that pupils read books that are closely matched to their increasing knowledge of phonics and ability to read 'tricky words'; so that they experience early reading success and gain confidence that they are readers, as well as consolidating the learning that takes place in school. In EYFS and Year 1, children bring home a Read Write Inc scheme reading book that is matched to their phonic group stage. Through the consistent, systematic and daily teaching of the Read Write Inc phonics programme, our aim is for children to become fluent, confident readers by the end of Key Stage One. Children are assessed at the end of Year 1 using a government statutory assessment tool known as the Phonics Screening Check. This screening check confirms whether the child has learnt phonic decoding to an appropriate standard and will identify sounds needing further support in Year 2. Children are assessed one to one by the reading leader, who is a familiar adult to them. Those who do not pass the screening will continue their Phonics lessons in Year 2 by being streamed into the correct group within the Year 1 cohort. This allows for them to consolidate and develop their confidence, within a group aimed at their specific ability, ready to retake the screening at the end of Year 2.

Through the Read Write Inc programme, children will be equipped with the skills to decode unfamiliar words using strategies that they have been taught in their daily lessons. This way, children can focus on developing their fluency and comprehension as they move through the school. Hopefully, this leads to a love of reading and children taking pleasure in exploring the rich literary world around them with a firm phonic basis to support them.

Curriculum Documents for Phonics can be found on the curriculum pages of the school website:

<https://www.dothillprimaryschool.co.uk/key-information/curriculum>

- Phonics Curriculum Statement
- Reading (Including Phonics) Progression Document EYFS/KS1
- Reading (Including Phonics) Progression Document Lower KS2
- Reading (Including Phonics) Progression Document Upper KS2

Planning

Read Write Inc follows a very prescriptive planning regime to ensure consistency and quality of learning. Once initial sounds are learnt, lessons follow a 3-day plan and then from Yellow books upwards a 5-day plan.

Day 1	Day 2	Day 3
Daily Speed Sounds Lesson	Daily Speed Sounds Lesson	Daily Speed Sounds Lesson
Speed Sounds from the Storybook	Speedy Green Words	Think About the Story
Story Green Words	Red Word Cards	Third Read – Children
Speedy Green Words	Partner Practice – Speedy Green Words and Red Words	Questions to Talk About
Red Word Cards	Second Read – Children	Proofread
Partner Practice – Speed Sounds, Story Green Words and Red Words	Hold a Sentence – 2	Write About
Story Introduction	Build a Sentence – Orally	
First Read – Children		
Read Aloud – Teacher	Handwriting	
Hold a Sentence – 1		
Handwriting		

Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5
Daily Speed Sounds Lesson	Daily Speed Sounds Lesson	Daily Speed Sounds Lesson	Daily Speed Sounds Lesson	Daily Speed Sounds Lesson
Speed Sounds from the Storybook	Speedy Green Words	Partner Practice – Speedy Green Words and Red Words	Spell Check	Spell Test
Story Green Words	Red Word Cards	Third Read and Voice Choice	Grammar	Write About... <i>(continue writing here from Day 4)</i>
Speedy Green Words	Partner Practice – Speedy Green Words and Red Words		Vocabulary	
Red Word Cards	Second Read – Children	Questions to Talk About	Proofread – Spelling	
Partner Practice – Speed Sounds and Story Green Words	Fred Fingers – Spelling Green Words	Questions to Read and Answer	Proofread – Grammar	
Story Introduction	Red Rhythms – Spelling Red Words		Write About... <i>(start writing here and continue on Day 5)</i>	
First Read – Children	Hold a Sentence – 1 and 2	Build a Sentence		
Read Aloud – Teacher				
Red Rhythms – Spelling Red Words	Handwriting	Handwriting		Partner Proofread
				Words to Keep
Handwriting			Handwriting	

Read Write Inc planning is concisely set out in the Teachers Handbooks which can be found on the Oxford Owl web-site <https://www.oxfordowl.co.uk/> . All Read Write Inc staff have access to this.

