



# Reading and Phonics Policy

**November 2024**

**Approved by the Governing Body Strategy Group 07/11/24**

**This Policy is due for renewal in Term 2  
2026–27**

# READING POLICY

## OF

### GODINTON PRIMARY SCHOOL

#### SECTION ONE – INTENT

(as displayed on our school website)

At Godinton Primary School we believe that reading is an essential life skill and we are committed to enabling our children to become lifelong readers. Reading is also the gateway in which doors are opened to creativity and greater knowledge across the entire curriculum. It is a crucial part of a child's development and can have a significant impact on writing, lifelong learning and achievements.

At Godinton we endeavour to promote a love of reading in our children. To achieve this pupils are exposed to a wide range of high quality text across a variety of genres. Pupils are given opportunities to increase their vocabulary, develop their fluency and dig deeper into the comprehension and meaning within a text.

Reading is a skill that enables children to develop their learning across the wider curriculum and lays the foundations for success in future lines of study and employment. We recognise the importance of taking a consistent whole school approach to the teaching of reading in order to close any gaps and to target the highest possible number of children attaining the expected standard or higher.

We have high expectations of all children and we encourage children to challenge themselves, persevere and pursue success.

As part of our Guiding Stars curriculum, Reading, Phonics and Writing are the leading light subjects for 'Communication'.

Within our English curriculum, the children develop an understanding of the needs of an audience and respond accordingly. They become confident to use the written or spoken word, to share ideas and thoughts or to entertain, report or explain, setting the page alight with ideas. The children develop a desire to expand their vocabulary and to enrich how they write and speak, trying to find the right words for the right situation. They learn how to improve their work and are happy to listen to or respond to suggestions. We want our children to have a love of literature and find enjoyment in the written or spoken word of others.

#### SECTION TWO – CURRICULUM STRUCTURE AND PLANNING

2.1 Our Curriculum Implementation for Reading is below. This information can also be found on the school website

##### EYFS

In EYFS, children are taught phonics daily by their class teacher, with additional small group sessions led by teaching assistants. Phonics is also firmly embedded into the wider curriculum. Teachers routinely model correct segmenting and blending when reading and writing with the whole class, and during child-initiated sessions. The systematic synthetic phonics scheme used is Little Wandle Letters and Sounds.

Alongside the teaching of phonics, all children in EYFS take part in 3 adult-led reading sessions per week. Within these sessions, decodable Little Wandle books are used which are carefully matched to the children's phonic ability, so they are able to read around 90% of the words with accuracy and fluency. Each reading session has a specific focus aimed at developing reading fluency, prosody (reading with expression) and comprehension. Class teachers also use reading practise sessions to make links to sounds being taught that week in Little Wandle phonics sessions, where possible. Additional whole-class sessions look at a broader range of texts including both fiction and non-fiction.

In addition to dedicated time to teach phonics and reading skills, teachers regularly read with their classes so all children have exposure to a wide range of texts and authors. This enables children, from an early age, to develop their own opinions about a range of stories, poems and information texts alongside continuing to promote a love of reading. Children are also given the opportunity to bring in favourite texts from home to share with the class.

### **Key Stage One**

In KS1 children are taught phonics daily by their class teacher with additional small group sessions led by our experienced team of teaching assistants. Phonics is also firmly embedded into the wider curriculum. Teachers routinely model correct segmenting and blending when reading and writing with the whole class. The systematic synthetic phonics scheme used is Little Wandle Letters and Sounds.

Alongside the teaching of phonics, all children in KS1 take part in 3 adult-led reading sessions per week. Within these sessions decodable Little Wandle (Big Cat) books are used which are carefully matched to the children's phonics ability, so children are able to read 90% of the words with fluency and accuracy. Each reading session has a specific focus aimed at developing reading fluency (decoding) prosody (reading with expression) and comprehension. Additional sessions look at a broader range of texts including both fiction and non-fiction. Lessons have a specific focus aimed at developing reading comprehension and vocabulary skills.

In Year 2, there are whole class guided reading sessions, which take place 3 times a week, in which teachers carefully select a text to be explored during each session. Lessons have a specific focus aimed at developing reading comprehension and vocabulary skills. For children who still need additional phonics support, Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Rapid catch-up programme is used. Daily sessions take place which focus on phonics and reading. decodable Little Wandle (Big Cat) books are used which are carefully matched to the children's phonics ability, so children are able to read 90% of the words with fluency and

accuracy. Each reading session has a specific focus aimed at developing reading fluency (decoding), prosody (reading with expression) and comprehension.

In addition to dedicated time to teach phonics and reading skills, teachers regularly read with their classes so all children have exposure to a wide range of texts and authors. This enables children, from an early age to develop their own opinions about a range of stories, poems and information texts alongside continuing to promote a love of reading.

