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Phonics and Reading



Phonics and Reading Intent, Implementation and Impact Statement

Intent

At Old Park School, we actively promote the development of reading skills through a total communication approach and positive reading culture embedded throughout the school. We recognise that this is a fundamental key life skill that all pupils are entitled to, with a clear link to individual Education Health Care Plan (EHCP) outcomes and preparation for adulthood.

We are ambitious about teaching children to become successful readers, ensuring a carefully sequenced programme taking into account pupil's individual strengths, barriers to learning, and current knowledge and skills. Communication, phonics and early reading has a high profile in the curriculum, ensuring sufficient time and emphasis is given to pupils' developing communication and pre-reading skills.

We recognise that learning to read is complex and involves a wide range of skills: visual, auditory, language and cognition, so teaching needs to be multi-faceted but coherent. Our approach to Early Reading is informed by Scarborough's Reading Rope Model, as described by Dr Sarah Moseley during her 'Foundations of Reading' training. This recognises the importance of language comprehension alongside word decoding and recognition skills.

Language Comprehension

- Background Knowledge
- Vocabulary Knowledge
- Language Structures
- Verbal Reasoning
- Literacy Knowledge

Increasingly Strategic

Skilled Reading

Fluent execution and coordination of word recognition and text comprehension.

Word Recognition

- Phonological Awareness
- Decoding (and Spelling)
- Sight Recognition

Increasingly Automatic

Scarborough, H. 2001. Connecting early language and literacy to later reading (dis)abilities: Evidence, theory, and practice. Pp. 97-110 in S. B. Neuman & D. K. Dickinson (Eds.) *Handbook of Early Literacy*. NY: Guilford Press.

Language Comprehension

Ensuring pupils are exposed to a range of vocabulary and language patterns through a variety of means is an integral element of early reading. Opportunities for pupils to experience, listen to (or decode), and respond to language throughout the day is a key part of our curriculum. This includes during both planned sessions and during more informal occasions e.g. playtime, transition.

Background Knowledge	Vocabulary Knowledge	Language Structures
<p>Pupils rely on background knowledge to make sense of what they are experiencing, hearing or reading. When a reader has background knowledge to draw on, they are more likely to remain engaged and focused upon the text. It reduces the likelihood of cognitive overload, especially important for readers who are also focusing on word decoding (or symbol recognition). The more experience and knowledge pupils have about a variety of subjects, topics and ideas, the more likely they will be able to make sense of what they are reading, and the more likely they will add to their body of knowledge.</p>	<p>A broad and rich vocabulary supports readers to make sense of what they are experiencing, hearing or reading. Being able to match a word to a thought, idea or concept crucial in reading. The richer a reader's listening and spoken vocabulary, the easier they will find it to encounter texts that contain words they do not know, particularly if these are linked to existing knowledge. An individual needs to have the vocabulary to understand what a significant percentage of the words in the text means.</p>	<p>Language structures refer to syntax, or the arrangement of words in a phrase or sentence. Pupils learn a variety of syntax structures through meaningful exposure to language being spoken, read to them and presented to them in text. Semantics is concerned with meaning, carried in a word, phrase, sentence or text. It refers to how the punctuation and chosen words relate to each other. Understanding a language's structures allows the reader to make sure they are understanding the text the way the author intends it to be read.</p>
Verbal Reasoning	Literacy Knowledge	
<p>Verbal reasoning relates to the ability to infer meaning from linguistic devices such as metaphors, similes, and idioms. It allows the reader to interpret what the words on the page are intending to say. A reader must be able to grasp when words are being used literally or figuratively. By adults modelling and talking about the meaning of words, phrases, tones of voice and even body language, and about what they are observing during the day will support pupils to develop and practise their verbal reasoning skills.</p>	<p>Literacy knowledge provides the reader with the information they need to know to enjoy reading. For example, they need to know how to hold a book, the way to read the words on a page from left to right and which way to turn the pages. They also need to understand different genres of text so they know what they can expect from what they read and how to interpret it. Exposure to a variety of literary styles gives pupils a greater understanding as they encounter different types of books.</p>	

