

Stubbins Primary School

Subject Policy for Reading and Phonics



At Stubbins School, children are at the centre of everything we do. We aim to give our children the best possible opportunities and learning experiences, enabling them to reach their full potential. We aim to ensure that the children in our care are equipped for life-long learning as responsible citizens in an ever-changing, diverse local and world-wide community.

We believe that everyone has the capacity to become great if they have the courage to challenge themselves. By nurturing creativity, enjoyment & ambition; this policy supports our responsibility to make this happen.

This policy is supported by, and should be read in conjunction with, our Teaching & Learning Policy, The Key Principles of which are that:

1. It is vital that staff have a consistent and shared understanding and approach to promoting learning. However, it is recognised that staff have different styles, strengths, enthusiasms and approaches – this is valuable and to be celebrated and shared.
2. **Agile Teaching**, rooted firmly in the principles of Formative Assessment, is the framework within which learning happens at Stubbins.
3. Teamwork underpins our professional roles. Our success depends on how closely we support and energise each other.
4. We are on a learning journey, and have much to learn from colleagues and other professionals; we learn from our mistakes
5. Teaching is sometimes difficult, and there are always barriers to overcome when promoting learning. However, we are right to be ambitious for what can be achieved, and optimistic that learning can always be enhanced for all our pupils.
6. Each and every pupil has the right to access the very best learning that we are able to offer.
7. We are responsible for providing the guidance, support and expertise necessary for the best learning to take place. 'Working' is not always 'learning' – we should enable our pupils to be active learners.

Learning and teaching is the core business of our school. It is our aim to motivate all our pupils to have high aspirations, to want to do their personal best and to have the desire to be successful in and out of school. We are trying to prepare pupils to be successful in a rapidly changing world that has many challenges; some of which are yet unforeseen. We can only nurture flexible and creative learners if teachers and pupils work in partnership to create a stimulating and successful learning environment.

Thus it is our aim to have pupils involved fully in the learning process thereby promoting an active culture of learning. The Teaching & Learning Policy sets out the principles and expectations behind our learning environment and should be read in conjunction with this policy.

Delivering the Curriculum

Our Policy on delivering the curriculum explains how we ensure that we include every child and use our skills environment to maximise every child's potential. This policy also outlines the areas of learning across the curriculum.

Other Policies which support this subject are:

- **Behaviour Policy**
- **Marking Policy**
- **Assessment Policy**
- **SEN Policy**
- **Equality Policy (Duty & Action Plan)**
- **Library Policy**
- **English**

The main aims in the teaching of Reading and Phonics.

At Stubbins School, we believe that Reading is the key to learning and to improving life chances.

The OFSTED publication 'Getting them reading early' (2011) sums up the teaching of Phonics and Reading:

"The government's White Paper, The importance of teaching, in November 2010 stated its case for phonics. It said that it would:

'ensure that all children have the chance to follow an enriching curriculum by getting them reading early. That means supporting the teaching of systematic synthetic phonics and introducing a simple reading check at age six to guarantee that children have mastered the basic skills of early reading and also ensure we can identify those with learning difficulties' (para. 4.6).

This intention is now reflected in the new Teachers' Standards, published by the DfE in July 2011 for implementation in September 2012.¹ Under the heading 'Developing good subject and curriculum knowledge' is the requirement for teachers who teach early reading to demonstrate 'a clear understanding of systematic synthetic phonics'.

The final report acknowledged:

'...it is an obvious truth that the goal of reading is comprehension and that skilled reading involves understanding as well as decoding text. In short, learning to read progresses to reading, effortlessly, to learn. The teaching of beginner readers requires an understanding of the processes that underpin this progression' (p.35).

The review showed that skilled reading requires two processes:

- ***PHONICS: that the reader recognises and understands the words on the page (that is, word recognition processes or decoding)***
- ***COMPREHENSION: the development of language comprehension (that is, written texts as well as spoken language are understood and interpreted).***

These are both necessary, but neither is enough on its own. Teaching reading needs to give attention to both dimensions: word recognition and comprehension (understanding spoken and written language.)"