Assessment

Assessment is woven throughout the curriculum and is used by staff to check pupil's understanding of key concepts. This supports in identifying gaps in knowledge and understanding enabling teachers to respond appropriately. We also recognise the value of assessment as an important learning tool which provides opportunities for pupils to strengthen their memories through concerted effort.

Assessment in Read Write Inc is completed at the end of each half term. Each child is tested individually. They must show that they know the sounds taught, they need to be able to read words containing sounds taught, read words with sounds previously taught at speed without blending and for yellow, blue and grey groups be able to read a piece of text at speed with fluency.

Year 1 children also take the Phonic Screening check in the Summer term. This is a government test that requires the children to read 40 words (20 real words/20 nonsense words). To pass the test children are usually expected to be able to read 32 words.



Recording

Work is recorded daily in Read Write Inc lessons. Pupils practice words containing the new sound learnt in each lesson. These are then developed through the week in short writing activities. Every classroom across the school displays either a Simple or Complex Speed Sound Chart that is referred to by Read Write Inc every lesson and is used as a reference point by all pupils when needing support with spelling.

Resources

Each group requires several resources. All staff are provided with the following:

Speed Sounds

- A simple or complex speed sound chart
- Large Set 1, 2 and 3 sound cards
- Small Set 1, 2 and 3 sound card
- A box with red, green and alien words for teaching new sounds and revising those already taught
- Fred frog

Reading Books

All reading books are located in the small RWI intervention room next to EYFS classrooms.

Books are ordered in trays according to colour and are in number order. Each tray contains a folder with a set of books and relevant green and red words. These remain in school and are used in the lesson. The tray also contains a set of the text being read that week – these go home with the children and must be collected in and returned when you move to the next book. There is also a linked text in the tray that also goes home.

Writing Books

Next to the reading books there are two tall blue cupboards. The first cupboard contains copies of Read Write Inc 'Get Writing' Books. These books are not written but provide staff with a reference for all writing activities. You will need to collect the book for the colour you are teaching.

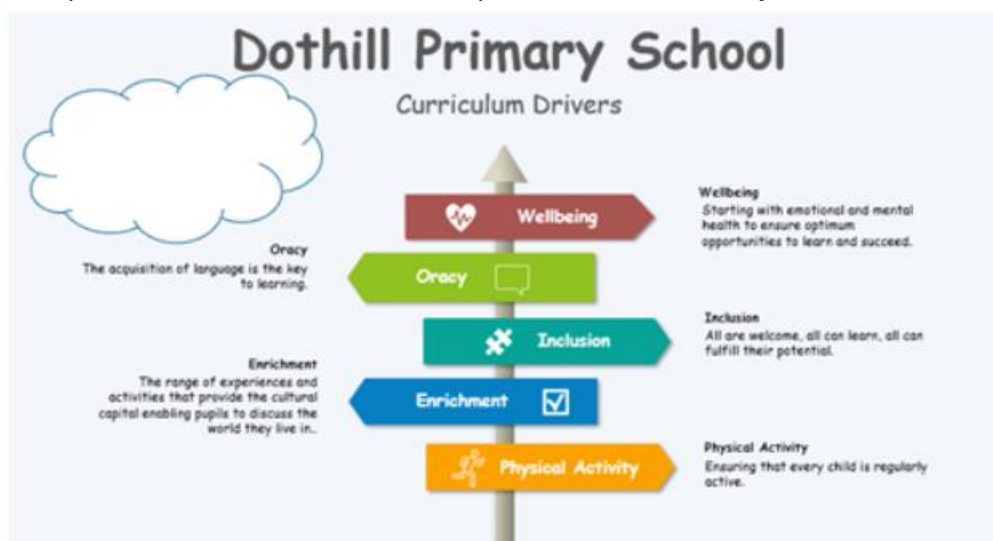
Role of the Subject Leader

The role of the subject leader is to:

