

# Phonics Policy

Overton School

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## Overton Phonics Policy

### Scope:

- To establish consistent practice, progression and continuity in the teaching and learning of phonics throughout the school with a focus on quality first teaching
- To ensure that systematic synthetic phonics following the Read Write Inc. (RWInc.) programme is the first approach pupils use to help with their reading and spelling
- To have robust assessment procedures to check progress and identify pupils in need of intervention
- For pupils to apply their phonic knowledge in their reading and writing across the whole curriculum
- Provide a progressive framework from beginning reader to mature independent reading



### What is phonics?

This is the knowledge of how alphabetic sounds work and how these sounds are combined to correspond to the spoken word. It includes the skills of blending for reading and segmentation for spelling. **Blending** is the skill of building words by merging phonemes together – this is used when reading words. **Segmentation** is breaking down a word into its component phonemes – this is used when spelling words. A **phoneme** is the smallest unit of sound in a word. It is generally accepted that there are 44 different phonemes in the English language. In phonics students are taught each of these phonemes and the alternative graphemes (different ways of writing) these phonemes. A **grapheme** is the written symbol of a phoneme. Some phonemes are written with two letters – these are called **digraphs**. Some phonemes are written with three letters – these are called **trigraphs**. **Split digraphs** are two letters that make one sound, but the letters are not adjacent in a word (they are split by another letter). **Tricky Words** (or Red Words) are words which students are unable to read using their phonic knowledge. These are taught as a whole word.

### Intent

The purpose of the delivery of phonics at Overton is to implement the systematic teaching of synthetic phonics. Students learn the common 44 sounds in the English language and learn how to blend them over a short period of time in both spoken and written language. Then the students will read texts which they can sound-blend and get early success in reading. The school uses the Read Write Inc. program as the foundation to deliver phonics

### ***What is Read Write Inc.?***

*Read Write Inc.* is a structured and systematic approach to teaching literacy. It is used by more than a quarter of the UK's primary schools but is applicable also to older readers with developing literacy and is designed to create fluent readers, confident speakers and willing writers. At Overton we use the Fresh Start programme of RWInc. which is designed for secondary schools.

The RWInc. programme is an inclusive literacy programme for all students learning to read and teaches synthetic phonics. The scheme includes both a reading and a writing focus. Reading is the

key that unlocks the whole curriculum so the ability to efficiently decode combinations of letters is essential.

The aim of the programme is to teach pupils to:

- apply the skill of blending phonemes in order to read words.
- segment words into their constituent phonemes in order to spell words.
- learn that blending and segmenting words are reversible processes.
- read high frequency words that do not conform to regular phonic patterns.
- read texts and words that are within their phonic capabilities as early as possible.
- decode texts with minimal effort so all their resources can be used to comprehend what they read.
- spell with minimal effort so that all their resources can be directed towards composing their writing.

Following this, the students read modules with words they can sound-blend so they get early success in reading. The more sounds they learn, the greater the range of texts they can read.

The aim of the reading programme is to ensure that the students:

- learn 44 sounds and the corresponding letters/letter groups using simple picture prompts
- learn to read words using Sound Talk (sound blending)
- read lively texts featuring words they have learned to sound out
- show that they comprehend the stories by answering questions

The aim of the writing programme is to ensure that the students:

- learn to write the letters/letter groups which represent the 44 sounds
- learn to write words by sound blending into words (Sound Talk)
- write simple sentences
- compose stories based on picture strips
- deconstruct and compose texts in a range of genres

**These aims will be delivered by:**

- Consistently following the principles and practice as set out in RWInc.
- Regular 20 minute intervention phonic sessions for students who require this
- Through well planned discrete phonics sessions taught using the 'sequence of teaching' structure as found in the RWInc. Fresh Start handbook 2011
- Regular assessment and monitoring of student's phonic abilities
- Following the school's overview of when to teach each phase from RWInc.

These sessions will be delivered either by the school English teacher in the course of a student's English curriculum or during intervention sessions by a member of staff who is experienced in the delivery of phonics. These will be delivered as 45 minute sessions which will be delivered on a daily basis or 20 minute intervention sessions.

## **Delivery**

Teaching is differentiated to the speed of progress of each student following a baseline assessment if required. 1:1 or small group tuition will be identified and implemented if required. This will be determined by the progress students are assessed to be making in relation to peers, against the phonics framework.

