

Firs Primary School Reading Policy

December 2020

Aims and Philosophy

At Firs Primary School we aim to deliver the programmes of study for reading at key stages 1 and 2. These consist of two dimensions:

- word reading
- comprehension (both listening and reading)

It is essential that teaching focuses on developing pupils' competence in both dimensions; different kinds of teaching are needed for each. Skilled word reading involves both the speedy working out of the pronunciation of unfamiliar printed words (decoding) and the speedy recognition of familiar printed words. Underpinning both is the understanding that the letters on the page represent the sounds in spoken words. This is why phonics should be emphasised in the early teaching of reading to beginners (i.e. unskilled readers) when they start school. Good comprehension draws from linguistic knowledge (in particular of vocabulary and grammar) and on knowledge of the world. Comprehension skills develop through pupils' experience of high-quality discussion with the teacher, as well as from reading and discussing a range of stories, poems and non-fiction. All pupils must be encouraged to read widely across both fiction and non-fiction to develop their knowledge of themselves and the world in which they live, to establish an appreciation and love of reading, and to gain knowledge across the curriculum. Reading widely and often increases pupils' vocabulary because they encounter words they would rarely hear or use in everyday speech. Reading also feeds pupils' imagination and opens up a treasure-house of wonder and joy for curious young minds.

We intend to:

- Develop a love of reading for every child recognising that reading is the key to independent learning.
- Ensure that all children who have been with us since Foundation Stage leave us decoding fluently whilst also reading for meaning and with expression.
- Enable all pupils to use a wide range of cueing strategies.
- Systematically track the reading of every child including new arrivals.
- Ensure children access top quality children's literature appropriate for their age, including literature which champions diversity and has characters and role models from a range of backgrounds and cultures, so all children can find themselves reflected in the books they hear and read.
- Work with parents in partnership to develop children's reading.
- Ensure that the school environment encourages children to read and love books.

Word Reading

At Firs Primary School we follow the Read, Write Inc (RWI) phonics scheme when teaching phonics to children who are at the early reading stage of their development (children in the Early Years Foundation Stage, Year 1 and older pupils who have limited or no prior schooling in English).

The aim of Read, Write Inc is to teach children to:

- decode texts effortlessly so all their resources can be used to comprehend what they read
- spell effortlessly so that all their resources can be directed towards composing their writing

The RWI scheme advocates that lessons should be delivered using the 5 Ps:

- Pace – good pace is essential to the lesson
- Praise/Positive Teaching – children learn more effectively in a positive climate
- Purpose – every part of the lesson has a specific purpose
- Participation - a strong feature of RWI lessons is partner work (based on research which states that we learn 70% of what we talk about with our partner)
- Passion – this is a very prescriptive programme. It is the energy, enthusiasm and passion that group leaders put into the lesson that bring the teaching and learning to life!

Implementation and Assessment

The first Read, Write Inc sounds are introduced in Foundation Stage 1, at the start of the Summer term. They are taught again from the beginning of Foundation Stage 2 ensuring that all pupils starting the school can secure these sounds before moving on.

Parent meetings are held during the Autumn term in Foundation Stage 2 to introduce parents to RWI and the way in which we teach their children to read. Parents are also given the opportunity to buy sound cards and green/red words to support their child at home.

Ability Groupings

Pupils work within ability groups across FS, Years 1 and 2, and smaller groups in Year 3, 4 5 and 6 where needed. Ability groups are structured using on-going assessments carried out every half term. The reading leader will group the children in light of the outcomes of the individual assessments. Pupils can be re-assessed earlier during the terms where needed and the groups are reorganised accordingly. This enables pupils to progress through the groups at a pace suited to their learning needs. Children new to the school will be assessed within their first few days and placed in an appropriate ability group. Less able children will be placed into smaller groups, where possible.

Coronavirus update to groupings: children will still be assessed and grouped as usual although the groupings will remain in year group bubbles.

Children are also assessed throughout every lesson using assessment for learning (AFL). Every time partner work is used the teacher assesses the progress of their children. The teacher assesses how children:

- read the grapheme chart
- read the green and red word lists
- decode the ditty/story

- comprehend the story

Recording of Work

Children will complete the spelling part of the speed sounds sessions in smaller red books. They will mark these in purple pen through self-assessment.

The 'Get Writing' part of the session will be recorded in the 'Get Writing' work booklets relevant to the colour level they are working at. These will be marked according to the marking policy and with some parts self-assessed using purple pen.

Resources

The Reading Leader is responsible for auditing the resources available in school and ordering any required resources. The resources used to deliver RWI are:

- Fred Frog (teddy character for younger children)
- Speed sound cards (A4 and smaller) set 1, 2 and/or 3
- Red words flashcards (high frequency, non-decodable)
- Green words flashcards (decodable)
- Story books
- Story green words flashcards
- Story red words flashcards
- Get writing! Booklets
- Interactive Whiteboard slide shows to go with story booklets – or printed equivalent
- Speed sounds chart
- Teacher Handbook (provides all planning for all colour groups).