- Audit, identify, purchase and organise all phonics resources ensuring that they are readily available and well maintained.
- Document and review the agreed ways of working through a written policy document and scheme of work
- Advise and support staff in the planning and teaching of phonics and developing their subject knowledge.
- Model lessons or parts of lessons to aid confidence and knowledge.
- Monitor the teaching and learning of phonics through learning walks, work scrutiny, the monitoring of planning and pupil voice.
- Monitor outcomes for pupils, assess and track pupil progress.
- Use feedback from monitoring to develop an action plan for phonics with realistic and developmental targets.
- Report to SLT and Governors

Curriculum Drivers

At Dothill we have five curriculum drivers that are central to our school vision and ethos. They help to drive and shape the curriculum and are incorporated across all subjects and themes.



Oracy – Our curriculum aims to develop learners who can think critically, reason together and have the vocabulary to express their knowledge and understanding. In phonics oracy is developed through reading and discussing the texts read in each lesson.

Enrichment - A range of visits or visitors into school are planned across the curriculum. These are organised by teachers, in order to offer a range of experiences that help to broaden the understanding of curriculum content, enrich the curriculum delivery with real-life experiences and most importantly help the children embed and retrieve their learning.

Wellbeing - We place emphasis on a curriculum that develops the whole child. Through our core values – happiness, respect, responsibility, creativity, honesty, enthusiasm, confidence, kindness, cooperation and fairness – we ensure that the wellbeing of all members of the community is at the centre of our life in school and the key to raising academic success. Our children gain a sound knowledge of their own value and purpose, with the ability to make choices and decisions. In Phonics this is the opportunity to share success quickly as new sounds are learnt daily and children are able to read and write new words at speed.

Inclusion – All pupils who need to participate in Phonics are taught through Read Write Inc or Fresh Start session. Inclusion is supported through being taught in a small group with other children of similar ability. Children progress through the programme at their own speed as they are assessed and regrouped half termly. Children that would benefit from extra phonics input take part in separate phonics intervention either in smaller groups or on a one-to-one basis. Each learner is an individual and we use a child centred approach to adapting our teaching to meet their need.

We use the NASEN 'Teacher Handbook: SEND' (2021) to further inform our inclusive practice by considering specific adaptations for each curriculum area.

Physical activity – Sport England Survey shows that active children are happier, more resilient and more trusting of others and it's also shown a positive association between being active and higher levels of mental wellbeing, individual development and community development. At Dothill we build physical activity into phonics through physical movement from one activity to another.

Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development

We recognise that the personal development of pupils, spiritually, morally, socially and culturally, plays a significant part in their ability to learn and achieve. Through the use of carefully selected texts pupils are provided with some opportunities to develop an understanding of others.

Use of ICT

Information and communication technology enhances the teaching of Read Write Inc wherever appropriate. Images are often used to help explain difficult words or vocabulary new to the children. Speed reading is often taught using fast moving visual displays. There are also many fun ICT activities and phonics games used with the children to enhance their learning.

Online Safety

As part of our commitment to safeguarding, online access during lessons is carefully planned for and monitored. Pupils may use specific content, videos, models, images on the computer. These will be carefully selected by the teacher to ensure that they are appropriate and safe. SENSO software is used across school to monitor and manage computer activity on any computer device.

Equal Opportunities

Equal opportunities are considered when we decide upon the teaching strategies that we employ and the resources that we provide. In our curriculum planning we ensure that all pupils, with due respect to their culture, religion and background, have equal access to all areas of the curriculum, extracurricular activities, all areas of the grounds, equipment and resources, the staff and time to contribute to whole class and group work.

Impact

The impact of our phonics teaching is that:

- Our pupils become confident and fluent readers.
- Our pupils have a strong foundation on which to build their reading and writing skills.
- Our pupils develop a love and passion for reading.
- Our pupils can participate in all areas of the curriculum because of their ability to be confident readers and writers.