If our students need additional support and guidance for literacy then we use phonics to build their skills in order to aid their progress. Without underlying understanding and skills of literacy students will struggle to make progress in reading and writing which will also impact on confidence in speech and understanding. Teaching is supplemented by the highly successful RWInc. phonics programme to teach our students to read, write and spell. Students are assessed throughout every lesson.

## **Pre-Assessment**

A standard word reading test (Schonell appendix 2) will be administered before students begin the programme and they will be re-tested at the end of each year following this and the results of this recorded in the student's spelling and reading age spreadsheet. Suitability of the Fresh Start entry test will then be assessed to ensure that it is of suitable difficulty for the student and that intervention from phonics is necessary.

## **Assessment**

The assessment of progress in phonics capability has paid due regard to the termly UK government phonics screening checks.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/phonics-screening-check-2019-materials>

Depending on age and capability, this can be adapted to suit our cohort and be used to measure progress.

The Fresh Start phonics assessments can be found in appendix 1 at the bottom of this document.

The RWInc. phonics baseline entry assessment (if it is judged necessary to be used following pre-assessment and baseline assessment for reading/spelling age) can be found in the English curriculum entry folder alongside all other Fresh Start assessments for this course.

Progress will be demonstrated by reading levels of students judged by progression through levels of phonics reading books including Read with Oxford and Oxford Reading Tree. We use ongoing phonic/word knowledge assessment. Progress in developing and applying their phonics knowledge is carefully assessed and monitored (explained in detail below). If a student is not progressing as quickly as expected then additional support will be put in place in order for the student to make accelerated progress with their reading and writing.

## **Application across the curriculum**

There are regular opportunities to highlight and practise incidental phonics in other areas of the curriculum and classroom environment. Students will have opportunities to use and apply their phonic knowledge in guided reading and writing sessions and in reading and writing activities across the curriculum.

## Monitoring and Impact

Progress in phonics capability will be monitored through a spreadsheet which will correlate the outcomes of the Fresh Start phonic/word knowledge assessment (mark out of 300 to be recorded) and reading levels generated by RWInc. *Read with Oxford* books. This system uses carefully levelled books to help children learn to read, and love to read. The [Read with Oxford Stages](#) have been developed to support students from basic phonics all the way through to being independent readers. Students' progression will be monitored and recorded through levels of Oxford e books. Ongoing phonic/word assessment, using the methods described above, will track the student's progress termly. This will assess student's phonic knowledge, blending ability, and knowledge of Red Words. This information will be recorded in the phonics assessment spreadsheet.

Fresh Start assessments focus on the student's **reading** ability to:

- use a range of strategies to read for meaning
- understand, describe, select or retrieve information, events or ideas from texts and use quotation and reference to text
- deduce, infer or interpret information, events or ideas from texts
- identify and comment on the structure and organisation of texts, including grammatical and literary features at word or sentence level
- explain and comment on writer's use of language, including grammatical and literary features at word or sentence level
- identify and comment on writer's purposes and viewpoints, and the overall effect on the reader
- relate texts to their social, cultural and historical contexts and literary traditions

Fresh Start assessments focus on the student's **writing** ability to:

- write imaginative, interesting and thoughtful texts
- produce texts which are appropriate to task, reader and purpose
- organise and present whole texts effectively, sequencing and structuring information, ideas and events
- construct paragraphs and use cohesion within and between paragraphs
- vary sentences for clarity, purpose and effect
- write with technical accuracy of syntax and punctuation in phrases, clauses and sentences
- select appropriate and effective vocabulary
- use correct spelling
- handwrite using correct letter formations
- understand genre and text type

## Post Phonics Progress

Once students have progressed beyond initial phonics training and are progressing onto becoming an independent reader who does not rely on phonics, (refer to CLPE reading scale <https://clpe.org.uk/library-and-resources/reading-and-writing-scales> as a useful guide to this,) the students will be assessed against Pearson's Teacher Reading summary step descriptors which detail 12 steps of reading competency broken down into individual skills (appendix 3).

A student's competency in reading will also be encouraged and monitored through reference to Bloom's Taxonomy (appendix 4) and a guide for strategies to use Bloom's in the classroom in relation to reading higher order thinking skills can be found in the link below (P.50).

