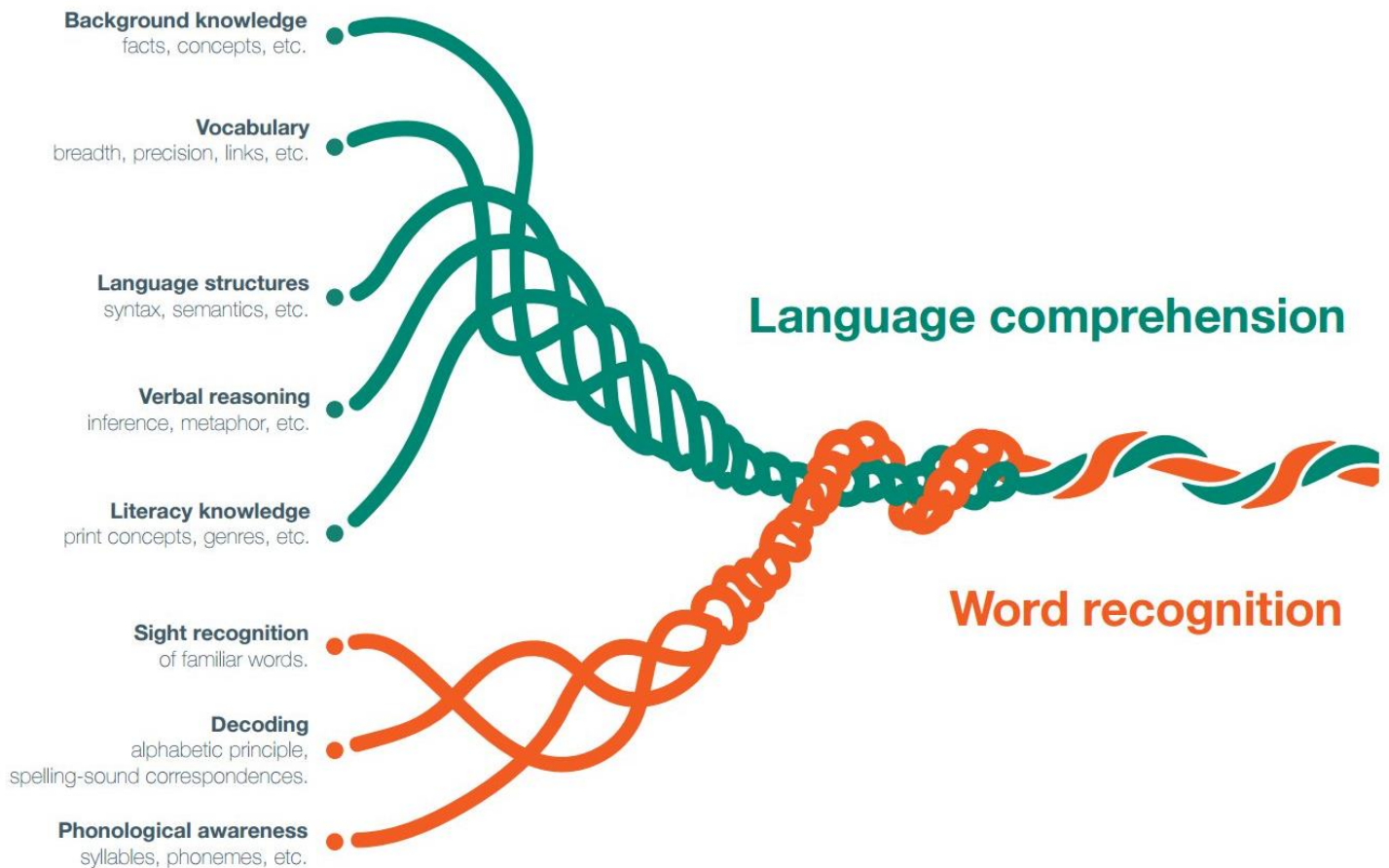


How we teach phonics and early reading

Intent

At Leamington Hastings Academy, we value reading as a crucial life skill and believe that all children have the potential to become fluent readers. We have an understanding that developing a rounded reader will consist of teaching a range of reading skills, as demonstrated below:

