



**Abbey Park
Primary School**

Belonging, Achieving, Thriving

Abbey Park Primary School

Phonics and Early Reading Policy (2025–2026)

Next review: September 2026

Responsible Lead: Kimberley Davies; Phonics and Early Reading Leader

Introduction

At Abbey Park Primary School, we are passionate about ensuring that every child becomes a confident, fluent reader who reads for both purpose and pleasure. Reading is the key that unlocks learning across the curriculum, and success in reading enables children to access knowledge, express themselves clearly, and develop a lifelong love of books.

We use **Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised**, a **systematic synthetic phonics (SSP)** programme validated by the Department for Education, to teach early reading and spelling. This structured and cumulative approach ensures consistency, fidelity and high expectations for all.

Our provision is underpinned by:

- Daily phonics lessons with clear progression.
- Small-group reading practice sessions using fully decodable books.
- A comprehensive home reading system including decodable e-books (Collins Hubs) and reading for pleasure books.
- Staff training and coaching to maintain fidelity and expertise.

We are committed to ensuring that every child, regardless of background, language or additional needs, learns to read fluently and enjoys reading as part of everyday school life.

Intent

At Abbey Park Primary School, our intent is to ensure that all pupils become fluent, confident and enthusiastic readers who can access all areas of the curriculum.

Through our high-quality phonics and early reading provision, we aim to:

- Ensure that all children secure strong phonics knowledge to decode words accurately and automatically.
- Build fluency and prosody so children read with expression and understanding.
- Promote reading for pleasure and foster a genuine love of stories, language and learning.
- Provide equal access to reading through inclusive practice and early intervention.
- Equip children with the vocabulary and comprehension skills needed for lifelong reading success.

We firmly believe that every child *can and will* learn to read with the right teaching, support and environment.

Implementation

Curriculum and Programme

We follow Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised, ensuring consistency, fidelity and a clear sequence of learning from Nursery to Year 2 and beyond where needed. All staff are trained in delivering this approach and receive regular updates and coaching.

Foundations for Phonics in Nursery

In Nursery, we provide a language-rich environment with:

- Daily stories, songs, and rhymes to build vocabulary and rhythm.
- Opportunities for oral blending and segmenting.
- Games and activities that develop listening and attention skills.
- A focus on high-quality talk and language modelling.

During the summer term, children begin **Foundations for Phonics**, preparing them for Reception by introducing oral blending and sound awareness.

Daily Phonics Lessons (Reception and Year 1)

- Phonics is taught daily by fully trained practitioners for 30 minutes.
- Teaching begins in **Week 2 of the Autumn Term** in Reception.
- Reception children progress through **Phases 2–4**; Year 1 children review and consolidate Phases 3–4 before completing **Phase 5**.
- Children learn to read and spell using grapheme-phoneme correspondences (GPCs), tricky words and segmenting skills.
- Lessons follow the Little Wandle structure: *Revisit and Review – Teach – Practise – Apply – Review*.
- Letter formation is taught alongside phonics using Little Wandle's **formation phrases** (not cursive). During the latter part of the Summer Term the children will be introduced to the Letter Join handwriting scheme in preparation for Year 1.

Keep-up and Rapid Catch-up Support

- Children who fall behind receive **daily Keep-up sessions** that mirror the class lesson structure but in smaller steps and with more repetition.
- In Year 2 and beyond, children who are not yet fluent follow the **Little Wandle Rapid Catch-up Programme**, taught in short, focused sessions (15–20 minutes daily) until fluency is achieved.
- Gaps are identified through assessment and addressed immediately.

Reading Practice Sessions

Children take part in **three reading practice sessions per week** in small groups (around six pupils). Each session focuses on one of the following key skills:

1. **Decoding** – applying phonics knowledge to read words accurately.
 2. **Prosody** – developing expression, phrasing and intonation.
 3. **Comprehension** – understanding and discussing what they read.
- Groups are led by trained adults.
 - Books are matched precisely to each child's secure phonics knowledge using **Little Wandle assessment and book-matching guidance**.
 - Class teachers monitor each group and rotate regularly.
 - In Reception, reading practice begins in **Week 4 of the Autumn Term**.

Home Reading: Decodable E-books and Reading for Pleasure Books

At Abbey Park, we believe that reading at home reinforces and celebrates success in school. To ensure all children can share their progress with families:

- Every child is assigned a **Collins Big Cat e-book** each week that matches their current phonics phase and reading group.
- E-books are allocated via the **Collins eBook Library** system; families receive login details and instructions for access.
- The e-book directly matches the text children have read in school, allowing them to practise fluency and confidence at home.
- In addition, every child takes home a **“Reading for Pleasure” book** chosen from the class or library collection.
- Parents are encouraged to **read the pleasure book to their child** to foster enjoyment, vocabulary growth and discussion.
- This ensures that **every child** takes home:
 - One fully decodable e-book for independent reading.
 - One reading-for-pleasure book for shared reading and enjoyment.

Reading for Pleasure in School

We promote a strong culture of reading enjoyment:

- Teachers read aloud every day from a wide range of diverse, high-quality texts.
- Early Years classrooms have **inviting reading corners** refreshed regularly with new books.
- Whole-school events such as book fairs, author visits and World Book Day celebrate reading.

Assessment

- **Formative assessment** happens daily within lessons to identify children needing immediate support.

- **Weekly review lessons** check retention and address gaps.
- **Summative assessment** is completed every six weeks using the Little Wandle tracker.
- **Fluency assessments** (1-minute reads) measure words per minute and accuracy to track progress.
- **Placement assessments** are carried out for new pupils to identify starting points.
- **Statutory Phonics Screening Check** takes place in Year 1; children who do not meet the expected standard are supported and re-tested in Year 2.

Inclusion and SEND

- All children access high-quality phonics teaching.
- Adjustments are made for children with SEND (e.g., smaller groups, visual prompts, adapted pace).
- The **Little Wandle SEND Programme** is used where appropriate.
- EAL pupils are supported with additional oral blending, vocabulary, and phonological awareness activities.

Training and Monitoring

- All staff receive comprehensive Little Wandle training and updates.
- Regular coaching and team teaching ensure fidelity to the programme.
- The **Phonics and Early Reading Leader** and SLT conduct:
 - Lesson observations and learning walks.
 - Data reviews and pupil voice checks.
 - Monitoring of e-book allocation and reading record engagement.
- Feedback informs next steps for support, CPD, and intervention.

Impact

Through consistent, high-quality phonics and early reading provision at Abbey Park:

- All children become confident, fluent readers by the end of Key Stage 1.
- Pupils can decode unfamiliar words and read with accuracy and expression.
- Children's fluency increases (60–70+ words per minute by end of Year 1).
- Pupils develop a genuine love of reading and talk confidently about favourite books and authors.
- The vast majority achieve or exceed national expectations in the **Year 1 Phonics Screening Check**.
- Children who require additional support make accelerated progress through Keep-up and Rapid Catch-up sessions.
- Families engage positively in their child's reading journey through e-books and shared home reading.

Ultimately, our intent, implementation and impact ensure that **every child at Abbey Park leaves Key Stage 1 as a successful, motivated reader** — ready to access a world of learning and opportunity.