Standlake CE Primary School Curriculum Handbook Phonics and Early Reading

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Curriculum Statement

Reading is one of the most important skills a child will learn at school. We are committed to helping every child read fluently and develop a love of reading.

At Standlake Primary School we will:

Ensure staff have a confident, fluent and coherent understanding of phonics and the effect this will have on a pupil's progress, both inside and outside of the school environment.

Deliver high-quality phonics teaching to help children quickly develop the word reading skills that form the foundation for successful and enjoyable reading.

Make sure all staff understand the planning, assessment, teaching, and learning requirements of the national curriculum to teach children how to use phonics knowledge and skills to decode words.

Ensure staff understand how a strong grounding in word reading skills will impact the future learning and development of a pupil in all aspects of their life.

Intent

Phonics

We understand that reading is a fundamental skill which underpins all other learning, and at Standlake Primary School we want all our children to achieve fluent, passionate, lifelong literacy skills. We believe that phonics is the most effective way to teach the skills needed for these and we do so using a DfE validated SSP programme *Rocket Phonics* programme.

Comprehension

At Standlake Primary School, 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.

Implementation

Our teaching of phonics at Standlake Primary School follows the *Rocket Phonics Systematic Synthetic Phonics Teaching Principles*. These principles are the specific knowledge and skills children need to be able to read and write in the English language. They are broken down into these smaller steps:

Knowledge of the English Alphabetic Code (150+ graphemes that represent 44 speech sounds)

- see the letters, say the sounds for reading to automaticity
- hear the sounds, recall the letters for spelling to automaticity (these are reversible processes)

Skill of blending for reading

- oral blending
- modelled blending
- supported blending
- independent blending at word, sentence and text levels

Skill of segmenting for spelling

- oral segmenting
- modelled segmenting
- supported segmenting
- knowing which spelling alternative to use

Skill of handwriting

- pencil hold
- letter formation
- positioning on a writing line
- print before cursive

At Standlake Primary School we follow the *Rocket Phonics* fundamental concepts:

1. Phonics is overseen by a dedicated phonics leader.
2. Phonics is taught daily.
3. All staff are supported with regular phonics professional development training.
4 A clear pathway is followed through the alphabetic code.
5 Children are not asked to read texts by themselves that they can't yet read.
6. The Systematic Synthetic Phonics Teaching Principles are taught explicitly.
7. The Teaching & Learning Cycle (revisit and review, teach, practise, apply) is followed.
8. Children are supported to keep up, so they do not need to catch up.
9. Phonics is taught at letter-sound, word, sentence and text levels.
10. Core phonics provision is distinguished from phonics enrichment activities.
11. Teachers have clarity about what, why and how they are teaching.
12. Teachers focus on details, such as accurate modelling and pencil hold.

We begin teaching phonics as soon as our children join school in Nursery and follow the Rocket Phonics Progression Map which ensures children build on their growing knowledge of the alphabetic code, mastering phonics to read and spell as they move through school.

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.

We follow *Rocket Phonics First Steps* nursery phonics and language programme. Phonemic awareness and early phonics development are entwined with vocabulary and language models. This phonics and language development programme for children aged 3–4 years develops children's speaking and listening skills, phonological awareness and oral blending and segmenting. We are laying the foundations ready for reading and writing by ensuring children can hear and say sounds. We are developing children's ability to:

- Listen attentively
- Enlarge their vocabulary
- Speak confidently to adults and other children
- Discriminate phonemes
- Develop an understanding and enjoyment of books
- Reproduce audibly the phonemes they hear, in order, all through the word
- Use sound talk to segment words into phonemes

Daily sessions have a recommended structure, pace and progression, gradually increasing in duration throughout the year. The Teaching and Learning Cycle (Revisit and Review, Teach, Practise, Apply) is followed through the week, with flexibility to support the development of children's recall skills.