The following pages summarise how we aim to put this into action at Stubbins School.

Phonics

We teach Synthetic Phonics using **Letters & Sounds**. This is a systematic approach and we begin every school day with a 20 minute phonics session for those children working towards Phase 6. This ensures that phonics is taught regularly, discretely, explicitly and in an agreed and rational sequence. Once children have achieved Phase 6 of Letter and Sounds children they are taught grammar, punctuation and spelling (GPS) during the first 20 minutes of the day.

Synthetic Phonics has nothing to do with the word 'artificial'; the reference is to the process of blending (synthesising) the individual sounds in a word together, working from left to right, to read them. Synthetic phonics work can begin simply with oral blending, that is, the children listen to sounds and then blend them. They also learn to say sounds, in order, that are represented by individual letters and pronounce these together to say a word (e.g. the sounds /c/, then /a/ and then /t/, blended together to say /cat/). Synthetic phonics also teaches children to break down (segment) a word they hear into its individual sounds, starting from the first sound and working systematically through the word. For each sound they hear, they choose the letter (or combination of letters, such as 'ch' or 'ai' or 'th') to represent that sound in order to spell the word.

Blending and segmenting are, in the words of the Rose Review, 'reversible processes': that is, if you can blend the sounds together to read a word, you should also be able to identify and break down (segment) the individual sounds in a word you hear to spell it. To spell the word, you need to represent each sound you hear by a letter – or more than one letter.

Children are also taught to read words that are not completely phonetically regular, often called **tricky words** in phonic sessions. Children are taught to read these tricky words on sight, so that they do not have to spend time puzzling them out. We regularly help children to practise their speedy recall of tricky words, often with something as simple as flashcards and interactive games.

We have a multi-sensory approach and use a range of activities and resources to support the teaching of phonics, including:

- hand actions/movements and songs to reinforce the sound being learnt or consolidated
- letter cards: to move around on the floor or to put in order, left to right etc.
- whiteboards for writing
- textured letters
- boards with plastic/magnetic letters
- Active Learn interactive phonics games and activities using IT
- various malleable materials and water and sand resources.

We aim to ensure that the children are physically engaged as active learners.

We ask parents to support this learning at home too.

Reading

Phonics is only part of the road to reading.

We also aim to encourage:

- independence and choice of reading material / books.
- knowledge of books and individual authors
- understanding: literal and inferential comprehension
- enjoyment
- higher-order reading skills, such as inference, appreciation of an author's style, awareness of themes, similarity and differences between texts
- awareness of own progress and development as a reader
- high expectations and a culture where reading is encouraged.

As a school we have invested in the high interest Bug Club, Phonics Bug and Phonics for Comics reading scheme. This reading scheme is available to us as both books in the traditional sense and as EBooks. The traditional reading books are taken home daily and EBooks can be allocated to children and are accessible at home and at school.

All children prior to completing Phase 5 phonics have fully decodable reading books from the Phonics Bug and Phonics for Comics strands of the scheme. These books have been written to follow the progressive teaching of Letters and Sounds and children have access to books that closely match the teaching of phonics within class and reflect level that they are working at. This enables us to give early readers successful and confidence building experiences of reading.

The whole reading scheme has been written and compiled with high interest as a focus. The scheme is progressive and is colour banded and Bug Club provides many resources to support the teaching, learning and assessment of reading.

In addition to this, children are encouraged to choose books from our school and class libraries.

In school, children read all the time. We have shared reading sessions (where we all look at a text), daily guided reading sessions (where children are prompted and questioned about their reading) and quiet reading (where children simply read for the pleasure of it).

There are also many times throughout the day where children will be reading from the board, using ICT and reading from worksheets or workbooks.