Word Recognition

Phonological Awareness (including early sound discrimination skills)						
<p>For all pupils, this is promoted through integrated and frequent opportunities to develop phonemic awareness and listening skills. This work draws upon the aspects detailed below. There is considerable overlap between these aspects and the overarching aim is for pupils to experience regular, planned opportunities to engage, experience, listen and communicate about what they hear, see and do. Each aspect is grouped into three strands, also shown below. This underpins the Little Wandle Foundations for Phonics: Tuning into Sounds. The boundaries between each strand are flexible and not fixed: teachers should plan to integrate the activities according to the abilities and interests of the pupils, capitalising on routines and familiar parts of the day. Activities within the seven aspects are designed to help children to listen attentively; develop their vocabulary; communicate confidently to others; discriminate phonemes; reproduce audibly the phonemes they hear, in order, in a range of familiar words; segment words into phonemes.</p>						
Aspect 1 Environmental Sounds	Aspect 2 Instrumental Sounds	Aspect 3 Body Percussion	Aspect 4 Rhythm and Rhyme	Aspect 5 Alliteration	Aspect 6 Voice Sounds	Aspect 7 Oral blending and segmenting
Strand 1 Tuning into Sounds (auditory discrimination)		Strand 2 Listening and Remembering Sounds (auditory memory and sequencing)		Strand 3 Talking about Sounds (developing vocabulary and language comprehension)		
Decoding (and spelling)				Sight Recognition		
<p>Decoding is the ability to apply knowledge of sound-letter relationships (phonics) to correctly read and write words as text. At Old Park School decoding is taught in a sequenced and structured way through the Little Wandle Letters and Sounds systematic synthetic phonics programme (SEND Programme). Pupils start learning grapheme-phoneme correspondences and associated skills of blending and segmenting to read and write words when they demonstrate appropriate sound discrimination skills, visual discrimination skills and early phonological awareness.</p>				<p>When a pupil begins to recognise words by sight, it means they no longer have to work to decode the word whenever they come across it and they begin to store the word visually in long-term memory. This means they can recall it automatically. Most pupils develop a sight word memory as their decoding skills develop, committing high frequency and important words (such as names) to memory, so they can be read accurately and effortlessly. However, some pupils will be developing this skill before they are at the stage of recognising some words in print, for example in sight recognition of symbols, environmental print (such as shop names etc.) and other words that are important to them.</p>		

Implementation EYFS – KS3

The Unique Learner

‘Children (with SEND) have to navigate the same written language, unlock the same alphabetic code, learn the same skills, and learn and remember the same body of knowledge as their peers. It is a critical skill in helping them prepare for adulthood.’ (The reading framework: Teaching the foundations of literacy, DfE 2021)

At Old Park School we follow the Little Wandle Letters and Sounds systematic synthetic phonics programme (SEND Programme). Little Wandle SEND is a complete programme that mirrors the main Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised phonics programme but with adaptations and support in place that make it possible for schools to meet the needs of all their learners.

Foundations for Phonics: Tuning into Sounds

Over 60% of our school population are working at a pre-subject specific developmental level, with an even greater percentage working towards English pre-key stage standard 1. Little Wandle states that *‘Children who are at Standard 1 do not need phonics instruction’*. At Old Park School this cohort of pupils therefore focus on developing phonemic awareness and listening skills in line with Little Wandle Foundations for Phonics: Tuning into Sounds. This is underpinned by the engagement model and individual ipsative outcomes. Our communication and interaction MORE principles including our total communication approach also supports this.