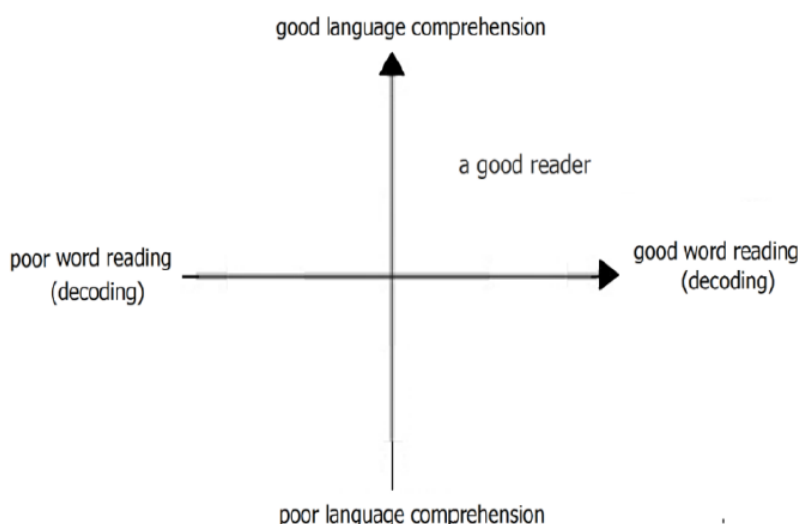


By the time children leave Leamington Hastings at the end of Year 2, they read confidently for meaning and regularly enjoy reading for pleasure. We teach reading and phonics using the 'Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised' phonics scheme, which is a systematic and synthetic phonics programme verified by the Department for Education. We use Big Cat Collins books which are aligned to the phonics scheme for our early readers.

At Leamington Hastings we start teaching phonics in Nursery through using phase 1 phonics games. Once children start school in Reception, we 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 of this approach, our children are able to tackle any unfamiliar words that contain the phonics sounds that they have been taught. We also model the application of the alphabetic code through phonics in shared reading 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 in all subjects.

Because we believe teaching every child to read is so important, we have a Reading Leader who drives the early reading programme in our school. This person is highly skilled at teaching phonics and reading, and they monitor and support our reading team, so everyone teaches with fidelity to the Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised programme. All teachers and teaching assistants are trained in the Little Wandle approach.

Our intent is that all children in school become a good reader by developing strong word reading and comprehension skills, as demonstrated by the 'Simple view of reading' diagram below.



Implementation

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
 - phonics activities that develop focused listening and attention, including oral blending
 - attention to high-quality vocabulary
- 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 for 25 minutes a day. 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 2 of the Autumn term.
- All children take part in a class based phonics lesson, we do not set the children by ability. Starting to learn and practice phonics is the best way for children to develop phonemic awareness.
- We follow the Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised expectations of progress:
 - Children in Reception are taught to read and spell words using Phase 2 and 3 Grapheme Phoneme Correspondences, and words with adjacent consonants (Phase 4) with fluency and accuracy.
 - Children in Year 1 review Phase 3 and 4 and are taught to read and spell words using Phase 5 Grapheme Phoneme Correspondences with fluency and accuracy.
- Phonics lessons include the children verbalising phonemes regularly, with the teacher ensuring these are pronounced correctly.
- Pseudo words are included within the scheme of work to prepare children to access the Year 1 phonics check, but these are not taught regularly on a daily or weekly basis as the children will not encounter these in their day to day reading.
- Revisit and review sessions are planned within the scheme of work to move Grapheme Phoneme Correspondences into long term memory. During these sessions:
 - Although sound buttons are used when introducing words for the first time, during revisit and review sessions these are not present.
 - Teachers must use those revisit and review words from the model plan, but also include any words that have been a common misconception for the children throughout teaching.
- Misconceptions such as mispronouncing a phoneme are addressed immediately within the lesson, they are not left until the following day. The teacher and teaching assistants monitor and respond to children in the moment, as well as noting down anything that needs further practise later in the day.
- At the end of Year 1, children are well prepared to follow the spelling, punctuation and grammar lessons taught in Year 2.

