



## Our Approach to Reading and Phonics

At Prenton Primary School, we provide a reading programme that both develops reading skills and fosters a love of reading for pleasure. Children become confident, independent readers, and move from “learning to read” to “reading to learn”. We promote reading in a variety of ways;

Reading is introduced when children enter F2. Those children assessed as being ready to tackle books with print will do so, those not yet at this stage will work with picture books in order to develop pre reading skills.

Reading their own work, to themselves, and to others, is an integral part of the literacy programme for all children.

We continue to develop a love of books across the school; and, to this end, we have a dedicated story time for all year groups, where the focus is on quality sharing of books. Teachers model good storytelling techniques, and children are encouraged to read their chosen books to the rest of the class.

We encourage parents to make use of the “Bug Club” – an excellent resource which allows children to access their reading books online.

### ***Phonics;***

The National Phonics Screening Check takes place each year in June. All Y1 children take part, together with the Y2 children who did not achieve the standard whilst in Year 1. In Year 3 and 4 further support is provided for any pupil who still requires additional work in this area and children are carefully tracked.

Staff at Prenton have taken part in the CLPE – Phonics in a Rich Reading Curriculum project in conjunction with the Department for Education. This was a five term project working closely with specialist phonic teachers to develop high quality teaching of phonics across school. Phonics is an important component in the development of early reading skills but it is also important that children decode for meaning. **The Letters and Sounds** approach teaches a synthetic approach to phonics.

In Prenton an investigative approach to the teaching of reading and phonics enabled by the use of high quality texts. The children readily engage with the texts and become sound detectives. They begin by looking at sounds within familiar texts and then in texts they have not read. We believe this approach leads to greater independence when reading and increases self-esteem. The texts involved are inspiring and provide a real context in which to teach different phonemes. Children very much enjoy the texts being read aloud and then exploring them in lessons and independently. At first, they find only the sounds they have been asked to find, but then they begin to find alternative phonemes independently. We begin to collect words and display these in the classroom, and add to them throughout the week. This is not only in phonics sessions, but at different points in the day - for example, in maths lessons or when walking through the school. The children are constantly on the hunt for phonemes and words! From this the children begin to apply their knowledge to writing and begin to practise formulating their own sentences independently.

Rhyme and rhythm are a key part of the books provided. The introduction of poetry and song brings the books alive. Children become immersed in these wonderful books and love to read.

‘Reading is not just pronouncing written words. Children who become avid and accomplished readers focus on making sense from the start: they develop a habit of mind that expects the words they decode to make sense. This allows them to monitor their own performance from an early stage, and to make corrections when they misread.’

ULKA, Teaching Reading: What the evidence says (2010)

The project looked at how we can teach systematic phonics through high quality texts. For example, when introducing the digraph /ar/ we will use the book ‘Shark in the Park’ by Nick Sharrett. Children will instantly see the connection between phonics and reading and this engages children with a purpose for wanting to read and write.

All children in F2 and KS1 follow the “Letters and Sounds” programme – children have a daily phonics session where all children are exposed to the new phoneme. Phonics is taught in a fun and engaging way where children can individually apply their skills. All children have daily opportunities to read and write for meaning, linking to a text where possible. Misconceptions and gaps are addressed during the revisit and revise session and also through practise and apply. Apart from the discrete teaching of phonics session, phonics is reinforced through all aspects of the curriculum. Work within the classroom puts these skills into context and allows children to use and apply their knowledge.

By the end of Year 1 children will have been taught and know alternative graphemes for each phoneme and different pronunciations of the same grapheme. They will use these to read and spell. In Year 2 the children are applying their phonic knowledge and recognising irregularities to spell more complex words and notice spelling patterns. This is done through the use of texts in an investigative manner, children work out for themselves what the spelling rule is.

The daily phonics sessions are very focused and they all follow the same structure, as outlined below:

- Revision of previous sounds (learned with actions).
- Use of songs to support learning.
- Handwriting practice for the last sound.
- Introduction of new sound and action.
- Using sound button actions to read the sound in words.
- Dictated sentence-the children write a sentence dictated by the adult.
- Fine motor skill activity-this helps improve letter formation and handwriting.
- Memory activity-this helps to improve the children’s memory especially when they are learning spellings.
- Alphabet chant.

