



PHONICS POLICY

DATE: Spring 2025

Brierley Primary School



Little Bears @ Brierley

Nurture, Aspire, Believe, Achieve

Intent:

Nurture, Aspire, Believe, Achieve.

At Brierley, we believe that all our children can become fluent readers and writers. This is why we teach reading through Little Wandle Letters and Sounds, which is a systematic and synthetic phonics programme. We start teaching phonics in Nursery/Reception and follow the Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised progression, which ensures children build on their growing knowledge of the alphabetic code, mastering phonics to read and spell as they move through school.

As a result, all of our children are able to tackle any unfamiliar words as they read. At Brierley, we also model the application of the alphabetic code through phonics in shared reading and writing, both inside and outside of the phonics lesson and across the curriculum. We have a strong focus on language development for our children because we know that speaking and listening are crucial skills for reading and writing in all subjects.

Nurture: to instill an enthusiasm for books and learning to read

Aspire: to develop the foundations and skills necessary in order to be able to enjoy books and read them with fluency and automaticity

Believe: to have confidence in ourselves when discussing books and resilience when reading new sounds and words

Achieve: to learn sounds and be able to confidently decode in order to become readers as early as possible

Our curriculum for phonics aims to ensure that all pupils:

- develop a love of books and an enthusiasm for reading as early as possible
- learn to read with automaticity and fluency by applying the sounds that they have been taught
- develop an understanding of the books they read
- build a rich and varied vocabulary through the books they read and listen to
- develop a sense of curiosity and ask questions about what they read

Implementation:

At Brierley we recognise the importance of reading. We understand that a child's journey to becoming a reader begins with a systematic approach to the teaching of phonics where the sounds of the English language are taught in a specific order. We follow the Little Wandle Letters and Sounds phonics programme which starts with foundations for phonics in Nursery where children are taught how to tune in to different sounds and repeat patterns. In Reception and Year 1, our children work through the phonics phases and are taught a new sound each day with the fifth day of each week focusing on recapping and reviewing. Additional phonics teaching takes place daily for any children who need extra practise. The teaching of phonics continues beyond Year 1 wherever children still need this or when a child joins our school and is not yet a reader.

In addition to the daily phonics lessons, children in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 work in small focus reading groups where they work with an adult to discuss and read a book which is a little above what they are able to read independently. During these sessions (which run Monday-Thursday), children practise reading sounds, tricky words and specific vocabulary for

the book. They engage in high quality book talk and practise reading and re-reading to develop their skills of being able to read with automaticity and prosody. During the final session of the week, each child completes an independent written task linked to the book. These groups are also put in place further up the school for children who are working at a phonics level.

All staff at Brierley are trained in Little Wandle and are able to deliver quality group or 1:1 read sessions with children. This is done with consistency across school, regardless of which year group children are in, to ensure we support each and every child in becoming a reader as early as possible.

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 ensure Nursery children are well prepared to begin learning grapheme-phoneme correspondences (GPCs) and blending in Reception.

Daily phonics lessons in Reception and Year 1:

We teach phonics daily. In Reception, we build from 10-minute lessons, with additional daily oral blending games, to the full-length lesson as quickly as possible. Each Friday, we review the week's teaching to help children become fluent readers. Children make a strong start in Reception: teaching begins in Week 1 of the Autumn term. · We follow the Little Wandle Letters and Sounds expectations of progress:

- Children in Reception are taught to read and spell words using Phases 2 and 3 GPCs, and words with adjacent consonants (Phase 4) with fluency and accuracy
- Children in Year 1 review Phases 3 and 4 and are taught to read and spell words using Phase 5 GPCs with fluency and accuracy

Any child who needs additional practice has daily keep-up support. 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 secures their learning.

We timetable additional phonics lessons and phonics reading sessions for any child beyond Year 1 who is not fully fluent at reading or has not passed the Phonics Screening Check. These children urgently need to catch up, so the gap between themselves and their peers does not widen.

We teach children to read through reading practice sessions which occur 4 times per week and provide the opportunity for children to apply the sounds they have been taught. These are small groups of approximately 6 children and use books which are above the children's phonics knowledge. These groups are regularly reorganised to reflect the progress that the children make and adults rotate to allow teachers to work closely with all children in their class.