Daily phonics keep-up lessons ensure every child learns to read

- Any child who needs additional practice has daily keep-up support, taught by a fully trained adult. 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.
- Keep up sessions will be based on the assessments completed of each child and will be used to fill any gaps.
- Keep up sessions may be carried out in small groups where there is a common gap or may be carried out individually where a child still needs keep up support following small group support, or is significantly behind age related expectations.
- Teachers are forensic with their phonics assessments and use these to inform the plans and activities for keep up sessions, or to inform a common misconception for the class.
- Teachers ensure that keep-up support takes place beyond any reading or phonics lessons. These sessions are held in addition to the phonics lessons, not instead of them.
- We timetable daily phonics lessons for any child in Year 2 who is not fully fluent at reading or has not passed the statutory Phonics Screening Check. These children urgently need to catch up, so the gap between themselves and their peers does not widen. We use the Little Wandle Letters and

Sounds Revised assessments to identify the gaps in their phonic knowledge and teach to these using the keep-up resources at pace.

- Any children in danger of falling behind or are already behind with their reading or phonics are always sat within the eyeline of the teacher.

Teaching reading: Reading practice sessions

We teach children to read through reading practice sessions three times a week. These sessions are used to *teach* children to read, not to simply hear them read aloud. These sessions:

- are taught by a fully trained adult to small groups of up to six children, with every child using their own copy of a reading book
- are taught in groups of children who are of a similar ability
- use books from the Big Cat Collins book scheme, matched to the children's secure phonic knowledge using the Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised assessments and book matching grids on pages 11–20 of ['Application of phonics to reading'](#). Children will only ever be provided with books where their phonics assessment demonstrates that they are secure with a grapheme. The matching grid demonstrates that some of these books must be read in cumulative order, whilst others may be read in any order.
- are planned for and monitored by the class teacher, who provides the book and pre-prepared resources (word cards, phoneme cards and comprehension questions). The class teacher rotates and works with each group on a regular basis.
- allow all children to read aloud at their own pace with the adults tuning in so that the amount of time the children are reading is maximised, we do not use a 'round robin' approach at any time
- are delivered in all year groups, with the exception of Nursery
- 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, using the same book in each session throughout the week:
 - Session 1 - decoding
 - Session 2 - prosody: teaching children to read with understanding and expression
 - Session 3 - comprehension: teaching children to understand the text. During these sessions children will be encouraged to speak in full sentences, and sentence stems may be provided for use by the adult such as 'I know this because ...'. Children will be asked to explore questions that have been pre-prepared by the class teacher for the focus of that lesson. One area of comprehension will be focussed on within this session, to avoid overloading the children's working memory.
Session 3 will always be verbal discussion around the text.
Areas of comprehension that may be focussed on in this session include:
 - making predictions, including what might happen next, or what might happen in a further story
 - identifying key aspects of fiction and non-fiction and retrieving information from the text
 - identifying key aspects of events, including sequencing and summarising these
 - identifying vocabulary, answering what words suggest that ... questions and discussing word meanings, including making links with word meanings already known
 - making inferences and deductions
 - exploring a character and their actions

- making comparisons and connections within texts and between different texts
- formulating questions
- answering questions to deepen understanding and reflection – how do you know that? Why do you think that? What helped you to work that out? When did you realise that? Could there be a different explanation? Is there anything that puzzles you? What pictures did you have in your mind? Where did they come from? Did it remind you of anything else you have read/seen? What made you change your mind?
- In Key Stage One, reading practise sessions start in Week 1 or 2 of the new academic year.
- In Reception, reading practise sessions start in Week 4 of the academic year for those children who are blending to read CVC words in their phonics lessons. Children who are not yet blending have daily additional practice in small groups during their reading practise time, so that they quickly learn to blend and can begin to read books as soon as possible. During comprehension sessions, children will use wordless books. The aim is that all Reception children can blend and are starting to read books by Christmas.
- When teaching reading, children are taught only to use phonetic strategies for decoding and reading words aloud. However, they will be taught to use other strategies such as using pictorial clues, when learning how to answer comprehension questions.
- In Year 2, we continue to teach reading in this way for any children who still need to practise and/or consolidate their reading with decodable books. Year 2 children who are secure with the Year 1 expectations of phonics and who read phonetically decodable books with fluency and understanding continue to take part in reading practise sessions using books that are from a range of publishers to continue to develop their reading skills and vocabulary knowledge.
- Key Stage 1 children take part in two additional comprehension sessions per week that teach the children the knowledge and skills they need to respond to written comprehension tasks.
 - These may be based on the books used in their reading practise sessions, be samples of texts, or may be tasks linked to books read in English lessons.
 - Areas of comprehension focused on may be those listed in the reading practise sessions.
 - Teachers should *teach* the children how to respond to questions such as find and copy, matching statements, place events in order, answering with true and false, ticking boxes to select correct answers and responding with a written response. Children should have regular opportunity to rehearse these skills.
 - Not all additional comprehension sessions will involve a written response. Some will include drama activities, whole class and group discussion and responding to pictures. Short quizzes and tasks may be used to assess understanding.