Planning and teaching

This is provided through the Read, Write Inc programme in the handbook. The plans are detailed and set routines are to be followed.

When using RWI to read the children will:

- learn 70+ sounds and the corresponding letter/letter groups using simple picture prompts
- learn to read words using Fred Talk to start, then as they progress without Fred Talk
- read stories featuring words they have learned to sound out
- show that they comprehend the stories by answering questions

When using RWI to write the children will:

- learn to write the letters/letter groups which represent 70+ sounds.
- learn to spell words by saying the sounds in Fred Talk
- write simple and complex sentences

Children at an early stage of reading take part in daily RWI lessons which last one hour. These lessons include both a reading (phonics and comprehension) and writing (spelling, punctuation and grammar) focus.

Children with delayed development in reading are placed in groups with the strongest teachers/TAs. RWI lessons are delivered either by a teacher or a teaching assistant.

Monitoring and Review

The reading leader:

- assesses all KS1 pupils and designates pupils to the correct groups
- assigns leaders to groups
- 'drops in' on RWI groups to give advice on teaching and to informally check that pupils are in the correct groups
- Provides coaching sessions for staff when necessary to ensure the set routines in the handbook are being followed correctly
- models lessons to support quality first teaching
- liaises with the head teacher regarding groupings, teaching spaces and other pertinent matters
- holds regular development days with for the school to improve practise and keep up to date
- ensures staff have adequate level of training in place- this may be formal or informal
- purchases new resources
- monitors marking (see above)
- ensures staff have access to the correct planning for their group (provided by the handbook)

Word Reading Interventions

Children identified as making less than expected progress through half termly assessments are given 1:1 tutoring. The aim of this is to move children forward quickly within their Read, Write Inc learning, filling gaps in their phonic knowledge and improving their reading fluency. The reading leader identifies children requiring intervention through analysis of half termly assessments and specifies which sounds or skills children will work on in their interventions. Interventions are delivered by the class TA or teacher.

Sometimes children with suspected or identified reading difficulties (e.g. Dyslexia) also benefit from the Toe by Toe intervention, and this may be offered if other interventions are not accelerating progress at a satisfactory rate.

Comprehension

Firs Primary School follows the Talk for Writing approach to teaching writing, and within the teaching sequence there is a strong focus on teaching children how to read both as a reader and also as a writer. This enables teachers to incorporate the teaching of reading strategies into daily English lessons. This is supported by the ERIC approach (based upon Reciprocal Reading) which explicitly teaches the skills needed for effective comprehension; explain, retrieve, interpret and choice.

- Explain: children learn the meanings of new vocabulary and subtle differences in meaning. This aspect also incorporates the Word Aware teaching strategy and teaches children the definitions, synonyms and phonology of new words.

- Retrieve: children learn to answer simpler retrieval style questions which require them to find information in a text or extract.
- Interpret: children learn to recognise hidden meanings within texts and answer inference-based questions.
- Choice: children learn to understand why authors make certain choices in their writing e.g. in relation to word choices or presentation.

Children at an early stage of reading have additional opportunities to practice their comprehension skills within their daily RWI lessons – in which teachers model thinking aloud about the story that is being read and ask targeted questions.

Older children and fluent readers access the Accelerated Reader program in which short quizzes are used to assess their understanding upon completion of an independent reading book.

Reading Books

All children work through the RWI books at the appropriate level matched to their phonological skill level. This starts at learning the speed sounds in set 1,2 and 3, moving through oral blending and blending sounds in words, to then accessing story books at the correct level from Ditties to Grey. Suitable books to choose from are available in each year group and are monitored by the English coordinator and reading leaders.

Each week every child takes home a RWI book appropriate to the level they read independently and they access in their phonics group. If a child does not access a RWI book, they take home the sounds and practice their blending to help them learn the skills to access a RWI levelled text.

Children in RWI can also access reading books from the Oxford Reading Tree (ORT) range. This provides them with a wider variety of reading materials and the reading leader has provided teaching staff with a document to ensure that the ORT book level is equivalent to the RWI level they access.

Once children have completed the Read Write Inc scheme and can read confidently and fluently, they can access Accelerated Reader. Children complete the Star Reading Assessment which provides a reading age and book level appropriate to the child's decoding and comprehension skills. They can then choose a book from the identified range within the library or their own classroom book corner.

Children who are at the early stage of reading (ie in RWI) also take a picture book home to share with their family to extend their vocabulary and to further promote the love of reading. Each family is encouraged to read the same story few times throughout the week to develop understanding of the text.

In order to celebrate the range of languages in the school and encourage the development of pupils' home languages, the school library has a range of bilingual books in a variety of languages available for children to borrow.