## **Key Stage Two**

At Godinton Primary School, we teach reading in Key Stage Two using a whole class, Guided Reading approach. Year 3 is seen as a transitional year between KS1 and 2 so initially the sessions are shorter but more frequent: reading is initially taught five times a week as short whole class Guided Reading to build fluency and introduce the children to the VIPERS comprehension themes used in Upper School. This is then reduced throughout the year, finishing with three, one hour long whole class guided reading sessions per week at the end of year 3. The aim of this is to transition the children, support continued learning through fluency and comprehension and prepare them for how reading is taught in year 4.

In Years 4, 5 and 6 reading is taught as a dedicated subject for one hour twice a week.

During reading sessions in KS2 teachers use carefully selected texts to study. Where possible, the texts will be in line with the writing genres that are being taught in learning adventure writing sessions so children gain additional exposure to the particular text type being studied. Teachers plan reading sessions based on their assessment of pupil ability and the key skills that they need to develop using our progressive key skills document. Through whole class reading sessions, our children are exposed to high – quality texts that provide challenge and promote discussion. Children then work independently or with support, as planned for by the class teacher to answer specific questions related to lesson objective. Opportunities for whole class work to model written comprehension answers are also planned for. We want our child to be able to talk confidently about a text; its structure and layout and the intent of the vocabulary used. Children need to be able to read for meaning to gain pleasure from a text and deduce and infer meaning too.

It is our intention that as children move into KS2, they all have secure phonics skills and are able to read fluently. Where children are continuing to develop their phonics knowledge, regular phonics intervention groups are planned. Where individualised support or a different approach is required, we are also able to provide 1-1 sessions using a programme called 'Soundwrite'. Some children start on this programme earlier. In KS2 we continue to provide children with a school reading book to take home which is matched to their reading ability. At the start of KS2, most children will have moved away from colour coded reading books and have a wider range of books to select from. For Years 3 and 4 these are our 'silver books' and in Years 5 and 6 our 'gold' books. We also have 'bronze' books which provide higher interest content for those children who need to maintain interest at a more accessible reading level. Teachers monitor the books that children are selecting and encourage them to read widely. Within the classrooms, we also have 'recommended reads' with star labels.

These are the top recommended books that we want our children to have exposure to during their time in each year group. These include a wide range of fiction books, poetry and classical literature and are reflective of diverse cultures. These may be read to the children in class or children may borrow these to read in class during free reading periods.

### **SECTION THREE – THE NATURE OF READING IN THE CURRICULUM**

3.1 Reading is not simply the decoding of marks on the page but involves the ability to read, with understanding, a wide range of different types of text including fiction, non-fiction, real world texts such as labels, captions and lists, and print in the environment. Competence in reading is the key to independent learning and therefore the teaching of reading is to be given a high priority by all staff.

Success in reading has a direct effect upon progress in most other areas of the curriculum and is crucial in developing children's self-confidence and motivation.

3.2 Our school curriculum for reading is based on the year group expectations of the national Curriculum. Reading is built into English lessons and is taught discretely through specific reading sessions.

3.3 Developing positive reading habits, both at home and at school are positively encouraged by class teachers, through individualised class incentives and by the layout of attractive reading corners within the classroom.

3.4 The children are taught phonics using the government validated scheme of Little Wandle Letters and Sounds. In Reception, and Year 1, children participate in whole class daily sessions led by the class teacher and are then given intervention support to address any gaps in knowledge through the daily keep up programme. Once children are secure in the final phase of the programme they move onto the school's spelling programme.

### **SECTION FOUR – READING WITHIN THE CLASSROOM**

4.1 Younger children will learn nursery rhymes, poems and songs, to build up vocabulary and to increase their phonological awareness. They will be taught letter sounds and will listen to a wide range of stories and traditional tales. They will share picture books with teachers, TAs and with one another, and will be made aware of the significance of print in the environment.

4.2 Children will be given opportunities to read, write and listen to a full range of literature including poetry, prose, contemporary and traditional stories, including multicultural works.

4.3 The systematic synthetic phonics scheme used is Little Wandle Letters and Sounds. All staff are trained to deliver phonics lessons and rapid interventions are put in place where necessary to ensure that all children make good progress and do not fall behind.

4.4 Reading areas and children's books will be arranged to be accessible to the children in each classroom.

4.5 All children will be encouraged to see themselves as readers. Children with learning difficulties in reading will be given appropriate help and support within the classroom. Materials are available to teachers for help with these children.