Same day keep up support

Teachers must constantly use assessment for learning throughout the lesson to identify those who need additional support. Some children may need an occasional short burst of same day keep up support to practise a particular word or Grapheme Phoneme Correspondence ready for the following lesson. In this circumstance:

- The class teacher must ensure this happens on the same day.
- The class teacher or teaching assistant may support the child to review the morning's lesson, using the same resources used in the lesson,
- The class teacher may stick a sticky label to the child's top, containing a word or grapheme that they have found difficult that morning. The orientation will be positioned so that the child can read the word / grapheme. Adults throughout the school should ask the child what it says when

encountering them to provide them with frequent practise throughout the day. This may also be sent home as a flashcard.

Additional reading support for children who need support to keep up

- Children in Reception and Year 1 who need support to keep up will take part in daily keep-up sessions with an adult, focusing on their phonics knowledge.
- Children in Year 2 who need support to keep up will take part in daily keep-up sessions with an adult, focusing on their phonics knowledge using the Year 1 assessment grids. This will be in addition to their class lessons.
- If a child has a secure phonics knowledge but is experiencing difficulties with comprehension skills, keep up support will be arranged to support this aspect of reading. Keep up support will always focus on phonetic skills initially, as if children aren't reading fluently, comprehension will be harder to grasp as children will find it difficult to make sense of the text as a whole.

Ensuring consistency and pace of progress

- Every teacher and teaching assistant in our school has been trained to teach reading, so we have the same expectations of progress. We all use the same language, routines and resources to teach children to read so that we lower children's cognitive load.
- Weekly content grids map each element of new learning to each day, week and term for the duration of the books used to match the phonics programme.
- Lesson templates, prompt cards and 'how to' videos ensure teachers all have a consistent approach and structure for each lesson.
- The Reading Leader and Head of School use the audit and prompt cards to regularly monitor and observe teaching; they use the summative data to identify children who need additional support and gaps in learning.

Ensuring reading for pleasure

'Reading for pleasure is the single most important indicator of a child's success.' (OECD 2002)

'The will influences the skill and vice versa.' (OECD 2010)

We work hard as a school to grow our Reading for Pleasure pedagogy, knowing that getting lost in a book is not only good for developing reading skills, it can also be a strategy for improving mental wellbeing. We encourage reading for pleasure by using the following strategies:

- We read to children every day. We choose these books carefully as we want children to experience a wide range of books, including those that open windows into other worlds and cultures. Story time is for teachers to read all the way through the stories or poems without stopping; this is time for children to get lost in the story, with time at the end for children to respond. These responses are not for children to ask comprehension questions, they are personal response as to how the story made children feel and to express their likes and dislikes. Through story time, children will be exposed to a wide range of vocabulary and will get to know a variety of stories, more than they would ever read by themselves.
- Every class teacher reads a story, or at least a chapter of a story where children are reading longer books, to their class daily. Children also have an opportunity to listen to / join in with a poem, rhyme or chant daily.
- Every classroom has an inviting book corner that encourages a love for reading. These contain a mixture of quality story, poetry and non-fiction books. Some of these books are phonetically decodable for the age of the children in the room. We curate these books and talk about them to

entice children to read a wide range of books. There is a manageable amount of books in these areas, so that children are able to select what they are looking for. The books within book corners may be added to throughout the academic year as children get to know more stories.

- In Nursery and Reception, children have access to the reading corner every day in continuous provision and the books are continually refreshed.
- Children from Reception onwards have a home reading record. 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.
- Each class visits the school library weekly, with children taking home a book that interests them to share with their family.
- A children's book recommendation is made on the newsletter each week, with recommendations made by both children and staff.
- Children across the school have regular opportunities to engage with a wide range of Reading for Pleasure events (book fairs, author visits and workshops, national events etc).
- Children are encouraged to experience reading at home five times per week. This may be through practising a reading book sent home, or through a parent or other family member reading a story to the child. Children who take part in reading five times in a week are rewarded with a raffle ticket, with one ticket drawn at random from each year group every half term. The prize is a children's book, which the child can choose from a selection available.

