



## St Aelred's Primary School Phonics and Early Reading

### Intent

At St Aelred's, we strive for all children to become **fluent, confident, and proficient** readers and to instil in them **a love for reading**. We recognise the importance of a **balanced approach** that teaches children both the skills of **word reading** (implemented through our chosen Synthetic Phonics Programme, 'Little Wandle Letters and Sounds') as well as the importance of developing **language comprehension skills** to so that children can read with understanding and for enjoyment. We endeavour to immerse them in a **language and vocabulary rich environment where** children are exposed to a breadth of **high-quality literature** and supported through **high quality interactions** with staff. We strive for children to see themselves as readers for both purpose and pleasure and to **foster a lifelong love for reading**.

### Implementation Phonics~

- Phonics is delivered through our chosen SSP 'Little Wandle', by a highly trained team of **reading experts**.
- All staff are trained in the 'Little Wandle' programme and lessons follow the programme with **fidelity**.
- The 'Little Wandle' assessments are used to inform a **rigorous programme of keep up intervention** so that all children can become **fluent and confident readers**.

### Foundations for phonics in Nursery

From the moment the children join us 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' and help to prepare children for formal phonics learning in reception. **Foundation for phonics** sessions ensure children are well prepared to begin learning grapheme-phoneme correspondences and blending in Reception.

### Daily phonics lessons

- Children make a **strong start** in Reception, following the Little Wandle progression: teaching begins in Week 2 of the Autumn term.
- Children in Reception and Year 1 are taught phonics daily for 30 minutes, building from 10 minute lessons initially at the start of Reception.

### Daily Keep-up lessons ensure every child learns to read

- In line with the programme, phonics is taught whole class.
- Any children who are not keeping up with the pace of the programme are **swiftly identified** and a **rigorous programme of keep up sessions** is implemented.
- **Assessments** are carried out regularly using the Little Wandle assessments. This informs interventions, addressing each child's specific gaps, allowing them to keep up with their peers. These interventions are in addition to whole class phonics lessons.
- Regular **progress meetings** are held with the reading leader for the children who are making slower progress.
- Daily Keep-up support is taught by a **fully trained reading champion**. 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 can secure their learning.
- Because of the impact of Covid on learning, we have timetabled additional phonics lessons for all children in Year 2 and additional catch up sessions for children in Year 2



and Year 3 who are not fully fluent at reading and have not completed the programme. 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.

### Reading Practice Sessions

- We teach children to read through [reading practice sessions three times a week](#).
- Children read [books matched to their secure phonic knowledge](#) informed by the *Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised* assessments.

### Home reading

- The decodable reading practice book is taken home to ensure [success is shared](#) with the family.
- ‘[We love to read](#)’ (reading for pleasure) books also go home for parents to share and read to their child to foster reading for enjoyment.
- The Little Wandle [parent’s resource](#) is shared with families to communicate how best to support their child in learning to read. [Parent workshops](#) are led by the English Lead and the Phonics and Early Reading Lead.

### Ensuring consistency and pace of progress

- [All teachers have been trained](#) to teach reading to ensure consistency in how the programme is delivered.
- Little Wandle [progression](#) is followed closely.
- Lesson templates, Prompt cards and ‘how to’ videos ensure teachers all have a [consistent approach](#) and structure for each lesson.
- The Reading Leader and Head teacher [regularly monitor and coach](#) the reading team to ensure teaching is consistent and of the [highest standard](#).

### Impact

- Phonics teaching is strong, as a result of regular coaching and CPD.
- Improved outcomes for children in the Year 1 Phonic screening check and end of KS1 assessments in Year 2.
- Children who are working outside of the pace of the programme will show good progress in their individual reading and phonics skills.
- All children will secure the skills required to become fluent, expressive, confident readers which will support them in their lifelong journey.

### Implementation~ Language comprehension and reading for pleasure~

We know that “*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)

At St Aelred's we take a **holistic approach** to reading across the curriculum:

- Reception and Year 1 have developed a **reading spine**. Core texts are chosen that expose children to **new vocabulary**, **spark their imaginations** and **broaden their knowledge** of the world. A heavy emphasis is placed on learning **new and challenging vocabulary** to support children's **Early Language Development**. Vocabulary from these texts is explicitly taught in one of our **'We love to read'** sessions in Reception. These sessions include best practice from **'Talk through Stories'** as well as the **'Tales Toolkit'** model.
- The **Wellcom** toolkit is used by staff to support vocabulary development and communication skills as part of the **'Early Talk for York'** programme.
- Adults consistently model language, vocabulary, and syntax both from books and stories, seeking to introduce new and challenging vocabulary. This is explicitly planned for.
- Stories and books are strategically placed in all areas of the classroom to support play-based learning.
- **Daily song and rhyme times and poetry sessions** are taught using the 'Poetry Basket' anthology in Reception and Year 1.

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Core text-identify the character, setting, problem and solution	Re-read the story. Tales Toolkit/Wellcomm session	Vocabulary session-wow word book	Additional Text	Helicopter stories-story scribing, shared writing and performance of stories

'We love to Read' sessions in Reception Class

Teachers encourage reading for pleasure and a love of reading across our school by:

- Reading out loud to children **at least once every day** using **high quality texts** that reflect our children's interests as well as books that open windows into other worlds and cultures. Teachers model reading with **expression** and **intonation**.
- Providing inviting, **cosy book corners** in each class.
- Using our **'Super Six' reading spine** of 'class favourites' from Nursery to Year 2. These stories are regularly shared with the children during whole class story time to build children's repertoire of well-known favourite stories.
- Providing children with opportunities to vote for their chosen story.
- Regular **'We love to read' sessions for parents/carers** to attend in Reception.
- Celebrating children who read 5 times per week at home with a **'Five star reader'** award to raise the profile of regular reading practice.
- Encouraging older children to write their own comments about books they have read and enjoyed in their reading record.
- Regularly visiting the **new school library** as well as the local community Library.
- Providing exciting whole school reading opportunities such as **World book day celebrations, read-athons, book fairs, author visits and workshops**.

## Impact



Children at St Aelred's have a love for reading seen in our 'We love to read' sessions. The children relish being read to and enjoy sharing books with their peers. Their love for reading continues to grow as they move through the school and children are excited to share and celebrate their reading skills at home with their families. Children can name their favourite books and can talk about well known and loved stories.