



Aspiring Ashwood

Phonics and
Early Reading



At Ashwood Spencer Academy, we believe that for all of our children to become confident communicators, fluent readers and writers, phonics must be taught daily through a systematic and structured phonics programme.

We're teaching every
child to read with
Little Wandle Letters
and Sounds Revised

A complete SSP validated by
the Department for Education



As part of our high quality curriculum we teach phonics daily, using **Little Wandle** as our vehicle and providing high quality interventions where needed. This ensures that children 'keep up' and become confident and fluent readers and writers. We have a strong focus on the development of language skills because we know that speaking and listening are crucial skills which provide the foundations for early reading and writing.

Our approach is based on the context of our school and the children we serve.



The context of Ashwood Spencer Academy

Ashwood Spencer Academy is a 3-form entry primary school situated in Allenton, Derby. We also have a nursery setting.

The school is situated in an area of significant deprivation. There is:

- High levels of disadvantaged pupils receiving FSM
- high social care involvement;
- generational workless families;
- low aspirations;
- poor health, including very high levels of poor mental health amongst parents;
- multiple housing issues including homelessness;
- low literacy levels among some parents

EAL proportions are increasing as are the number of children identified with SEND. *Since September, we have had 16 children arrive who are new to English/England. We currently have 16 children with an EHCP and 5 more going through the application process.*

On entry, there are low levels of oracy and language acquisition alongside poor social, emotional and personal development.



Our Phonics Approach

At Ashwood Spencer Academy we believe that for all of our children to become fluent readers and writers, phonics must be taught through a systematic and structured phonics programme.

We use the **Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised** to plan and provide daily engaging phonics lessons. In phonics, we teach children that the letters of the alphabet represent a different sound, that these can be used in a variety of combinations and are put together to make words. The children learn to recognise all of the different sounds and combinations that they might see when they are reading or writing. Our phonics teaching starts in Nursery which allows our children to build on their previous phonic knowledge and master specific phonic strategies as they move through school. At Ashwood we also model these strategies in shared reading and writing both inside and outside of the phonics lesson and across the curriculum.

Phonics Intent

Taught daily



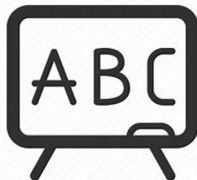
Phonics is taught daily in EYFS, year 1 and for some children in year 2 following the DfE approved scheme of 'Little Wandle'. All children have a phonics lesson taught daily at the expected level. In addition, interventions are provided for children working below the expected level or children who are not making sufficient progress. We work to ensure that these children 'keep up', rather than having to 'catch up' with their peers. Where children have specific gaps in their knowledge due to starting points and the pandemic, specific 'catch up' sessions are tailored to their needs. Phonics is also woven through the continuous provision and the environment to enable children to regularly practice and consolidate their new learning.

DfE approved scheme



We believe that all our children can become fluent readers and writers. This is why we teach reading through *Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised* which is a systematic and synthetic phonics programme. We start teaching phonics in Nursery using Phase 1 and this is continued in Reception and follows 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, our children learn to tackle any unfamiliar words as they read. We also model the application of the alphabetic code through phonics in shared reading and writing, both inside and outside of the phonics lesson and across the curriculum.

Environment



Classrooms have a phonics display to showcase 'grow the code' which is referred to by the adults and the children as a visual aid. This supports children to look back and identify the GPC's that have been taught over the week as they 'grow the code'. The use of visual picture prompts on the 'grow the code' chart acts as a memory hook to support children in identifying the correct grapheme/phoneme correspondence for each letter. Sound mats are also available in the classroom to support children when working independently. Children also have use of a phonics bookmark to use during writing sessions.

Reading Leader



Because we believe teaching every child to read is so important, we have a reading lead who drives the early reading programme in our school. This person is highly skilled at teaching phonics and reading, and this information and support our reading team, so everyone teaches with fidelity to the *Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised* programme.

The reading leader has responsibility for reading across school nursery until year 6. This ensures consistency and a smooth progression in the intent and implementation of reading.

The reading leader oversees the early reading teaching beyond year 2, as we regularly have children who are new to school and/or English.

Assessment and interventions



Assessment is part of daily and weekly practice in phonics to ensure children are making good progress. Assessment informs the class teacher of gaps, both individual and cohort specific, and this information is used to shape intervention. Each child has an individual phonics tracker which is updated regularly. This information is analysed to show the progress children are making and swift interventions are planned for those at risk of falling behind with daily 'keep up' sessions following the *Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised* programme. Children who are in Y2-Y6 and need 'catch up' sessions are assessed through teacher's ongoing formative assessment as well as *Little Wandle* summative assessments. Intervention sessions are run every week to ensure that children both catch up and keep up. Participation in these interventions is informed by regular assessment.

