



**A COMPLETE PHONICS RESOURCE  
TO SUPPORT CHILDREN**

## **The Breck Primary Phonics and Early Reading Policy**

“The reading and writing of Standard English, alongside proficient language development, is the key to unlocking the rest of the academic curriculum. Pupils who struggle to read struggle in all subjects and the wonders of a knowledge-rich curriculum passes them by unread. Fluency of reading is also a key indicator for future success in further education, higher education and employment. In short, reading can achieve something teachers and policymakers have been attempting for decades: to lessen or even eliminate the impact of early life disadvantage.” Rt. Hon Nick Gibb, The Reading Framework, July 2021.

### **The context of our school**

The 2019-2020 and the 2020-2021 lockdown have impacted language development in KS1 significantly. A large proportion of children in Year 1 and 2 and a small group in Year 3 need intensive, additional phonics teaching to enable them to decode and read fluently to access the wider curriculum and enjoy reading. Analysis of baseline assessments show children accessing reception at lower levels. The school is oversubscribed, receiving appeal applications monthly and 2021 data shows number on roll is in Q2 Quintile with 323 pupils on roll compared to 281 nationally.

The January 2019 census shows the proportion of disadvantaged pupils eligible for Ever 6 FSM as 8.9% compared to 23.0% nationally and pupils who have English as an additional language (EAL) as 1% compared to 21.2% nationally. The Primary Inspection Data Summary Report 2021 shows pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or a disability as 2.2% compared to 12.6% nationally and those having an EHCP as 0.3% compared to 1.8% nationally. 2021 data shows the school has 6 of 17 possible ethnic groups. The 2019 census shows deprivation is 0.12% compared to 0.21% nationally, 88.9% stability compared to 85.6% nationally and overall absence and persistent absence both as 2.8% being in the lowest 20% of all schools.

**It is essential that our approach to teaching phonics and reading is accessible to all learners, regardless of background.**



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### Intent

#### Phonics (reading and spelling)

At **The Breck Primary** we believe that all our children can become fluent readers and writers. This is why we teach reading through *Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised*, which is a systematic and synthetic phonics programme. We start teaching phonics in Nursery/Reception and follow the [Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised progression](#), 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 Breck Primary, 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 Breck Primary**, we value reading as a crucial 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.

Because we believe teaching every child to read is so important, we have a Reading Leader, Miss Wragg, who drives the early reading programme in our school. This person is highly skilled at teaching phonics and reading, and they monitor and support our reading team, so everyone teaches with fidelity to the *Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised* programme.

### Implementation

#### 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.



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- 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.
- In 2021, to address COVID recovery we stream pupils to provide targeted, effective phonics teaching with additional, daily five-minute one-to-one Keep up sessions for all pupils working below age-related expectations. 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.
- If any child in Year 3 to 6 has gaps in their phonic knowledge when reading or writing, we plan phonics 'catch-up' lessons using THRASS until Summer 2022 (as this is the scheme these children will be familiar with). As pupils move into Year 3, in September 2022, Little Wandle Phonics will begin to replace THRASS in Key Stage 2. In Key Stage 2 short, sharp phonics 'Catch-up' lessons last 10 minutes and take place at least three times a week. Staff use THRASS assessment to identify gaps in pupil knowledge and to plan an intensive catch-up programme.



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### Teaching reading: Reading practice sessions once a week

- We teach children to read through group reading practice sessions once a week, through whole class reading of the class text daily, through one-to-one reading with an adult and Reading Buddies.
- The group reading practice sessions:
  - are taught by a fully trained adult (usually the class teacher to keep an overview of the streamed groups in Year 1 and 2) to small groups of approximately six-nine children
  - use books matched to the children's secure phonic knowledge using the *Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised* assessments and book matching grids on pages 11–20 of ['Application of phonics to reading'](#)
  - 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. (Skills include: activating prior knowledge, questioning, direct retrieval, inference, prediction, summarising, sequencing, vocabulary, explaining, identifying the structure of the text, writers' use of language and purpose, audience and impact on the reader).
- 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.
- A fully trained adult listens to each child read twice a week and changes their reading book.
- Year 6 Reading Buddies listen to those children who need intensive keep-up support, daily and talk to them about the book they are reading, discussing vocabulary in 'Child-friendly' language.



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- All children share and enjoy the whole class text and short reading extracts practising comprehension skills.

### Home reading

- A decodable reading 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 vulnerable children

- Children in Reception and Year 1 who are receiving additional phonics Keep-up sessions read their reading practice book to an adult daily.

### 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 children to read 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.
- The Reading Leader and SLT use the Audit and Prompt cards to regularly monitor and observe teaching; they use the summative data 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.



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- 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 Breck Primary** and our local community as well as books that open windows into other worlds and cultures. We choose books that reflect our thematic approach to the curriculum and use them as a springboard to curiosity, knowledge and learning. These books include award-winning titles, contemporary and classical fiction, a range of non-fiction genres, poetry and perspectives and experiences which are similar and different from the children's own lives. We promote diversity and equality through reading.
- 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.
- Each class visits the school library once a week to select a reading for pleasure book.
- Children across the school have regular opportunities to engage with a wide range of Reading for Pleasure events (book fairs, author visits and workshops and national events).

## 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. Children receiving Keep-up support are assessed every three weeks.



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- 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.

### **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 as well as through the half-termly *Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised* summative assessments (Year 2) and THRASS (Year 3-6).