## Appendix 1

### Assessment

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### Pre-test and Entry test

#### *Pre-test*

Please use a standardised word- or sentence-reading test (not a comprehension test) before students start on this programme. Re-test the students at the end of each year, and keep this data for your information. Many schools use the Salford Test as it is quick to administer.

#### *Entry test*

It is important that the manager of the *Read Write Inc. Fresh Start* programme administers this test to all the students in order to achieve consistency of judgement. (In a large school, use two or three experienced teachers, but moderate your judgements first.)

See also page 11 for key points on grouping students.

#### *Starting point: Modules*

The passages are taken from the *Modules*. Start the student on the *Module* that matches the last text he or she read confidently, with fluency and intonation that shows understanding. They will also need to know all the Speed Sounds that are contained in the *Module*.

Remember that students' current sound/grapheme knowledge must always be well ahead of those sounds included in the text (*Module*) they are working on. They must also be able to sound blend efficiently. If they cannot do that, then they will not be able to read the words in the text and therefore will not be able to access the meaning of the text. The blending lessons (pages 21–27) are designed to teach this skill through Sound Talk (for reading) and Sound Fingers (for spelling).

#### *Starting point: Phonics*

- Many *Fresh Start* students will only need to practise pure pronunciation or review existing knowledge of Speed Sounds Set 1 and blending. They will then be taught all of Speed Sounds Set 2 and then Speed Sounds Set 3 thoroughly and systematically, using the blueprint lesson plans as they work through the *Modules*.
- Other *Fresh Start* students will need to do as above, but may need to be taught (using the Speed Sounds Set 1 blueprint lesson plans) certain more tricky/less familiar Set 1 Speed Sounds, e.g. th, qu, ng.
- A few *Fresh Start* students will need to be taught each Set 1 Speed Sound using the blueprint lesson plans as if they had never seen them before. Some of these students may also need more time spent on sound-blending.

#### *Starting point for all students on the programme*

Explain to these students that:

- we use 44 speech sounds to speak every word in the English language, e.g. d e g, c l a p, s t a n d
- every word we speak is made up of individual speech sounds that are spoken so quickly we hardly notice them

## Appendix 2

### Schonell reading test

#### SCHONELL READING TEST 1971 PROCEDURE

##### Instructions For Administering The Test

The Test should be given in a friendly atmosphere in which the child is thoroughly at ease. It should not take place within the hearing of other children.

Younger children or weaker readers should start the test at the beginning. Better readers can start at a later group of ten words. If any words is failed, however, the preceding group of ten words is given until all ten are read correctly. Credit is then given for all words preceding this point. Testing is discontinued when ten consecutive words are failed. The Reading Age (RA) for the total number of words correctly read is given in the table below.

The temptation to help the child should be resisted. He should not, for example, be asked to repeat a word that he has almost but not quite pronounced correctly nor should he be given any clues as to how to attack a particular word.

Credit should not be given unless the word is clearly correct e.g. 'flowers' for 'flower' is incorrect as is 'postage' when the last syllable is pronounced as the word 'age'.

##### Total number of words read correctly and Reading Age in years and months

	30 = 8y 0m	55 = 9y 11m
0.1= 6y 0m	31 = 8y 1m	56 = 10y 0m
2 = 6y 0m	32 = 8y 3m	57-58 = 10y 1m
3 = 6y 2m	33 = 8y 3m	59 = 10y 2m
4 = 6y 4m	34 = 8y 4m	60 = 10y 3m
5 = 6y 5m	35 = 8y 5m	61 = 10y 4m
6 = 6y 6m	36-37 = 8y 6m	62 = 10y 5m
7-8 = 6y 7m	38 = 8y 7m	63 = 10y 6m
9 = 6y 8m	39 = 8y 8m	64 = 10y 7m
10 = 6y 9m	40 = 8y 9m	65 = 10y 8m
11-12 = 6y 10m	41 = 8y 10m	66 = 10y 9m
13-14 = 6y 11m	42 = 8y 11m	67 = 10y 10m
15 = 7y 0m	43 = 9y 0m	68 = 11y 0m
16 = 7y 1m	44 = 9y 1m	69 = 11y 1m
17-18 = 7y 2m	45 = 9y 2m	70 = 11y 3m
19 = 7y 3m	46 = 9y 3m	71 = 11y 4m
20-21 = 7y 4m	47 = 9y 4m	72 = 11y 5m
22-23 = 7y 5m	48 = 9y 5m	73 = 11y 6m
24 = 7y 6m	49-50 = 9y 6m	74 = 11y 8m
25-26 = 7y 7m	51 = 9y 7m	75 = 11y 10m
27 = 7y 8m	52 = 9y 8m	76 = 12y 0m
28 = 7y 9m	53 = 9y 9m	77 = 12y 1m
29 = 7y 10m	54 = 9y 10m	78 = 12y 2m