### ***Letters and Sounds – Overview***

Phase 1	Focus on speaking and listening
Phase 2	The start of systematic phonics work. Introduction of phoneme (sound)/grapheme (what it looks like) correspondence. Teaching of blending to read/segmenting to spell as reversible processes. Teach 19 letters of the alphabet.
Phase 3	Completes teaching of the alphabet – children move on to sounds represented by more than 1 letter. (All letter sounds must be secure to do this.) Children begin to write phonetic approximations.
Phase 4	Children learn to read and spell words with adjacent consonants.
Phase 5	Awareness that most phonemes can be spelt in more than one way/most graphemes can represent more than one phoneme.
Phase 6	Reading should become automatic. Focus on word specific spelling and broad guidelines for making choices between spelling alternatives.

### **Phonics/Spelling**

The school uses synthetic phonics to teach reading. Daily phonics/spelling sessions follow a very structured format. Children are also taught to read and spell words from the National Curriculum and are tested on these each week.

## **Guided Reading**

Guided reading is used throughout the school as a key teaching strategy for some groups of pupils. Teachers will work with each guided reading group throughout the week. Within these sessions there are lots of opportunities for discussions about the book and key skills are taught such as predicting and summarising.

Big Cat/Oxford Reading Tree/Planet X scheme materials are used in conjunction with other books to support children's reading journey. Using a variety of scheme books allows children to access a broad range of books which can be matched to their reading ability and interest level. As the children progress in their reading these texts are then supplemented by a broader range of graded reading materials and with carefully chosen high quality novels. These more challenging texts help our children to experience a range of genres and writing styles. They provide different sentence structures, vocabulary, layouts and contexts and help our children to experience a wealth of texts and begin to form opinions and preferences in literature.

## **Individual Reading**

Texts are chosen from the school's graded reading scheme and are at the instructional level for each child with the child's interest level taken into account; staff find out about each child's interests and match books appropriately. The school actively promotes the support of parents in this process by hearing their child read each evening and recording this in the home-school record. Wider reading is encouraged at home and children record this in their reading record; in KS2 children are asked to comment on their reading for pleasure books.

## **Shared Reading**

In these sessions teachers demonstrate how to read a wide variety of different texts and show that reading is a pleasurable and informative experience. Shared reading gives access to challenging texts for all pupils and provides a secure environment for learning to read.

## **Independent Reading tasks**

Teachers set reading tasks for pupils that require them to read without teacher support. Some of these tasks might require a written response. These comprehension activities check for understanding of texts and prepare children for future reading tests.

## **Whole Class Text**

Each class will also have a book that they are studying, chosen to match the interest and sometimes the topic the children are studying. Power of Reading is used widely across school to match high quality text to the age and interest of the children and support the teaching of reading across whole classes. The teacher will model reading this aloud to the class while allowing time for questioning and discussions. Through carefully selecting books teachers ensure that all our children are exposed to a wide range of quality literature and that they develop an awareness of famous authors and different writing styles.

## **Spelling**

This follows on from our Phonics work. The children are taught to read and spell age appropriate words from the National Curriculum. They are tested on these each week. These structured spelling sessions include handwriting, revision of previous spelling patterns and the spelling and understanding of new words.

## **Writing**

Years 1- 6 follow the National Curriculum for writing. The children understand and use correct grammar in their writing and are taught grammar specifically to ensure they understand the terminology and features which they

can apply in their work. Children are taught to use a cursive handwriting script and take pride in the presentation of their work.

***Involving Parents;***

- Phonics workshop – Focus on the delivery of the Phonics Programme at Prenton Primary School. Discuss the National Phonics Screening Check.
- Follow up phonics workshop. Informal session with the opportunity to ask any questions/talk to other parents.
- Packs are sent home to support children's learning and with particular reference to pseudo words and real words.
- Parent volunteers are trained to listen to children read 1-1 in order to support our reading programme.
- KS2 library is opened to parents weekly after school to bring their children in and choose books.
- Reporting to Governors