Resources

Bug Club: banded books are all located in the entrance corridor; E-books are available online, with home share access

Phonics Bug and Phonics for Comics: banded books are located in the hall by the entrance to the Reception Class; E-books are available online, with home share access

Active Learn: interactive games and activities to aid the teaching and learning in language, grammar, phonics and spelling; printable teaching and assessment guides and printable resources are all available online

Educational City: interactive games and activities and printable resources are available online, with home share access

Library: all classes have timetabled access to the school library and have constant access to individual class libraries.

Reading and Phonics games and activities: these can be found in individual classrooms throughout the school; a wide range of English resources, designed to help children with extra needs, are located on the SEN shelves in the Music Room.

Multi-copies of quality books: these can be found in classrooms and in the Library and are available to be used for Guided Reading sessions and Book Clubs.

Assessment & Recording

Teachers are expected to make regular assessment of child's progress and to record these systematically. The following is the school policy for assessment in reading and phonics:

Teachers use both formative and summative assessments to inform their assessment of each child.

- All children's progress through 'Letters and Sounds' is closely monitored and children are assessed at the end of each phase.
- Teachers have end of Book Band assessment resources available online via Bug Club.
- Teachers also use the Key Learning EYFS Reading Grids and the Learning and Progression Reading Group Grids (LAPs) on a daily basis to assess and plan reading sessions.
- All children in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 are given a summative termly reading assessment.

These formative and summative assessments enable teachers to accurately assess each child.

Teachers' summative records for the assessment of reading are kept in assessment folders and recorded on the Lancashire Tracker termly. Other formative assessments may be noted on planning sheets, LAPS documents and in teacher's individual formats for their own information.

Children's work is recorded in their reading journals, in the home-school reading records, during comprehension tasks in English exercise books and in reading tests which are to be kept in each teacher's Assessment Folder.

Parental Involvement in Reading and Phonics

Parents are kept informed about teaching and learning in Reading and Phonics through:

- A dedicated page on the school website.
- EYFS Parent Meeting regarding the Teaching and Learning of Reading and Phonics
- Work assigned to individuals using online home access to Active Learn, Education City and 2Build a Profile (EYFS) IT resources.

Homework

At Stubbins, reading books are changed weekly. Children in KS1 and EYFS are given two books to read each week, allowing time for children to read and return to each book. KS2 children are able to change books once completed. Children are encouraged to read at home daily. A little, often.

All Bug Club, Phonics Bug and Phonics for Comics reading books can be allocated to children as EBooks. When allocated in this way comprehension activities and quizzes are incorporated and rewards in the form of Ecoins are given. Teachers have access to all work completed online and can be used to assess and record children's progress.

All children have home-school reading records. These books allow parents and children to record the daily/weekly reading and encourage children to write about or review books that they have read. Parents are also encouraged to write about their child's progress in these books and this is read by the teacher. This sharing of information confirms parents and teacher's understanding of the child's strengths and weaknesses in reading and informs future teaching.

In EYFS children are given phonics sheets in their Phonics Books, each time a new phoneme has been taught in class, so that parents are able to support and enhance this learning at home.

Reporting to Parents

A main report is completed before the end of the summer term and parents are given two smaller reports as well having the opportunity to discuss their child's progress at parents evening in the Autumn and Spring terms.

Subject Leader

The subject leader is responsible for:

- Creating the subject policy.
- Explaining subject expectations to other staff.
- Ensuring the subject policy is followed across the school.

- Monitoring and evaluating attainment & progress in the subject across the school.
- Recording & holding evidence of the quality of teaching & learning in the subject across the school.
- Reporting to the headteacher and/or governing body.

The Governing Body

Our Curriculum Committee has overall responsibility for the delivery of our curriculum, and for ensuring that standards are high. The subject leaders are encouraged to report to this committee on any developments and particular achievements. Governors are encouraged to visit school in order to monitor the curriculum and celebrate successes.

This policy will be reviewed in January 2021

Miss Alison McNulty

Subject Leader