79 = 12y 3m  
 80 = 12y 4m  
 81 = 12y 5m  
 82 = 12y 6m  
 83+ = 12y 6+

Step #	Teacher Reading summary step descriptor
1st	Reads with broad understanding and may identify some relevant key points but shows little evidence of inference skills. Can express a personal response to a text, identifying some whole text or language features but with limited comment.
2nd	Beginning to monitor reading comprehension. Can identify the majority of key points. Makes broad, generalised inferences. Beginning to think critically about texts, with limited awareness of the writer’s whole text and language choices and their effect.
3rd	Inconsistent monitoring of reading comprehension. Can identify the majority of key points in a text and make limited connections. Beginning to make specific inferences. An increasingly focused critical response to texts showing some awareness of the writer’s whole text and language choices and their effect.
4th	Beginning to develop strategies to monitor reading comprehension. Can identify the majority of key points and link them. Makes increasingly specific inferences. Critical responses are more objective with a developing awareness of the writer’s whole text and language choices and their effect.
5th	A growing range of reading strategies to tackle unfamiliar words. Attempts to summarise and synthesise key points from a text. Draws inferences from specific evidence. Critical responses are more analytical and formal, supported with straightforward comments on the writer’s whole text and language choices and their impact on the reader.
6th	Frequent monitoring of reading comprehension. Some effective summary and synthesis of key points from a text. Draws inferences from close reading. Increasingly competent critical responses consider the writer’s whole text and language choices, making more detailed comments on their impact.
7th	Monitors reading comprehension increasingly consistently. Summarises and synthesises a range of key points from a text with some skill. Draws securely founded inferences from close reading. Critical responses are more confident, beginning to focus on how the writer’s whole text and language choices have shaped a text and the reader’s response.
8th	Uses a widening range of reading strategies to counter misunderstanding. Summarises and synthesises a range of key points from a text with some precision. Beginning to consider layers of inference at word level. Confident critical responses are supported with some analysis of the writer’s whole text and language choices.
9th	Miscomprehension in reading is unlikely. Summarises, synthesises and makes perceptive connections between key points from a text. May identify patterns of inference at word, sentence and text level. Clear analysis in critical responses to text explores common strands and patterns in the writer’s whole text and language choices.
10th	Evaluates comprehension and reading skills during and after reading. Summarises, synthesises and makes a range of perceptive connections between a text’s key points. Frequently considers patterns of inference. Increasingly analytical critical responses explore the implications and intention of the writer’s whole text and language choices.
11th	Evaluates comprehension and reading skills, consistently questioning the text. Summarises, synthesises and connects key points, and may consider alternative interpretations. Consistently considers patterns of inference. Perceptive, evaluative critical responses explore a range of implications in the writer’s whole text and language choices.
12th	Monitoring and evaluation of reading skills are largely automatic. Summarises, synthesises and connects key points, reaching astute conclusions. Considers and compares layers of inference. Independent critical responses, which may explore multiple readings, are supported with confident and perceptive analysis of the writer’s whole text and language choices.

### Appendix 3

- tree little milk egg book
- school sit frog playing bun
- flower road clock train light
- picture think summer people something
- dream downstairs biscuit shepherd thirsty
- crowd sandwich beginning postage island
- saucer angel ceiling appeared gnome
- canary attractive imagine nephew gradually
- smoulder applaud disposal nourished diseased
- university orchestra knowledge audience situated
- physics campaign choir intercede fascinate
- forfeit siege recent plausible prophecy
- colonel soloist systematic slovenly classification
- genuine institution pivot conscience heroic
- pneumonia preliminary antique susceptible enigma
- oblivion scintillate satirical sabre beguile
- terrestrial belligerent adamant sepulchre statistics
- miscellaneous procrastinate tyrannical evangelical grotesque
- ineradicable judicature preferential homonym fictitious
- rescind metamorphosis somnambulist bibliography idiosyncrasy

### Appendix 4

