Alverstoke Infant School and Pre-School

Phonics and Early Reading Policy

Reviewed by FGB: September 2025
Next Review: September 2028

Our main aims in the teaching of reading are that all children will:

- be able to decode written language
- enjoy books and reading and increase their 'Reading Miles'
- be able to apply knowledge they acquire through reading to their own wider context
- develop a wide and effective vocabulary
- be able to answer comprehension questions effectively.

Reading underpins our curriculum as it is required in all aspects of learning.

We believe:

Learning to read is a partnership between parents and school.

- Classroom teachers are responsible for delivering the reading curriculum to their own class and delivering phonic teaching to their own phonic groups.

- Children read both in groups and individually with regular opportunities provided for both.

- Essential letters and sounds is used as a tool for teaching systematic phonics and reading throughout the school. Reading books in the school are banded according to the National Curriculum levels.

Guidelines:

- Children will be taught to read using a wide range of reading materials ensuring balance and breadth. Phonetically decodable banded reading books from Essential Letters and Sounds phonics and the Oxford Reading Tree reading scheme will be used to support the teaching of reading and to give structure to the development of reading where appropriate.

- Children will have a daily opportunity to develop phonic skills and acquire a bank of

key words to support reading and writing.

- Children that are causing concern and those with SEN will read every day and any children falling into the bottom 20%, who are not daily readers will read at least twice a week. Children who do not receive support at home receive additional opportunities to read in school.

- Teachers regularly share books and listen to the children read and record their progress, usually in guided reading sessions.

- Whole class shared reading sessions will take place which will focus on decoding, prosody and comprehension.

- In Year one children have at least two weekly-shared reading sessions and do paired reading and In Year two children have two guided reading sessions and one shared read every week.

- Everyone Reading in Class (ERIC) sessions take place in every class three times a week.

- Regular reading sessions are part of the ELS phonics scheme.

Love of reading:

- Each class will have a well-resourced and attractive story corner where the focus is on the books, to encourage a love of reading. The children will have free choice within the pre-school, classroom and school library from a wealth of good quality resources including fact, fiction, poetry, plays and picture books.

- A love of reading will be nurtured from an early age at the pre-school. Reading will take place every day through structured group story time and reading during play. Children will experience the opportunity to read stories and poems in all areas of the pre-school environment. Children will have the opportunity to visit the school library to share stories together.

- Each year group has a carefully chosen core set of books and poems. These are quality, creative texts which are engaging and language rich; these will be shared consistently throughout the year.

- Every year we celebrate World Book Day.

- All children will visit the school library weekly and can chose from a wide range of books, including books that open windows into other worlds and cultures.

- Every child that reads at least three times a week will be given a raffle ticket, each half term the raffle is drawn and one child from each year group will go to a shop to choose a book to buy and take home.

- Each year we hold a bedtime reading event to promote a love of reading, the children come into school in their nightclothes and have a story with their teacher, whilst their adult goes into the hall with SLT to find out about how we teach reading in school.

Reading at home:

- In the pre-school children will have the opportunity to take books home to share every week through our book borrowing scheme. Parents will be able to feed back information about the stories they have borrowed using our online communications platform, Tapestry.

- Reading books are sent home on a weekly basis, all children are encouraged to read at home every evening; the children will take home one reading book that is accurately matched to their reading ability and to their phonic level. This ensures that pupils practice reading and re-reading decodable books that match the grapheme-phoneme correspondences they know.

- Class teachers will allocate eBooks from Essential Letters and Sounds to access at home. These will be matched to the children's phonic ability.

- Reading diaries will be checked and signed by the class teacher every week and a sticker will be put in that will inform parents of the current sounds and harder to read and spell words, or reading strategy they are currently working on. Any parent comments will be responded to by the teacher.

Record Keeping and Assessment

To ensure all children fulfill their potential, their progress is monitored and recorded through the following:

Each year group will have a Reading File in which the progress of individual children is recorded. This will include:

- Class list showing band levels and date when children are moved up.
- Guided Reading Group and Individual reading record sheet.
- Reading level descriptors to support the Cohort Reading Tracking Document.
- Essential letters and sounds phonics assessment-as part of the programme.

- Harder to read and spell words (HRS) check, every half-term.

Reading progress data is tracked by classroom teachers with class lists. Children move through reading bands initially related to EYFS Levels and then National Curriculum levels;

- Teachers use professional judgement to move children onto the next level with the support of teaching assistants.
- Benchmarking should be regularly used with a sample group of children to support movement through book levels. 90% or above accuracy is required to move onto the next level.