Pathway 1 (Pre-Subject Specific)

At Pathway 1 we teach key processes which lead to the development of early visual and auditory skills and then to learning symbolic representation and pre-reading skills. These include:

- response to stimuli and an understanding of and response to sensory input
- early focus and attention skills
- early visual skills such as locating, focusing and tracking leading to visual discrimination skills with objects
- the understanding that objects and symbols can carry meaning leading to the development of symbolic representation
- an interest in the messages carried by the human voice through words, expression, volume, onomatopoeia, and context leading to auditory discrimination
- gross and fine motor skills which support the development of spatial awareness
- the use of anticipation, cuing, structures, functional routines, and familiar sequences to support the development of temporal sequencing
- the use of song, rhythm and rhyme to create meaning (such as cuing and developing anticipation) and for enjoyment
- the development of short-term memory skills, including object permanence, early cause and effect skills
- communication skills which build children’s understanding of words and meaning, including names

At Pathway 1 phonics sessions mainly focus on the aspects within Strand 1 Tuning into Sounds (auditory discrimination). Daily opportunities are planned, for a minimum of 15 minutes, with a weekly focus on aspects 1 – 3. Classes are encouraged to ensure that they whilst they provide new experiences each week linked to the focus aspect, opportunities to repeat, rehearse and transfer previous learning are included.

Teachers should consider the attention and focus levels of pupils in their class when structuring sessions e.g. repeating a previous session as a cue into phonics, introducing new learning first, whole class teaching, small group teaching. Observations are recorded using the Evidence for Learning app.

Pathway 2 (Pre-Subject Specific)

Pupils working within Pathway 2 pupils continue to develop the skills above in more sophisticated and complex ways. In order to begin to access reading as a distinct stage of literacy, pupils work on the following pre-requisite skills, before formal word recognition:

- symbolic discrimination – so that children process the visual information in a symbol through rapid shape discrimination
- short term memory - the ability to retain information essential for fluent reading to
- both make sense of what has been read and decode
- awareness of words as units of sound, and being able to produce and imitate some sounds, such as animal noises
- auditory discrimination – of environmental, instrumental and body sounds, with attention to supporting children to listen attentively
- appreciation and enjoyment of rhythm and rhyme
- left-to-right sequencing – in a range of functional contexts (e.g. now and next boards) and in play
- sequencing - the ability to retain and process a short series of concepts, linked to convey a wider concept. This will initially be in the context of functional routines and highly familiar sequences.
- language comprehension of single words and two information carrying words
- vocabulary development – the acquisition of words and associated concepts, through a focus on understanding, expressive use of the word and through to generalisation, application, and association

At Pathway 2 phonics sessions build on the aspects taught within Strand 1 Tuning into Sounds (auditory discrimination) and extend into Strand 2 Listening and Remembering Sounds (auditory memory and sequencing). Daily opportunities are planned, for a minimum of 15 minutes, with a weekly focus on aspects 4 – 6 (with opportunities to revisit aspects 1 – 3). Classes are encouraged to ensure that they whilst they provide new experiences each week linked to the focus aspect, opportunities to repeat, rehearse and transfer previous learning are included. Teachers should consider the attention and focus levels of pupils in their class when structuring sessions e.g. repeating a previous session as a cue into phonics, introducing new learning first, whole class teaching, small group teaching. Observations are recorded using the Evidence for Learning app.

Pathway 3 (Old Park Reading Scale 5 and 6)

Where pupils are working towards English pre-key stage standard 1 and not yet displaying any phase 2 GPC, then they should continue to develop their phonemic awareness and listening skills in line with the above approach. Phonics and early reading teaching will focus on:

- developing awareness of syllables in words
- developing awareness of onset and rime
- recognising rhyming words, playing with rhyme, and continuing a rhyming string
- developing awareness of initial sounds in words through alliteration and an ability to identify familiar words that belong to an alliterative string
- practising voice sounds and pronunciation skills
- developing oral blending skills

- auditory processing skills – being able to retain and process three things that have been heard is essential for blending and decoding CVC words

Daily phonics sessions, minimum of 20 minutes, should focus on Strand 3 Talking about Sounds (developing vocabulary and language comprehension), with a particular focus on aspect 7 ‘oral blending and segmenting’.

