

Green Lane Infant School Early Reading and Phonics

Intent

As an infant school, we prioritise early reading encompassing the skills for reading alongside providing a wealth of opportunity for immersion within a range of quality texts, genres and authors to motivate and inspire our children. We know that reading is a fundamental building block for success in all other areas of the curriculum and in future life. Our shared belief that all children can be readers, regardless of their starting point, needs or background, underpins our rigorous and well sequenced early reading curriculum and our school's reading culture.

We aim for all of our children to:

- read easily, fluently and with good understanding
- develop the habit of reading widely and often, for both pleasure and information
- acquire a wide vocabulary, an understanding of grammar and knowledge of linguistic conventions for reading, writing and spoken language
- appreciate our rich and varied literary heritage
- have the reading knowledge and skills to succeed in all aspects of their education and beyond.

'To learn to read is to light a fire; every syllable that is spelled out is a spark' – Victor Hugo

'Reading is the gateway skill that makes all other learning possible' – Barack Obama

Implementation

Systematic synthetic phonics is the primary way that our children are taught to read. Our scheme, [ALS Phonics](#), builds progressively from Phase 1 in Nursery to Phase 5 in Year 1 in line with National Curriculum expectations and meets the needs of our children with visuals, resources and mantras that support the fluent application of phonic knowledge into reading and writing.

Daily phonics lessons follow a consistent structure and include retrieval and application of previously learnt GPCs* and practice and application of new GPCs into reading and writing of both words and sentences. Any child who is not on track receives additional support, either in class and/or through additional targeted intervention, based on assessment of their individual needs. This may include intervention to support the retention of GPCs, blending (putting sounds together to make words) and segmenting (separating words into individual sounds) or for a child who is new to English.

Our children are taught to apply their phonics in shared and guided reading sessions, independent reading and across the wider curriculum. This is to ensure that fluent decoding develops alongside reading skills and comprehension within meaningful contexts and for different purposes. Where appropriate, children may also have opportunities for one to one reading. These repeated opportunities for application aim to ensure that phonics knowledge and skills are embedded into long-term memory so that our children can decode confidently and develop fluency that supports comprehension and reading for pleasure.

Our children have further opportunities to apply their phonics in decodable reading books at home. Accurate assessment ensures that books match their developing phonic knowledge, reading fluency and comprehension skills so they can consolidate what they have learnt in school and experience success. Our learning app, Seesaw, is used to share information with parents and encourage home school dialogue: this includes the sharing of home reading books, children's next steps in reading and videos to introduce new GPCs that have been learnt in school.

Alongside phonics, High Frequency Words, including Common Exception Words that cannot yet be decoded using phonics, are taught progressively within each phonic phase to further support our children's fluency. This includes reading the words in and out of context. Confident decoding of these words supports good fluency as they make up a large proportion of all text therefore our ultimate aim is for our children to read these words 'at a glance' without over-reliance on sounding out and blending.

* a GPC (grapheme-phoneme correspondence) is the matching of a spoken sound to a written letter or group of letters e.g. knowing that 'ph' is pronounced as a 'f' sound

Impact

In line with ALS Phonics, rigorous assessment is used periodically after each new block of sounds has been taught to identify areas for further consolidation. Revision and reassessment is then used to ensure that our children are secure before moving on. Shared, guided and one to one reading is used to further support formative assessment of our children's early reading so practitioners know that phonic knowledge, reading and comprehension skills are being applied in context. Termly NFER comprehension tests in KS1 further support teacher's assessment judgements and identification of next steps. Any child who is not on track is supported in class and/or through additional targeted intervention.

At the end of Reception, our children are assessed against the Early Learning Goal for reading. Our children take the statutory phonics screening check at the end of Year One and any children who do not pass are supported with daily phonics sessions in line with their needs.