

Dean Field School

Phonics Policy



Name of Policy Writer/Amendments	Date Written/Amended	Next Review Date
KFudge	September 2019	July 2020
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L Brambani	July 2024	July 2025

Intent

At Dean Field, we value reading as a key life skill and are dedicated to enabling our pupils to become lifelong readers. We believe that reading is key for academic success and progress in a number of curriculum areas therefore we provide our pupils with the skills and confidence to deal with printed language from a very early age. We provide children with a structured scheme, Read, Write, Inc., that will lead to children becoming fluent readers so that at the end of their primary education with us, they are able to read a wide variety of texts easily.

As we hold reading for pleasure at the heart of reading, we ensure children develop a real love and thirst for reading a range of genres by providing them with a Read, Write, Inc. story book which they are reading in class, a Read, Write, Inc. story bookbag book and a reading for pleasure book. The two Read, Write, Inc. books sent home match the individual child's phonic ability in order for them to practice at home what they have learnt in school, building on their confidence and fluency as readers.

We, as a school, are determined to provide the best phonics teaching to our children and therefore ensure all staff members teaching Read, Write, Inc. sessions are regularly up-to-date with the correct training. Miss Brambani, our phonics lead, checks in weekly with all staff and holds weekly 'bite-size' training sessions to ensure the teaching remains at a high level. All of our staff members have access to all of the training videos to recap different areas of the sessions they deliver. We also ensure our parents and carers are kept up-to-date too by sharing Read, Write, Inc. resources, information and 'how-to' videos in order to support their children at home.

Aims

Right from Nursery, we put phonics at the heart of everything we do as we believe it is a crucial part of our pupils' educations.

We aim to:

- Ensure that phonics has a high profile in school and we take every opportunity to celebrate success in this.
- Develop positive attitudes towards phonics to ensure reading is an enjoyable experience for all pupils.
- Ensure phonics is placed at the centre of our Early Years and Year 1 curriculum planning and development as well as for those children who need extra support in phonics in other year groups.
- Teach our children a range of phonics strategies so they can tackle reading problems and apply them to the wider curriculum.
- Involve, engage and update parents on their child's progress via home-school reading record communications and parent workshops.
- Upskill staff by providing them with training on a regular basis to ensure they are up to-date with school policies and procedures.

- Monitor and assess phonics every half-term to ensure children are placed in the right Read, Write, Inc. group to support their individual reading ability.

Implementation

Planning, Teaching and Learning

At Dean Field, phonics is placed at the forefront of our Early Years and Lower School curriculum planning and design. Read, Write, Inc. teachers follow the scheme to plan daily lessons to explicitly teach children the key phonics skills. They ensure they feedback to the phonics lead and child's class teacher to discuss further intervention support and provide feedback to their parents. The Read, Write, Inc. staff ensure their children have access to the correct bookbag books which match their phonic ability in order to support their home reading, with a progression ticklist in there to ensure they always have the correct bookbag book suited to their individual ability. Pupils also get the opportunity to apply their phonics skills in other areas of the curriculum, like science, geography and history, and as a school we are very keen to provide these opportunities wherever possible.

Miss Fudge, our RWI leader, ensures that all children accessing RWI are placed in the correct group and the group leader is following and delivering the correct plans when teaching. Miss Fudge will regularly conduct observations of staff delivering RWI and check books to ensure learning is suitable and on track. The children mix for phonics to suit their reading ability and to create smaller groups for more focused teaching. The groups typically mix Nursery/Reception, Reception/Y1/Y2, Y1/Y2 and include any children above Y2 that we feel need the intervention to support their reading ability, All staff follow the plans from the scheme and all children are re-assessed at the end of each half-term to adjust groups if necessary, The book bag books children take home are in line with the RWI scheme we use, so every child is a confident reader at home too as they reflect the sounds they have already learnt in school.

Accelerated Reader

Some children in Year 1 achieve at a rapid pace in phonics and therefore we provide these children the opportunity to join Accelerated Reader alongside their phonics Read, Write, Inc. scheme. This assessment provides information on a student's overall reading ability and suggests a range of book levels for each student called the "zone of proximal development", or ZPD. By doing this, teachers are reassured that children are reading books at the correct level with a suitable amount of challenge which ultimately helps raise standards in reading. Pupils take the STAR Reading test at the end of every half term as a way of assessing reading and ensuring they are moving up ZPD ranges appropriately based on their reading age.