4.6 Computers, laptops or iPads will be used, when appropriate, for the development of specific reading skills.

4.7 The books, which our children read, are carefully chosen so that issues related to equal opportunities are handled sensitively. The interests of both boys and girls will be taken into consideration when reading activities and materials are selected. We will ensure that the books and literature available to children represent as wide a range of cultures as possible.

4.8 There will be opportunities to develop reading skills in cross-curricular themes.

4.9 The importance of reading will be reinforced through special events, for example, book fairs, book weeks, visiting storytellers, authors, drama productions and the performance of children's work. The enjoyment of reading is promoted through class reading books. All classes should have a class book that is read to the children during the week. In Reception and year 1 teachers share stories on a daily basis, using picture and short story books. This also allows for further opportunities to develop pupil understanding of a text.

## **SECTION FIVE – TEACHING READING**

5.1 Alongside the teaching of phonics, all children in Year R and Year 1 take part in adult-led reading sessions three times per week. These are small group sessions led by the class teacher and teaching assistants. Within these sessions, decodable Little Wandle (Big Cat) books are used. These books are carefully matched to the children's phonic ability, so they are able to read around 90% of the words with accuracy and fluency. Class teachers also use reading sessions to make links to sounds being taught that week in Little Wandle, where possible.

Years 2 to 6 take part in whole class lessons, usually with all children working on the same text, but with differentiated activities or questions. Sessions focus on a specific reading skill, with a regular focus on differentiated reading next steps, which are set for the children at regular intervals throughout the year.

5.2 During these sessions the children will experience a wide range of reading strategies. Children will have the opportunity to discuss texts/ words/ sounds, read aloud independently, to a partner or adult, read to themselves independently, read together and be read to. Children will be taught to make use of all appropriate reading strategies to help them read independently and with understanding, and will also be helped to develop different reading styles to enable them to read a wide range of texts. All children will be encouraged to develop an awareness of audience when they are reading aloud.

5.3 Teachers may use a range of resources with a group or class; this could include multiple copies of a text, big books, comprehension texts, question cards, newspapers or reading games.

5.4 The majority of these sessions will take place outside of the main English lesson and the duration of the session will depend on the age of the children, ranging from 15 – 25 minutes in Lower school and 30–60 minutes in Middle and Upper School.

5.5 Guided Reading texts are chosen with regard to the themes and genres taught within the year group.

5.6 Objectives for the sessions are taken from the school's assessment overview sheets, which outline the expectations for each year group and highlight targets and next steps in learning. Staff use these assessment sheets to track the children's progress and to identify the next steps in their learning.

## **SECTION SIX – SUPPORTING READING AT HOME**

6.1 Our home reading scheme is based on a selection of commercial schemes used as appropriate supplemented with a selection of books from a range of good quality children's literature. Therefore, children will have access to a range of books, with varying levels of difficulty, which they will be encouraged to read for pleasure and information at home. Children in Year R – 1, and some Year 2 children who continue to learn through phonics, will be able to read at home the text read that week in the three reading sessions. The Little Wandle Reading book will go home on Thursday to be shared at home and returned to school Monday. Children in Year R and 1 are also able to take home one additional book a week to read for pleasure. The reading for pleasure book is a book that the children have

chosen to take home to share with their parents, they are not expected to be able to read this book.

6.2 In Years R – 2, children complete a reading / contact book in which information about the children’s reading habits can be shared. Particular emphasis will be placed on building up a strong sense of home/school partnership. The support and encouragement of parents/carers will be sought and valued. Parents/carers will be encouraged to make brief comments about their child’s reading at home. Teachers may also make a comment, where appropriate. Children in Year 3 use the records which are sent up at the end of Year 2, these are then gradually phased out during the year as part of the transition between KS1 and KS2. Children in Upper school do not have contact books.

6.3 Meetings at the beginning of the academic year will ensure parents/carers are aware of the approach taken to reading within the year group and the expectations with regard to reading habits. Parents/carers will also be helped to see that they have a vital role to play in their children’s reading development and will be encouraged to foster a love of reading in their children.

6.4 Teachers adopt specific routines within their class timetables for changing reading books.

6.5 Children will have the opportunity to take home a new book at least once a week.

6.6 Teachers do not need to listen to children read from their ‘home’ books before changing it. They will use assessments made in guided reading and 1:1 sessions to assess when it is appropriate for a child to move onto a different reading level colour-band.

## **SECTION SEVEN – SCHOOL LIBRARY**

The school has a library however through necessity, it has been temporarily repurposed as a small group space. Books to support Learning Adventure topics have been distributed amongst classes. This means that classes have access to a variety of fiction and non-fiction books, for a range of ages, to suit the themes and interests within each year group. Books to support Learning Adventure topics and to top up class reading books or guided reading sessions can be borrowed by classes.