The following games from Little Wandle Foundations for Phonics should be used to structure these sessions;

- Play with sounds
- Bertha the bus
- Name play
- Voice sounds
- What’s in the box?
- Blend from the box

Evidence and staff annotations are recorded in pupil English skills evidence books.

Where pupils demonstrate some phase 2 phonic awareness (recognising and/or saying graphemes/phonemes, in line with the Little Wandle ongoing assessment), then these pupils should receive direct phonic teaching in line with the Little Wandle SEND Programme. These pupils will be discussed/moderated on a case by case with the My Communication curriculum driver team/SLT.

Pathway 3 (Old Park Reading Scale 7)

All pupils working towards Standard 2 (OPS Scale 7 onwards) receive daily direct phonic teaching in line with the Little Wandle SEND Programme, for a minimum of 20 minutes per session. This is not delivered as a teacher led whole class session. Planning and delivery ‘ensure a direct instruction approach, which is modified to ensure challenge and progress’. This is likely to be small group or individual teaching. Evidence and staff annotations are recorded in pupil English skills evidence books.

Phonics and early reading teaching will focus on:

- developing knowledge of grapheme-phoneme correspondence
- developing blending and segmenting skills
- developing the ability to blend words through teacher-led blending
- learning the grapheme and phoneme for common diagraphs
- practicing decoding skills by reading fully decodable books well-matched to their secure phonic knowledge
- accessing symbol-supported text
- learning commonly used tricky words
- word to picture matching using simple picture noun vocabulary
- simple word matching to understand that words are units of meaning, looking at words carefully and differentiating between their shape, e.g. word bingo, snap, dominoes, or track games
- reading a range of carefully selected high quality texts with an adult, in groups or individually, with rich opportunities to develop language comprehension skills through following carefully sequenced units of work
- identifying features of the book, such as pictures and words and answering
- simple retrieval, prediction, and inference questions

- having opportunities to select and handle books, identify favourites, revisit and re-read familiar stories

Little Wandle SEND Programme Progression

This programme overview shows the progression of GPCs and tricky words that we teach, in order. The progression has been organised so that children are taught from the simple to more complex GPCs, as well as taking into account the frequency of their occurrence in the most commonly encountered words. All the graphemes taught are practised in words, sentences and, later on, in fully decodable books. Children review and revise GPCs and words daily, weekly and across terms and years, in order to move this knowledge into their long-term memory.

Phase 2

Graphemes	Coverage in Phase 2 weekly grids						
	(Words should be introduced only when focus GPCs are secure)						
	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4	Week 5	Week 6	Week 7
s a t							
p i n							
m d							
g o c							
k ck							
e u							
r h							
b f							
l ll							
ff ss							
j v							
w x y							
z zz							
qu th							
ch sh							
ng nk							
Tricky words*	I is the	put* pull* full*	as and has	his her go	no to into	she push* of	he we me be

Phase 3

Graphemes	Coverage In Phase 3 weekly grids				
	(Words should be introduced only when focus GPCs are secure)				
Review Phase 2 GPCs	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4	Week 5
ai ee					
igh oa					
oo oo					
ar or					
ur ow					
oi ear					
air er					
Tricky words (review)*		I is the put* pull*	full* as and has his	her go no to into	

*Tricky words are included on the weekly grids for convenience but should be taught outside of the blending practice sessions in Phases 2 and 3. The words 'put', 'pull', 'full' and 'push' are not tricky in some regional pronunciations, in which case they should not be treated as such. They can be taught in teacher-led blending.

