



Reading and Phonics Guidance

Approved by School Representative: Stephen Dowell

Date: 04/05/23

Last reviewed on: May 2023

Next review due by: May 2024

Intent

At The Milestone School, we recognise reading is a tool that allows our pupils to access the world around them. We consider all aspects of reading, including enjoying and experiencing books, to be one of life's most enriching skills. We aim to create a stimulating environment where children are encouraged to engage with all forms of written material. The reading and literacy opportunities we provide reflect the unique learning needs of our pupils. We provide a range of experiences for our pupils: including multi-sensory approaches; practical applications of reading; independence skills in the community etc.

Implementation

At The Milestone School, our reading curriculum takes into account the needs of all pupils, of all ages. We use a Total Communication approach throughout the school which supports pupils to make links between print, the spoken word and the marks they make.

For our pupils working within levels 1-6 of the progression pathway, early reading skills are included as part of our Cognition and Learning pathway. Pupils working at this level work towards early reading outcomes through a holistic approach to teaching. Outcomes linked to phase one phonics have been embedded within the Cognition and Learning pathway in order to support a planned progression towards a systematic, synthetic reading approach. Learning activities for these pupils may include, but are not limited to:

- Storytelling, including sensory stories
- Singing, including music interaction
- Attention autism
- Intensive interaction
- Story massage
- Tacpac
- Multisensory topic-based sessions

As pupils progress onto levels 7-16 (our English pathway), they continue to work towards their readiness to access systematic, synthetic phonics teaching. Phase one phonics outcomes continue to be embedded throughout this pathway until level 9. Once secure in these skills, pupils move onto the school's chosen synthetic phonics programme, Read, Write Inc (RWI). Pupils within this cohort, pupils are put into ability groups to allow for clear differentiation of teaching and to support high quality learning.

Pupils work through the RWI scheme until completion, including the 14 comprehension modules, with an aim to become a fluent reader. Pupils who are identified as fluent readers choose their own books to read from the fluent reader collection. These are recorded using a reading record and pupils are asked to complete a reading journal activity to go alongside their weekly reading.

For some of our pupils, who show no progress using a phonics approach, we may draw upon other approaches that support their learning. Approaches may include, but are not limited to:

- sight reading
- learning functional vocabulary etc.

Alongside the pathways, a rolling programme of genres supports breadth of reading experiences for all pupils. These are often linked to the topic-based learning delivered throughout the school.

A love of reading is promoted throughout the school through celebrations of events such as World Book Day and The Really Wild Reading Festival. Each department has a library and all classes have a reading area. Books in reading areas are chosen to suit the ability and age appropriateness of the pupils within each class. In addition, classes share their class text using a poster on each class door. The aim is to prompt discussion and excitement surrounding reading. 'The Masked Reader' is a whole school initiative which encourages pupils to 'get caught' reading with the hope of being featured in assembly and put onto a whole school display.

Impact

The impact of the teaching of reading at The Milestone School can be seen through ongoing assessment and discussion throughout the year. Examples include:

- Continuous updating of the SOLAR assessment tool
- 3x yearly RWI assessments
- Pupil progress meetings
- EHCP review meetings
- Moderation meetings

Where pupils are not making progress, barriers to learning will be discussed with SLT during pupil progress meetings with teachers.

Pupils at The Milestone School do not undertake statutory testing, including the phonics screening check at the end of Year 1. In the Senior Department, pupils use the phonics and reading skills to work towards gaining a national accreditation in preparation for adult life (ASDAN/Pearson).