Displays and prompts

Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 classes must have:

- a phonics display in their class, displaying the Little Wandle phonics flashcards, wall charts or frieze for the Grapheme Phoneme Correspondences that the children have learnt. In Year 2 these serve as a reminder.
- resources displayed at an appropriate height for the children to access
- phonics mats available on tables for children to use at all times, matched to their corresponding year group. Children with Special Educational Needs may need access to a phonics mat at a lower stage to support them with their developing phonics knowledge.

Adults in school reading to children

Adults will already be familiar with the stories they read to children so that they can read them effectively using the strategies below. Adults will be aware that when they read stories to children they are acting as a role model, so should read with fluency and expression to engage the children.

- Adults should sit where they can be sure that all children can see the book easily when it is shown.
- Adults should model reading with prosody.
- Adults should consider the voice they use – a neutral voice for the narrator, and a voice for characters that indicates their character such as slow, loud, squeaky, low etc. The character voice should be maintained throughout the text.
- Adults may wish to use pauses to build tension, allow for the building of anticipation or to demonstrate shock.
- Word meaning are discussed either in the second reading of a story or during a lesson focussing on vocabulary. Word meanings are told to the children, encouraging them to guess could lead to misconceptions and distract from the story being read.
- Asides might be used to demonstrate thinking – 'I wonder why he did that?' 'What will he do next?'

- Memorable words and phrases should be emphasised when reading aloud, and children may automatically join in with these. These phrases might be used in different contexts throughout the school day.

Home reading

- Any reading undertaken at home is to develop a love of reading or to celebrate the reading carried out at school. ***We do not expect parents to teach their children to read.***
- Each week the children take home two books – a reading practise book and a shared reading book.
- In Reception and Year 1, the decodable reading practice book is taken home weekly to ensure success is shared with the family. In KS1 these are taken home and returned on a Wednesday, in EYFS this is on a Thursday. These must be returned the following week before a new book is issued.
- In Year 2, the reading practise book that has been completed is taken home on a Wednesday to enable them to share their success and knowledge with their family. These must be returned the following Wednesday before a new book is issued.
- Children are issued with online reading practise books so that they can practise reading this book over the course of several weeks. These books are books that match the children's secure phonic knowledge and are assigned by the class teacher.
- The class teacher regularly reviews the books available in a child's online library and ensures there is not a large amount visible, ensuring the child is practising the correct Grapheme Phoneme Correspondences.
- Reading for pleasure books also go home for parents to share and read to children for all children across the school.
- We use the [Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised parents' resources](#) to engage our families and share information about phonics, the benefits of sharing books, how children learn to blend and other aspects of our provision, both online and through workshops.

Impact

Assessment

Assessment is used to monitor progress and to identify any child needing additional support as soon as they need it; we do not wait to intervene if they run the risk of falling further behind.

- [Assessment for learning](#) is used:
 - daily within class to identify children needing keep-up support, teachers do not wait until progress checks to take action if a child is falling behind.
 - weekly in the review lesson to assess gaps, address these immediately and secure fluency of Grapheme Phoneme Correspondences, words and spellings.
- [Summative assessment](#) is used:
 - every six weeks to assess progress, 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, including whole class additional phonics sessions to address common misconceptions immediately within the review week.
 - to ensure that the children are provided with the correct reading practise books that are matched to their phonics knowledge.
 - by the Reading Leader, class teachers and Head of School, and is scrutinised through the Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised assessment tracker, to narrow attainment gaps between different groups of children and so that any additional support for teachers can be put into place.

Class teachers input the outcomes of the six weekly assessments into the Little Wandle Assessment tracker and scrutinise these for misconceptions. Class teachers then discuss these assessments with the Reading Leader on a six weekly basis, and also discuss these as part of gap analysis meetings.

Carrying out the assessment

- When carrying out the assessment tasks, children are provided with a grid, composed by Little Wandle
- The expectation is that children read the majority of these words correctly, and that at least 5 of these are read without segmenting and blending the words in order for the children to be secure

Statutory assessment

- Children in Reception are assessed using the Early Learning Goals.
- Children in Year 1 sit the Phonics Screening Check. Any child not passing the check re-sits it in Year 2.
- Children in Year 2 sit the statutory SATs reading tests.