Phase 4

Focus word type	Example words	Taught In weekly grids
Adjacent consonants with short vowels		
CVCC	hand	Week 1
CCVC	spot	Week 2
CCVCC	stamp	Week 3
CCCVC	string	Week 4
CCCVCC	strict	
Adjacent consonants with long vowels		
CVCC	paint	Week 5
CCVC, CCV	green, star	Week 6
CCVCC, CCCVC	spoilt, sprain	Week 7
Adjacent consonants with short vowels and suffixes		
-ing	resting	Week 7
-er	swimmer	
-est	longest	
-ed /id/	landed	
-ed /t/	dressed	Week 8
Adjacent consonants with long vowels and suffixes		
-ing	painting	Week 8
-er	toaster	
-est	smartest	
-ed /id/	painted	
-ed /d/	groaned	Week 10
Two-syllable words		
With short vowels	plastic	Week 9
With long vowels	frighten	Week 10

Tricky words (new words in bold)	Weeks revised/taught
the I no go to	Week 1
into we me be of	Week 2
was you they my all	Week 3
are sure come do have	Week 4
here like little love one	Week 5
out said says some so	Week 6
there today were what when	Week 7
put pull full push he	Week 8
she by pure come do	Week 9
have here like little love	Week 10

Phase 5

Not all Phase 5 graphemes from the main Little Wandle programme are taught in the Phase 5 SEND weekly grids. The 40 most common and useful GPCs are taught – these are the Phase 5 core graphemes. Some GPCs are taught as variants in words only, for example, /j/ 'ge' as in 'fringe' and /s/ 'ce' as in 'fence'.

These Phase 5 core graphemes will give children enough understanding of Phase 5 to be able to decode most common words whilst keeping the number of graphemes small enough to be manageable. Each Phase 5 core grapheme card has an image on it to help create a strong link; these are replicated in the SEND Grapheme mat for Phases 2, 3 and 5.

Graphemes	Example word	Taught in weekly grid	Graphemes	Example word	Taught in weekly grid
/ai/ ay	crayons	Week 1	/ee/ ie	shield	Week 8
/ow/ ou	cloud		/or/ aw	paws	
/oi/ oy	toy		/ee/ y	jelly	
/ee/ ea	beach	Week 2	/e/ ea	bread	Week 9
/ur/ ir	bird		/w/ wh	wheel	
/igh/ ie	pie		/igh/ y	butterfly	
/oo/ ue	blue	Week 3	/j/ g	giant	Week 10
/yoo/ ue	statue		/j/ dge (ge)	bridge (fringe)	
/yoo/ u	unicorn		/s/ c (ce)	mice (fence)	
/oa/ o	robot	Week 4	/f/ ph	elephant	Week 11
/igh/ i	spider		/air/ are	square	
/ai/ a	apron		/z/ se	cheese	
/ee/ e	lemur	Week 5	/l/ le	apple	Week 12
/oa/ ow	rainbow		/v/ ve	leaves	
/ai/ a-e	cake		/u/ o	gloves	
/igh/ i-e	bike	Week 6	/o/ a	watch	Week 13
/oa/ o-e	fishbone		/or/ a (al)	ball (walk)	
/oo/ /yoo/ u-e	tubes/cute		/sh/ ti	station	
/ee/ e-e	athlete	Week 7	/sh/ ci	magician	Week 14
/oo/ /yoo/ ew	jewels/new		/or/ ore	before	

The graphemes in brackets are taught in Phase 5 as variants in words; 'tch' is also taught as a variant of /ch/.

Tricky words (new words in bold)	Weeks revised/ taught	Tricky words (new words in bold)	Weeks revised/ taught
said says so some there	Week 1	many again who whole where	Week 8
today were what when come	Week 2	two school call different thought	Week 9
do have here like little	Week 3	through friend work once laugh	Week 10
love one our their people	Week 4	because eye busy beautiful pretty	Week 11
oh your Mr Mrs Ms	Week 5	house move improve parents shoe	Week 12
ask* could would should our	Week 6	their people oh your Mr	Week 13
house mouse water want any	Week 7	Mrs Ms ask could our	Week 14

*The word 'ask' is not tricky in some regional pronunciations, in which case it should not be treated as such.