EYFS and Year 1 Daily phonics lessons
We teach phonics for 30 minutes a day. In EYFS, we build from 10-minute lessons, with additional daily oral blending games, to the full-length lesson as quickly as possible. Through Rocket Phonics, we teach one letter-sound correspondence over two days. The first day focuses on blending skills and the second day focuses on segmenting skills. Reading and writing are interlinked so there will naturally be overlap, but by separating the skills and spreading them across two days the teacher has greater clarity over which skill is being taught, practised or applied. The children have more time and more opportunity to learn, practise and apply the skills using the new letter-sound correspondences before moving on. The two-day pattern is repeated twice through the week, leaving the fifth day as an opportunity for further consolidation,

assessment, enrichment activities or as a focus lesson on common exception words.

Year 2 Daily phonics lessons

We timetable daily phonics lessons for children in Year 2 following *Rocket Phonics Next Steps*, revisiting letter-sound correspondences, and introducing new spelling content such as suffixes, using a layered approach that focuses on the following elements

- knowledge of the complex part alphabetic code
- independent blending at word, sentence and text levels
- knowing which spelling alternative to use
- cursive handwriting.

In Year 2 *Rocket Phonics*, teaching is through a 'dual aspect'. In class teaching (shared whole-class reading) the adult uses the Year 2 colour-banded books, but low attainers can use the Blue, Green and Orange Target Practice Readers as their book band individual book to link to the phonics being revisited. Low attainers are getting a gap-closing revision year to prepare them for Year 3. Phonics screening results, teacher assessment and *Rocket Phonics Assessment baseline and half termly tools* enable gaps to be identified and targeted *Keep-up* sessions implemented. If any child in Year 3 to 6 has gaps in their phonic knowledge when reading or writing, we plan phonics 'catch-up' lessons to address specific reading/writing gaps. These short, sharp lessons last 10 minutes and take place at least twice a week.

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. *Rocket Phonics* combines the alphabetic code knowledge and skills that are needed to learn to read and write, with language-rich children's literature. This approach embeds phonics in context, and supports a love of reading and writing from the outset. At the heart of the programme are the digital-only 'Big Books', which consist of language-rich stories to teach all the target letter-sounds in context.

Alongside our daily phonics sessions, 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 Standlake Primary School and our local community as well as books that open windows into other worlds and cultures.

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. Children have access to the reading corner every day and the books are continually refreshed.

Home reading

A decodable reading practice book is taken home to ensure success is shared with the family. Every child is expected to read at home at least 3 times a week and this should be recorded in their reading diary (EYFS and KS1). This allows teachers to track which children need more support in school and which children need to be exposed to different genres. 'Reading for pleasure' books also go home for parents to share and read to children. To support reading at home we use Rocket Phonics Parent Support Rocket-Phonics-Parent-Guide.pdf Rocket Phonics | The English Alphabetic Code | A guide for parents, carers and families 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 Stay and Learn sessions.

Impact

Assessment

Assessment is used to monitor progress and to identify any child needing additional support as soon as they need it.

Formative assessment 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.

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.

The English Lead regularly monitors and observes teaching, discusses progress and identifies children who need additional support due to gaps in learning.

Statutory assessment is carried out when children in Year 1 sit the Phonics screening check. Any child not passing the check re-sits it in Year 2.

Working Walls

These are an extremely important part of the learning process as they provide children with a form of continuous provision they can keep referring to throughout the journey. The appropriate frieze will be displayed and the weekly phonemes, graphemes and words will be displayed.

Inclusion

Our aim and expectation is that almost all children have the capacity to read and write well when taught with phonics and we follow the ethos of 'keeping up, not catching up'. Through the use of steady pace and progression, whole-class teaching and consistent daily phonics practice we aim to support all learners, and we take steps to support those needing further time.

At Standlake Primary School we:

Ensure every adult working with the class knows who these children are, e.g. discuss formally and informally; keep a brief 'profile' record electronically or in a class reading management folder in order to be able to share information easily.

Assess, observe and evaluate the possible reasons for slower progress, e.g. weak memory; weak concentration; slower processing; hearing or sight difficulties; impoverished vocabulary; SEBD (Social, Emotional or Behavioural Difficulties). Discuss significant concerns with the SENCo.