Individual Reading

At Dean Field, we endeavour to listen to all our pupils read at least once a week. In some cases, particularly to support our disadvantaged pupils, pupils will read to a member of staff daily. Children will read and discuss their Read, Write, Inc. group or bookbag book with their teacher or teaching assistant and this will be recorded in their home-school reading record along with a positive comment to motivate children and a constructive next step. The next step will be very specific and will aim to fill in any gaps in their reading or help them progress further. The next steps will be taken directly from the EYFS or National Curriculum objectives. Children who are using the Read, Write, Inc. scheme will take home a book which reflects the sounds they already know and the book which they are learning within their RWI group that week. A progressive RWI bookbag book tick list is stuck in their reading record so parents and staff ensure each child has the correct book according to their phonic ability.

Inclusion

Teachers ensure that children with SEND linked to reading, have access to the resources and scaffolding they need, as per their Individual Educational Plan (IEP), in order to succeed in reading. We also carefully plan challenges for our more able pupils to help deepen their understanding and to stretch them further. We use homogeneous grouping typically from Nursery – Year 2, but sometimes above for individual children still needing phonics sessions. This means we mix according to individual ability rather than the focus on their age. Children who still need support to read and are using phonics to help with this have intervention in their class using the RWI resources. If a child requires further support and intervention with phonics they are set up with a fast track pathway on the RWI portal, this is also shared with parents for home learning too.

Reading for Pleasure

As well as providing our children with the skills to read, we hold reading for pleasure at the heart of everything we do so pupils develop a real love and thirst for reading a range of genres. At Dean Field, we have a vibrant library that not only invites in reluctant readers, but provides children with a wide range of texts to choose from. We resource the library based on children's interests so that there are texts suitable for all readers. We have a weekly newspaper in the library that children are encouraged to read during reading sessions or take home to share with their families so they can read about current affairs. Not only will this help them develop their non-fiction reading skills, but it will also add to their cultural capital.

We also run a very successful 'borrow a bedtime story' scheme which allows children to freely take home texts of their choice. This allows children to read and share texts that they would not normally get the opportunity to read under their Accelerated

Reader level or, if they are in EYFS, their phonics level. This scheme not only promotes sharing books with families, but it allows all children to experience a love for books.

Impact

Assessment and Feedback

At Dean Field we believe that prompt assessment and feedback is essential to accelerating pupils progress. We use the assessments provided by the scheme Read, Write, Inc. to assess children's phonics every half-term. These are forwarded to the RWI leader and the groupings discussed. This is also fed back to the class teacher to inform that child's intervention for that half-term so they receive the correct phonics teaching in the group as well as individual intervention, if required.

We have weekly one to one conversations with each child to discuss their phonics progress when reading their phonics book or after phonics sessions. Each half-term children are re-assessed on their phonics and intervention put in place to close the individual gaps. This allows staff and children to monitor progress on the fundamental areas of phonics: sound recognition (phoneme/reading), sound representation (grapheme/writing), blending sounds to read and segmenting sounds to write. Teachers discuss the next steps with pupils and provide them with small, achievable targets that will help improve their phonics knowledge and ultimately improve their reading. This is then reassessed the following half-term and new targets may also be set. This form of assessment provides teachers with a clear, up to date picture of each child's phonics progress and because this happens weekly, it allows teachers to intervene where necessary in good time. If any problems are identified, interventions will be put into place as soon as possible which helps accelerate progress. Parents are also informed and homework produced via paper copy or on Seesaw to support phonics skills.

Phonics Screening Check

At the end of Year 1 (June) the children sit a Phonics Screening Check (PSC) to test their phonic knowledge and understanding. This is conducted, usually, by the Year 1 class teacher who has received the PSC training. The children who score low on this, even if passed, will still be integrated into the RWI scheme the following academic year. Any children who do not pass the PSC will re-sit it in June in Year 2, they will also continue to have RWI. Any children who re-take in Year 2 and do not pass the PSC will continue to receive RWI intervention and support until they are competent at reading, typically a case study will have been produced to investigate why they have not passed and communications with the school SENDco begun.