Early Reading Approaches for all Pupils

A respect for, and love of books, is encouraged for all pupils. They are offered experience of a wider range of texts through the school and classroom environments, the curriculum, and special events. Every classroom has a designated reading for pleasure session on their timetable. This maybe linked to accessing our school library or accessing appropriate reading material within the classroom.

A balance of child-led and adult-led Early Reading experiences are provided for all pupils. These include:

- provision of a range and breadth of high-quality literature which allows pupils to see themselves reflected in the language, characters and events
- encounter texts which provide both 'mirrors' and 'windows'. Mirror stories reflect their own culture and helps to build their identity. Window stories offer a view into someone else's experience.

Reading Practice Sessions

At Old Park School we use the Collins Big Cat – Little Wandle decodable reading books to support our phonics programme. These books have been written to align with the Little Wandle order of teaching and offer a mix of stories and non-fiction to help foster a love of reading.

Pupils are given regular opportunities to apply the phonics they have learned to reading fully decodable books. Where possible each pupil has three reading practice sessions per week, with a book taught over two weeks. Each reading practice session has a clear focus, so that the demands of the session do not overload the children's working memory.

Reading practice sessions have been designed to focus on three key reading skills:

- decoding
The decoding session might be repeated to aid fluency, or the book might be chunked up to two sessions, depending on the needs of the pupil.
- prosody – reading with meaning, stress and intonation
Teaching prosody is an important skill for all pupils. Some pupils with an autistic spectrum condition (ASC), auditory processing disorder or hearing impairment may not be able to produce prosody when speaking. However, talking through how and why specific emphasis carries meaning beyond the words themselves is helpful in teaching how spoken prosody affects comprehension.
- comprehension – understanding the text
Teach comprehension through talk and by making connections between the book and the pupils' lives. Dialogic talk is the best way to grow vocabulary and language. When pupils make connections between books and their interests, they are growing their foundational knowledge of reading, and finding out how it will benefit them and give them pleasure.

Reading practice sessions are adapted and taught to meet the needs of individuals or groups. Sensory elements, pictures and other adaptations are added to ensure children make strong connections between the book and their knowledge of the world. This enables them to read the book with the greatest level of success possible.

The SEND programme ongoing assessment is used to ensure that books match the pupils secure phonics knowledge. Where pupils are making quicker progress in between assessments, then professional judgement issued to move a pupil onto the next book level, ensuring that the pupil can read:

- the GPCs in the book effortlessly
- the practice words at the front of the book fluently (with little or no overt blending)
- the tricky words

Wordless Books

Where pupils have begun direct phonic instruction at phase 2 but cannot yet blend, wordless books (phase 1) are used to further develop book behaviours, language and phonemic awareness. These may be supported by symbols/Aided Language Display (ALD) where appropriate.

Blending Practice Books

The Little Wandle blending practice books all focus on specific Phase 2 and Phase 3 GPCs. The books are much shorter in length, have sound buttons beneath the words and have been designed so that pupils can practise their blending skills in context. The books are richly illustrated and provide lots of opportunity to extend language and comprehension.

Templates for delivering the reading practice sessions can be found at

<https://www.littlewandlelettersandsounds.org.uk/resources/my-letters-and-sounds/weekly-reading-and-phonics/reading-send/>

Positive Relationships

To support Old Park's approach to early reading and phonics, class-based staff:

- know and promote the importance of communication, phonics and reading
- are given training and support to know how to teach a child to read, from their current starting point, so they are confident in and aware of the key knowledge, skills and attitudes early readers need to succeed.
- are trained in the school's SSP (Synthetic Systematic Phonics), Little Wandle, and work to a clear programme of phonics, ensuring that GPCs (grapheme phoneme correspondences) are taught sequentially alongside the key skills of decoding for reading and encoding for spelling
- choose and use stories, poems, rhymes, and non-fiction for reading that allow pupils to develop rich vocabulary
- carefully assess the progress of every child, identifying the needs of any child not meeting expectations and putting appropriate support in place to enable them to make progress
- acquire specialist knowledge to be able to address potential barriers to learning, such as sensory impairments
- model and convey enthusiasm, opinion, and appreciation of texts
- discuss and talk about books in way that supports comprehension and encourages a lifelong love of reading
- when appropriate, use carefully selected and well-matched texts that enable pupils to use and apply their developing phonic knowledge
- work with families to support them to understand how to support their child's early reading
- build on children's prior knowledge and seek to incorporate family literacy into pupils learning, including experiences of their own language, songs, and print