## **SECTION EIGHT – ASSESSMENT**

8.1 Teachers will ensure that children are assessed in individual reading regularly. In Years R – 1, teachers regularly assess according to the Little Wandle Letters and Sounds



assessment schedule, and use the Little Wandle Letters and Sounds placement chart to determine which books are of an appropriate level. Upon completion of the Little Wandle Letters and Sounds assessment, Little Wandle generate a heat map which identifies gaps in phonics knowledge and identifies where targeted support is needed. In Years 2–6, they will judge which colour level of book is most appropriate for each child.

8.2 Assessments made during guided reading sessions will be used to monitor the children's reading progress and to track reading attainment. Children will not be expected to read every book on a particular level. Through regular assessments, teachers will be able to make an informed choice about possible changes.

8.3 The school has a comprehensive reading assessment which enables teachers to track the children's achievements over the course of the year. Attainment against age expected descriptors is recorded at regular intervals during the school year and allows targets for progress to be determined.

8.4 Children's reading attainment and progress is discussed at pupil progress meetings three times a year with the Headteacher and Assistant Headteachers. We ensure that the Assistant Head (Inclusion) is present at all pupil progress meetings. Children identified as under-achieving or failing to make sufficient progress will form the focus of the meetings.

8.5 Regular assessment will identify those pupils who require additional intervention and support. Teachers outline these interventions on a provision map. Individual provision maps are sent out to parents three times a year.

8.6 Children in Year 1 complete the Phonics Screening Check during the summer term. Any child not achieving the required standard will then be re-tested in the summer term of Year 2. Additional intervention may be provided for pupils who do not achieve the expected standard in Year 1. Little Wandle Rapid Catch up will be used for this.

8.7 Children at the end of Key Stage Two participate in formal reading assessments in the KS2 SATs. 2023 saw the last year of formal KS1 SATs testing. Optional reading assessments are available to support assessment at the end of Year 2 from 2024 onwards and our school engages with these materials. In Year R, children are assessed against the 'word reading' and 'comprehension' Early Learning Goals towards the end of the school year.

8.8 Children will take home a school report three times per year which provides information for parents about their attainment against year group expectations.

## **SECTION NINE – TEACHING READING TO PUPILS WITH ADDITIONAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS**

9.1 At Godinton Primary School we teach the skill of reading to all children, whatever their ability. Reading forms part of the school curriculum policy to provide a broad and balanced education to all children. Through our teaching we provide learning opportunities that match the needs of children with learning difficulties and we take into account the targets set for individual children with special educational needs.

9.2 Some children may have specific reading targets that require additional reading support. This may also include specific schemes such as ‘Soundwrite’ or ‘Cracking Comprehension’. There may be times when this requires additional individual teaching from a teaching assistant.

9.3 Targets will be planned in accordance with the class timetable and should be incorporated into lesson time as well as any additional intervention work.

9.4 Consideration is given in planning to meeting the needs of children identified as exceeding year group expectations. These children may also access additional activities and targets to enhance and extend their skills such as higher level questioning.

## **SECTION TEN – EQUALITY STATEMENT (Refer also to specific policies for equal opportunities and racial equality)**

At Godinton Primary School, we are committed to ensuring equality of opportunity for all members of our school community irrespective of race, religion or belief, gender, gender reassignment, disability, sexual orientation, age, pregnancy or maternity, marriage and civil partnership or socio-economic background. We are determined to develop a culture of inclusion and diversity in which all those connected to the school feel proud of their identity and ability to participate fully in school life.

We tackle discrimination through the positive promotion of equality by challenging stereotypes and by creating an environment that champions respect for all. At Godinton Primary School, we believe that diversity is a strength that should be respected and celebrated by all those who learn, teach and visit us.

All school policies have an explicit aim of promoting equality and will be reviewed in terms of their contribution and effectiveness in achieving this aim.

## **SECTION ELEVEN – CHILDREN IN CARE**

As for all our pupils, Godinton Primary School is committed to helping every Child in Care (CIC) to achieve the highest standards they can. To this end staff will ensure that in delivering the curriculum they set suitable learning challenges of CIC, respond to the diverse learning needs of CIC, and help to overcome the potential barriers to learning and assessment for CIC. The English coordinator will support staff in doing this within this subject.

## **SECTION TWELVE – MONITORING AND REVIEW**

12.1 The curriculum team leader, supported by the English co-ordinator, is responsible for monitoring the standard of the children's work and the quality of teaching in reading.

12.2 They are also responsible for supporting colleagues in the teaching of English, for being informed about current developments in the subject, and for providing a strategic lead and direction for the subject in the school.

12.3 They evaluate the strengths and weaknesses in the subject through data analysis and indicate areas for further improvement which may then be fed into the school action plan.

12.4 This policy is reviewed every two years.