Each reading practice session has a clear focus, so that the demands of the session do not overload the children's working memory. The reading practice sessions have been designed to focus on three key reading skills:

- Decoding

- Prosody: teaching children to read with understanding and expression
- Comprehension: teaching children to understand the text.

Regardless of year group, practice reading sessions are planned for using a whole school proforma and follow the same sequence:

Lesson 1	Lesson 2	Lesson 3	Lesson 4
Practise reading sounds/key vocabulary/tricky words needed for the book and discuss, including meaning. This is done without the book. Introduce the book followed by book talk including making predictions (concepts of print). Begin to decode the book.	Quick flashcards work on sounds/vocab. Continue to decode the book. Adult to model prosody and fluency – children to practise this.	Quick flashcards work on sounds/vocab. Re-read the book (combination of independent, choral and popcorn reading). Focus on prosody/fluency/expression. Oral comprehension or group comprehension with the adult scribing.	Re-read with prosody and fluency. Children to complete an independent task based on the book.

The decodable reading practice books used in group sessions are aimed slightly above what the children are able to read independently to ensure challenge. The books which children take home are closely matched to their phonological level and are easily decodable for the child. The purpose of the take home books is for children to practise reading the sounds that they know with fluency and accuracy and to celebrate their achievements at home. Share books also go home for parents to share and read to children. We use parent workshops, letters and emails to support our parents in engaging with their child's phonics and early reading journey.

Pupils with SEN and learning difficulties are supported within class and identified through teacher judgement and assessments through the year. Additional small group work and opportunities for 1:1 reading sessions are used to scaffold and support pupils to develop their decoding skills and fluency. Within each year group, children with special educational needs are taught the knowledge, skills and understanding in a way which suits the individual abilities. All children are expected to take part in the whole class phonics lessons, with additional phonics sessions being used to support children with gaps in their learning.

More able pupils are extended by being exposed to more challenging texts through the practice read sessions.

Assessment:

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

Assessment for learning 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 of GPCs, words and spellings

Summative assessment is used:

- Around every 3 weeks, 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. These assessments are carried out regularly to ensure children are consistently taking home books which are closely matched to their phonics knowledge, to allow for accelerated progress and to inform the organisation of phonics read groups which are regularly changed according to assessments.

Children in Year 1 sit the Phonics Screening Check. Any child not passing the check re-sits it in Year 2.

Enrichment & Wider Opportunities

We value reading for pleasure highly and work hard as a school to grow our Reading for Pleasure pedagogy.

- 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 Brierley 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.
- In Nursery/Reception, children have access to the reading corner every day in their free flow time and the books are continually refreshed.
- Children in Reception to Year 2 (along with children beyond Year 2 who are still a phonics readers) have a home reading diary. The parent/carer records comments to share with the adults in school and the adults will write in this on a regular basis to ensure communication between home and school.
- Classes visit the local library regularly.
- There are workshops for parents and carers to advise how to support their children with phonics and early reading at home.
- In Reception and Year 1, teachers communicate with parents on a regular basis what sounds are being taught in phonics so that this can be practised at home.

Health & Safety

Pupils will be taught to use any equipment safely. Class teachers, teaching assistants and the subject leader will check equipment regularly and report any damage; removing defective equipment and replacing as appropriate.

Resources:

A wide range of independent reading books, both fiction and non-fiction can be found in the Key Stage 1 room, the school library and in individual classrooms. Classroom libraries are organised to offer a range of age-appropriate books which reflect the needs and interests of the children within each class. Colour-banded books (including phonics books and share books) are based in the Key Stage 1 room and staff visit the room once a week to change reading books.

Group reading sets can be found in bookcases in the school corridors and storage units outside the Year 2 classroom. We also have a range of author sets available to use.

Appendix

Appendix 1:

National Curriculum for English 2014

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-curriculum-in-england-english-programmes-of-study/national-curriculum-in-england-english-programmes-of-study>

Appendix 2:

Early Years, Foundation Stage Framework

[Early years foundation stage \(EYFS\) statutory framework - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

Appendix 3:

Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised

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

For Review – Spring 2026