- link reading to other areas of the curriculum and look for incidental opportunities across the school day to promote reading

The My Communication curriculum driver team supports and promotes the school's approach to early reading and phonics by:

- co-ordinating induction and ongoing Continual Professional Development (CPD) in early reading, phonics, and English
- develop own subject knowledge through working with other professionals and experts
- strategically planning school-level interventions to improve the quality of practice
- implementing and overseeing the school's SSP: Little Wandle SEND Programme
- ensuring pupils have access to a wide range of high-quality texts in their classrooms and in shared areas
- promoting reading at home and training families to support their children's literacy
- celebrating reading through special events and specialist week, such as Book Day
- supporting other curriculum driver teams in how to promote and use literacy through their subject areas
- oversee and monitor assessments in reading across the school and develop assessment practice in reading

Engaging Environments

The Little Wandle SEND programme outlines the following:

Reducing cognitive load

It is important to factor in the impact of cognitive load on children. In phonics lessons, be mindful of the impact on cognitive load of the following:

The teaching environment

- Keep the visual environment clear and uncluttered – remove visual distractions.
- Keep teaching surfaces clear and easy to use.
- Put away any grapheme cards or word cards if they are not needed.

The way information is presented

- Think about how you can adapt lessons to cater to the children's working memory.
- Present new information using a combination of visual and auditory materials; pupils will be less likely to experience cognitive overload as the content will be spread between the channels (audio/visual).
- Only present the pupils with essential information, to ensure that non-essential information does not take up some of their working memory's capacity. Do not include unnecessary details, such as anecdotes or animations.
- Consider how you can support the pupils when cognitive load is high for them; for example, when they need to hold more than one concept in their minds.

Teacher-modelling and language

- Teach essential information one step at a time.
- Use teacher modelling and the copy me method to ensure children have worked examples to learn new content or skills.
- Consider the language level of instruction and materials. Language comprehension requires working memory, and many children with SEND will have both limited working memory capacity and delayed

or disordered receptive language. This makes it all the more important to minimise unnecessary language, which increases the cognitive load. Keep language simple, clear and to the point, to offer children with SEND the maximum opportunity to process and understand it and, therefore, to learn.

Impact

Education Health Care Plans

There are clear links within Phonics and Reading that impact across all four areas of the EHCP

- **Communication:** the ability to tune into, listen, remember and talk about sounds will help and support auditory discrimination, auditory memory, sequencing and developing vocabulary and language comprehension. This will all directly support developing communication skills at every level. The ability to recognise letters and words and ultimately, read, will also support their ability to communicate with others, for example through the written word, texts, emails, letters and books. Phonics and reading also helps pupils develop comprehension and writing skills, vocalisations and speech. It encourages the sharing of ideas, responding, initiating, turn taking and communicating with others using a Total Communication approach.
- **Cognition and Learning:** skills developed during phonics and reading sessions such as visual, gross and fine motor, auditory, exploratory, problem-solving, memory, communication and comprehension will support cognition and learning across the curriculum. Skills related to reacting to stimuli and to then understanding and responding to it is a fundamental skill needed for learning across both the pre-subject and subject specific pathways. Developing the differentiation of sounds and the recognition of symbols, pictures, objects and graphemes will also help support and enable learning across the curriculum. In addition, skills related to sequencing events, stories, problem solving and exploration will be developed through phonics and early reading sessions which will all support learning in this area of the EHCP and beyond.
- **Social, Emotional and Mental Health:** the ability to tune into sounds and communicate using sounds and print can have a big impact. This can help someone to feel understood, emotionally regulated and part of a community. There are implications for safety related to this, particularly developing expressive communication and the resulting ability to discuss and read about relationships, experiences and feelings. Another impact phonics and early reading skills can have is a wider social circle and enjoying communicating with people by developing skills in engagement with adults and peers. Skills in phonics and reading will also help develop confidence and a sense of belonging to the world around them and enable them to experience other worlds and roles in their imaginations. The ability to read and/or enjoy books also helps support our mental health and when our world is reflected back to us this can help with our self-esteem, confidence and promote pupil voice. When we read stories which offer windows into the experiences of others through engaging with characters, events and settings beyond our usual day to day life this can broaden our own imagination and perception of the world. This can develop our empathy and understanding about what it is like to be someone else. Phonics sessions often involve working in a small group, transitioning to other areas of the school, working with different peers from across school and turn taking including waiting and listening to others. These are all vital skills linked to this EHCP area.