CPD and monitoring

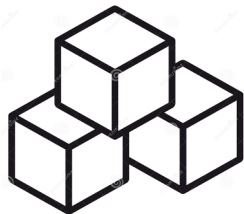


All teachers and teaching assistants, including the SLT have been fully trained in the *Little Wandle* approach to teaching phonics. Teaching staff who are new to Ashwood are expected to complete the training as part of their induction programme. Learning walks and monitoring are completed regularly to ensure that phonics practice is consistent across school and leading to good progress for all children. Outcomes of these are shared and next steps are planned accordingly.

CPD is delivered regularly to all staff at school, as year groups and at an individual level. This tailored approach to CPD ensures phonics teaching is of high quality ensuring all children make good progress.

Phonics Implementation

Foundations for phonics in Nursery



In Nursery, we build the foundations for phonics by providing a balance of child-led and adult-led experiences for all children. These experiences meet the curriculum expectations for 'Communication and language' and 'Literacy' and include sharing high-quality stories and poems, learning a range of nursery and action rhymes, activities that develop focused listening and attention, including oral blending skills.

We work to ensure Nursery children are well prepared to begin learning grapheme-phoneme correspondences (GPCs) and blending skills in Reception.

Daily phonics lessons



We teach phonics lessons for around 40 minutes a day. In Reception, we commence 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. 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 GPCs, 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 GPCs with fluency and accuracy.

Keep up lessons



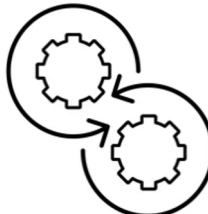
Any child who needs additional practice has 'Keep-up support', taught by a fully trained adult. 'Keep-up' lessons match the structure of class teaching, and use the same procedures, resources and mantras, but in smaller steps with more repetition, so that every child secures their learning. Additional daily phonics lessons happen for any child in Year 2 who has not yet passed the Phonics Screening Check or are not secure in phase 5. If any child in Year 3 to 6 has gaps in their phonic knowledge when reading or writing, they are assessed using the Little Wandle Rapid Catch-up assessments and enter the Rapid Catch-up programme if needed. This consists of 3 taught phonics sessions per week and 3 reading group activities.

Reading groups



We teach children to apply their reading skills through reading practice sessions. These are taught by a fully trained adult to small groups of children using books matched to the children's secure phonic knowledge using the Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised assessments and book matching grids. 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: decoding, prosody (teaching children to read with understanding and expression) and comprehension; teaching children to understand the text.

Consistency and pace



Every teaching adult at Ashwood has been trained to teach reading, so we have the same expectations of progress across school. We all use the same language, routines and resources to teach children to read so that we lower children's cognitive load to enable their working memory to focus on the 'to be learned' material. CPD at Ashwood is iterative and may be pitched at the whole school, specific year groups or individual teachers. This tailored approach ensures our teaching is of the highest quality. Weekly content grids map each element of new learning to each day, week and term for the duration of the programme to ensure consistency across classes and year groups. The use of lesson templates, prompt cards and 'How-to' videos ensure all teachers and additional adults have a consistent approach and structure for each lesson. In addition, the Reading Lead and SLT use the audit and prompt cards to regularly monitor and observe teaching and regularly review and analyse the summative data to identify children and adults who need additional support.

Love of reading



We value reading for pleasure highly at Ashwood as 'Reading for pleasure is the single most important indicator of a child's success' (OECD 2002). We read to the children every day using books which reflect the children at Ashwood and our local community, as well as books that open windows into other worlds and cultures. Every classroom has an inviting book corner, with books that are refreshed regularly to entice children to read a wide range of books. 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. As the children progress through the school, they are encouraged to write their own comments to reflect on the books they have read. Regular visits to the local and school library as well as the opportunities to engage with a wide range of reading events (book fairs, author visits and workshops, national events etc) all aim to promote a love of reading.



How do we teach phonics?

- In Nursery, children follow the Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised 'Foundations for Phonics' guidance. The focus is on daily oral blending and language development through the use of high quality stories, songs and rhymes.
- In Reception and Y1, children follow the progression within Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised programme. Phonics is taught daily and there is a review session on a Friday.
- Phonics starts in Reception in week 2 of Autumn 1 to ensure that the children make a strong start.
- Reception lessons start as full sessions, with daily additional oral blending. By the end of Reception, children will have been taught up to the end of phase 4.
- Y1 lessons are 40 minutes long. By the end of year 1, children will have been taught up to the end of phase 5.
- In Y2, phonic lessons are taught daily to children where appropriate - following the model of Little Wandle by plugging specific gaps identified through assessment.
- In Y3-Y6 there are planned short, sharp phonic 'catch-up' sessions following a set model to address specific reading/writing gaps.