Do not use a different intervention programme. Continue to expose the child to the main class teaching but adjust the expected outcomes, e.g. the child may achieve some but not all of the Pupil Practice Booklet activities, (however, they may return to complete the activities with adult support later in the day and week). Strategically position the children where they have a clear line of sight to the teacher and can be supported during the lesson, e.g. at the front of the class.

Pinpoint the specific difficulty, e.g. letter-sound retention; ability to blend/segment; letter reversals.

Build in additional sessions targeted to specific needs, e.g. an afternoon session revisiting content at a slower pace or focusing on one skill at a time.

Build in opportunities for 'little and often' practice through the day, e.g. flashcards whilst lining up for lunchtime; five minute 1:1 targeted intervention sessions.

Provide children with their own pack of materials that can be taken home, e.g. their own sets of flashcards; Pupil Practice Booklets for use at home; additional decodable reading books.

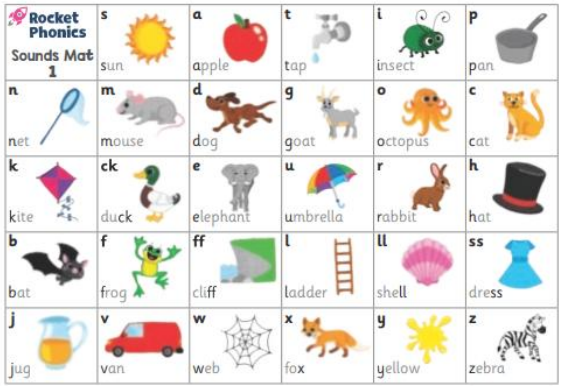
Work as closely as possible with parents and carers.

Be specific about small measurable targets, e.g. This week we will make sure we know the letter-sounds p, n, m.

Provide additional support during sessions, e.g. use individual sets of selected grapheme tiles to enable children to select graphemes rather than writing them.

Print and laminate Sounds Mats in A4 and A3 sizes for support during phonics lessons and during wider curriculum lessons.

Check that visual displays are accessible, e.g. large enough, at a suitable height.



Extending and challenging

At Standlake Primary School we 'lift the ceiling' off our teaching and learning. This means that lessons are designed to be ambitious and all children are exposed to the same content and materials. Every child deserves to experience open-ended extension and challenge. At Standlake Primary School we:

Ensure that adults understand that children may be ready for extension and challenge in some but not all areas, e.g. a child may read at a level beyond the main class teaching but may have gaps in code knowledge or be weak in any of the phonics skills or sub-skills.

Rocket Phonics lessons already contain content to cater for faster-to-learn children, e.g. the very first Pupil Practice Booklet lessons include words and sentences that they can use for decoding and segmenting despite most children focusing on phonemic awareness and letter-sound correspondences at that point. Lessons stretch beyond letter-sound and word levels to include sentence and text level activities. Lessons also contain ambitious vocabulary and word structures.

In general, keep faster-to-learn children working at the same pace and progression as the rest of the class and extend them within the lesson.

Provide early exposure to more of the alphabetic code through visual display of the *Rocket Phonics* frieze.

Engage in discussion about vocabulary and the ways in which words are spelled.

Use letter names to relay spellings when children are confident with letter names, e.g. That's right, you need the /ai/ sound in the word snail, and in that word it is spelled with the letter a and the letter i

Encourage children to sometimes practise independently without close supervision, thereby taking more responsibility for their own practice.

Encourage children to self-dictate by reading a sentence, holding it in their heads, then writing it down from memory. Encourage children to compose and write their own sentences in addition to those dictated to them.

Be diligent about accuracy and attention to detail.

Provide additional enrichment reading books that may contain words beyond the taught code but are accessible to faster-to-learn children who can read them at a level of 95% independence.

Cultural Capital

Our English curriculum at Standlake Primary School stems from our use of high-quality texts. Texts have been carefully chosen to link closely with and enhance the learning of the overarching topic for the term and should inspire and engage all learners. Children experience a range of text types, including fiction, non-fiction and poetry.