- **Sensory and Physical:** During phonics and reading learning there is a tactile exploration of a range of different media, textures and resources such as books, story objects and sensory resources. Gross and fine motor, hand-eye coordination, auditory processing, discrimination and visual skills will be developed and used frequently. Vocalisation and speech development will be encouraged and worked on. The ability to read and respond to social stories and instructions can help with this EHCP area skills such as dressing, toileting and feeding. Body percussion, actions and mouth movements which are worked on in phonics also help develop physical and sensory skills.

Pre-Subject Specific Learners

Pre–subject specific learners are able to engage with a sensory curriculum in which Phonics and reading plays a major role. Pupils working at this level benefit from a range of experiences and stimuli which develop over time following the long-term structured sequence. This maximises the opportunity of these learners to respond expressively to different resources, books and sensory experiences as they work through the Reading and Phonics curriculums.

This supports them to be active participants within the world that they are living. In line with their cognitive and physical development, pupils develop emergent communication of their awareness of an interaction, responding consistently to the same familiar people or resources around them, and moving towards or away from others to indicate basic wishes to interact, seek comfort, or reject touch from another. They begin to respond consistently to preferred stimuli, for instance; different items presented alongside a sensory story. They also begin to tune into more sounds, develop their focus, attention and visual skills which opens up more experiences and helps them to learn and develop across all areas. This also includes exploring different books and stories, visiting the library, sharing Bag books and Story Sacks and focused lessons experiencing aspects of phonological awareness. This could also include offsite visits, help to enrich their experiences and broaden their horizons, allowing them to be part of the wider community and world around them.

Subject Specific Learners

Subject specific learners develop their knowledge of grapheme-phoneme correspondence and blending and segmenting skills. They practise their decoding, prosody and comprehension skills by reading fully decodable books well-matched to their secure phonic knowledge. They will read a range of high quality, chosen texts, with rich opportunities to develop their vocabulary and language comprehension skills by following the sequenced units of work. These learners will develop their skills and learn to read and understand text and the spoken word. Pupils begin to communicate to a range of audiences in a variety of ways and develop their ability and confidence when interacting with others.

Preparation for Adulthood

During an Old Park School stakeholder consultation on Post 19 hopes and aspirations across all pathways, a variety of responses were received. The following are addressed through our phonics and early reading approach.

- Expressing likes and dislikes.
- Expressing preferences and opinions
- To have developed an appropriate and functional means of communication which provides/gives maximum independence and self-expression.

- Have the confidence to have a voice.
- To be able to communicate in the wider community in various settings.
- To understand universal signs which are found within community settings. (toilets, traffic signs, college).
- Understand simple directions and be able to follow them.
- To understand core vocabulary, e.g. I, you, more, finish, again, yes, no, stop, verbs, adjectives.
- To understand signs and symbols in the community.
- To read menus, shopping lists, instructions and directions.
- To read for pleasure at the highest possible level.