Every child in the school, including those in Foundation Stage 1 and 2, is also given a MyON account. MyOn is an online library which enables children to access hundreds of electronic books from home on any electronic device e.g. phones and Ipads. MyOn has an audio facility which supports early readers and pupils learning English as an Additional Language by exposing them to vocabulary they

may not be able to decode themselves. This is particularly helpful for children whose parents have limited or no literacy skills in English, and are therefore unable to support them with wider reading at home.

Reading Records

The school no longer provides individual reading records for pupils as high pupil mobility meant that this was an ineffective use of resources. Teachers keep written records for each pupil to make notes on 1:1 reading sessions which include next steps and skills demonstrated by the pupil. This supports ongoing assessment for learning.

Pupils who access RWI take home a weekly sheet on which their parents are able to record any reading carried out at home if they are able to. This is returned to the teacher each Friday and kept with the child's school reading log.

Both MyOn and Accelerated Reader provide an electronic record of any books completed by children at home, and the AR short quizzes ensure that pupils are accurately comprehending what they have read. Class teachers can monitor this information and intervene by changing a pupil's reading level or supporting with more appropriate book choices where necessary.

Independent Reading in KS2

Children in KS2 who are at the early stages of reading will take part in daily RWI lessons. During these lessons they have the opportunity to read a book at their level with the teacher, with a partner and independently throughout the week. They should also have the chance to read to their class teacher (who may not be their RWI teacher) at least once a week.

Children who are able to access the Accelerated Reader scheme have 20-30 minutes per day for independent reading time.

Promoting a Love of Reading

At Firs Primary School we are passionate about instilling a love of reading in every child and so we offer a range of experiences throughout the year to promote reading for pleasure, and develop the children's wider understanding of literature. These include:

- Meet the Author visits as part of Derby Book Festival each summer for small groups of Year 2 and KS2 pupils. Books written by the authors are purchased for each class, and for children attending the visits.
- Celebration of World Book Day each year.
- Visits to Waterstones Book Shop as part of the World Book Day celebrations for disadvantaged pupils who may not otherwise have the chance to use their free book token.
- Hosting the Travelling Book Fair twice a year, which enables pupils to purchase books at a discounted rate (and also helps to raise money for the school library).

Every class also has dedicated reading for pleasure time daily, in which the class teacher or TA reads a high-quality text to the class. This means that pupils are exposed to a range of high-quality children's books (including classics) throughout their time at Firs Primary School and they are supported to develop their cultural capital. Class Reader texts are chosen from Pie Corbett's Reading Spine as well as from a selection of texts which champion diversity taken from the 'Diverse Voices –

50 of the Best Children's Books celebrating cultural diversity in the UK' booklist. Class Reader texts are also supplemented by additional books in Key Stage 1 and the Early Years, where stories tend to be much shorter.

We also offer further opportunities for reading at playtimes and lunchtimes by:

- Staffing the library for two hours per day, to ensure that children can access it throughout lunchtimes.
- Providing a 'Reading Shed' on the playground, which provides a cosy space to read and a selection of books at different levels.
- Training 'Reading Champions' who are pupils that love reading and will read to, or with, others at playtimes, and providing Book Packs for them to use on the playground.

Parental Involvement

We offer workshops for parents to share knowledge of RWI and reading strategies to enable parents and carers to support their children at home.

On Friday afternoons the library is opened to parents and carers so that they can come in to school and read with their children.

Assessment

A combination of strategies are used to assess pupil's word reading and comprehension skills. The strategies used depend on the child's age and level of development in reading and include:

- Half termly (or more frequent) RWI assessments which assess phonic decoding skills
- Practice Year 1 phonics assessments
- Termly PIRA tests (standardised)
- Practice SATs Reading papers
- 1:1 reading with the teacher
- Whole class reading comprehension questions based on short texts or extracts
- STAR reading test
- Short comprehension quizzes once pupils complete a reading book
- Teacher questioning within RWI lessons or whole class ERIC lessons

Training

Every member of staff takes part in two days of Read, Write Inc training as soon as possible after they begin working at the school. Until this point, they are heavily supported by the reading leader to ensure consistency of approach and skill in phonics teaching across the school.

The reading leader provides further CPD opportunities throughout the year by:

- Modelling and coaching where a training need is identified
- Providing regular 'RAG' rated feedback to teaching staff on observed lessons
- Holding RWI Development Days in partnership with a RWI consultant

The school is also working towards become a 'Talk for Writing' model school and staff have had several INSET days in 2019-20 as part of a long-term training plan. This has supported their understanding of teaching children to 'read as a reader' and 'read as a writer'.

Coronavirus Update: Due to restrictions in place as a result of the pandemic and the need to minimise infection risks in school, parts of the policy are not currently actionable. They will be reintroduced as soon as social distancing guidelines allow.