

**Phonics Policy**

**Spring 2025**

**Rationale**

At Cale Green Primary School, we recognise reading as a key life skill, which underpins access to the rest of the curriculum. We aim for children to read words and simple sentences by the end of Reception; become successful, fluent readers by the end of Key Stage 1 and develop a lifelong love of reading as they move through school. The systematic teaching of synthetic phonics is given a high priority throughout Early Years and Key Stage 1. We value and encourage pupils to read for enjoyment and recognise that this starts with the foundations of acquiring letter sounds, segmenting and blending skills. By equipping children with these key skills, they will be able to complete the phonics screening check at the end of Year 1 which serves as a useful checkpoint rather than as an end in itself. We want children to enjoy success and gain confidence from a positive experience.

**Aims** - Aims are specific to year group

**Reception**

* To develop awareness and pronunciation of sounds in words
* To orally blend and segment words
* To recognise phase 2 and 3 Grapheme Phoneme Correspondences (GPCs) within words
* To independently read unfamiliar words by blending GPCs including adjacent consonants
* To read all phase 2, 3 and 4 common exception words
* To read simple sentences including taught sounds and common exception words
* To write simple sentences including taught sounds and common exception words

**Year 1**

* To recognise phase 5 GPCs within words
* To independently read unfamiliar words by blending GPCs
* To complete the Year 1 phonics assessment
* To read increasingly complex sentences including taught sounds and common exception words

**Year 2**

* To enable our children to become fluent and responsive readers who recognise the pleasure and knowledge to be gained from reading a variety of fictional and factual books and encourage them to develop a lifelong love of reading
* To be able to read a range of texts fluently by the end of Key Stage 1
* To be able to comprehend what they are reading

**Phonics in KS2**

* Any children who did not pass the PSC in year 2 or who still have significant gaps in their phonics will continue to have 3 x phonics lessons each week using the ULS resources.

**Phonics at Cale Green Primary School**

* We follow ‘Unlocking Letters and Sounds’ in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2
* Lessons are taught to small groups of children inline with their phonics ability
* Lessons are fast paced and should last around 20 minutes
* The lowest 20% are quickly identified and targeted for same day interventions
* Interventions are targeted to specific barriers i.e. blending OR recall of GPCs
* Interventions follow the format outlined in Unlocking Letters and Sounds: oral blending/blend and find/precision grid/Spot it! /mix it up/digraph spotter
* We use sound buttons and sound lines under letters while children are learning to blend. A split digraph curved bar is added above the grapheme
* When reading a word, we point to the graphemes and swoosh left to right to blend (phoneme fingers)
* When segmenting to spell, we use phoneme fingers to help us
* We use the technical vocabulary outlined in the glossary of ‘Unlocking Letters and Sounds’
* As soon as children are able to, they should be encouraged to fluently read a word without sound-talking. Sound-talking is a means to an end and not the end in itself
* Class teachers regularly communicate with parents regarding developing phonic knowledge. Parents should be kept up to date of new GPCs as they are introduced
* We model and expect children to use pure sounds

**Inclusion**

* We follow the ULS scheme, however, we recognise that for mixed age classes, children need to be grouped according to their ability. This means children will be learning the appropriate phase based on where they are at in their phonics journey. Although most children will access the full ULS lessons provided, staff have the autonomy to adjust the length of lessons and adapt how they teach the lessons to meet individual children’s needs.
* Additional resources such as iPads, magnetic letters etc can be used to meet children’s individual needs.
* During lessons, teachers will explain and model new vocabulary.
* Staff set high expectations for all pupils and use appropriate forms of assessment to inform interventions.

**Typical Lesson Format**

**Review**

* Review a selection of GPCs
* Review reading a selection of common exception words
* Review reading a selection of decodable words seen before - fluent reading encouraged

**Teach**

* Explicitly state learning point
* If teaching a new GPC, let children hear the phoneme before seeing the grapheme. Highlight shape of mouth.
* Orally give children examples of words containing the new sounds
* Show the grapheme (practise writing it)
* Teach any new common exception word

**Practise and Apply**

* Read some words using the focus GPC
* Identify the digraph or trigraph first - then sound talk and blend
* Re-read the words with an emphasis on reading more fluently
* Segmenting. Model, support and scaffold where needed. Children write words containing new GPC
* Read and/or write a sentence or caption. 1) identify Common Exception words (CEW) 2) identify digraphs and trigraphs 3) decode 4) read fluently
* Revise the key learning for the lesson – restate new learning intention

**Resources**

* Phonics Jotters are provided for children in KS1.
* Displays should be as near as possible to where the teaching takes place so they can be referred to during phonics lessons.

**Display in EYFS**

* Alphabet frieze displaying sky, grass, ground formation Policy Document: Phonics Last
* Flashcards of graphemes to be added to display as each is introduced
* Flashcards of common exception words to be added to display as each is introduced

**Display in KS1**

* Alphabet frieze displaying sky, grass, ground formation
* Flashcards for phase 3 graphemes to be added to display.
* Flashcards for phase 5 graphemes to be added to display.
* A selection of focus common exception words to be on display – changed regularly and regularly referred to

**Supportive resources in EYFS:**

* Phase 2 and 3 sound mats
* Common exception word mats

**Supportive resources in KS1:**

* Phase 2 and 3 sound mats
* Phase 5 sound mats
* Common exception word mats

**Assessment**

* Formative assessment takes place by all adults in phonics lessons throughout the day
* Same day interventions may take place for any children who need extra support with the new learning point
* The lowest 20% of children are identified and receive regular intervention
* Seating is planned to ensure the maximum engagement of the lowest 20%
* Regular assessment means the lowest 20% may vary
* ULS Individual phonics assessment is used at the end of every phase taught. In Year 1 this also includes mock phonics screening checks.

**Reading**

* Children’s phonic reading books are fully decodable and follow the progression of Unlocking Letters and Sounds
* All children read to an adult at least once a week
* Children are taught reading through whole class and small group sessions
* Group sessions follow the pattern of 1) pre-teaching sounds and words 2) decoding 3) reading for fluency 4) reading for prosody and comprehension
* Children are asked to read each decodable book at least 3 times to develop reading fluency and comprehension

**Parental involvement**

* All children have a reading record that is to be kept in their book bag for both school and home adults to record what is being read.
* Parents are informed of any GPCs that children are finding hard to remember
* Children take home 1-2 reading books containing taught GPC’s and CEW’s.
* Our website’s phonics page contains suggestions on how to support your child with learning to read including instructions on pure sounds and blending

**Training**

Whole school accredited Letters and Sounds phonics training took part in September 2022.

All practitioners are to follow ‘Unlocking Letters and Sounds’ with rigour and fidelity. All staff have access to the ULS online platform which contains training videos and detailed lesson walkthroughs. Ongoing monitoring and additional training is carried out by the phonics lead. This may include signposting to specific areas of the online platform, coaching, team-teaching and leading training sessions.

Morgan Taylor

Summer 2025

To be reviewed summer 2026