

# Abingdon Primary School



## Phonics and Reading Policy

Updated: September 2024

reviewed: September 2026

## **Our Vision:**

At Abingdon Primary School we aim for all children to be passionate and excited about reading. We strive for our children to be equipped with the crucial skills and knowledge needed to be an excellent reader. By the end of their primary school journey, our children will be independent, successful and ambitious learners, choosing to read for pleasure and to read to further their learning.

We believe all children, regardless of background, should be provided with the foundations to become confident and fluent readers as early as possible. Our Reading Offer helps to inspire a lifelong love of reading, ensuring the children have the ability to access all aspects of the curriculum. We recognise the impact that becoming a reader can have on both their self-esteem and future life opportunities.

Through reading a wide variety of high-quality texts we aim to inspire and motivate our children to appreciate excellent writing and to learn about the wider world. We aim to provide exciting learning opportunities which are rich in vocabulary and allow children to explore their creativity and imagination.

## **Intent:**

**We aspire for our children to leave Abingdon Primary School as:**

- Confident and fluent readers who can fully comprehend a wide variety of written texts.
- Children who have a genuine interest in books, a love of literature, and read for pleasure to open up their imagination. Through reading, they build a strong awareness of the world around them.
- Children who have a vast bank of interesting and exciting vocabulary and a thirst to gain more.
- Effective and enthusiastic readers who can discuss and articulate ideas about what they have read.
- Children who identify with authors and different genres of books; recognising themselves as authors when they are writing.

## **Implementation:**

### **Phonics:**

At Abingdon Primary School, we teach Phonics using the scheme: Read, Write Inc. (RWI). Teachers and Teaching Assistants deliver the RWI Scheme consistently, enabling the children to be taught how to: recognise the Set 1, 2 and 3 sounds, blend taught sounds accurately, decode simple words containing taught graphemes and read specifically designed books that are closely matched to their increasing knowledge of Phonics and Common Exception Words.

At Abingdon Primary School, our children begin their reading journey as soon as they start Reception. For the first four weeks of Reception, children take part in a whole class Phonics lesson which lasts for approximately 15 minutes. The children are then assessed and grouped into 'Progress Groups', which ensures each child is learning at their specific 'challenge level'. Throughout the year, the duration of a Reception Phonics lesson builds up to 40 minutes in preparation for the children's transition into Key Stage 1.

Within Key Stage 1, the children also access RWI Phonics Lessons. These Phonics lessons last for approximately 40 minutes and the children work in 'Progress Groups'. Each RWI Phonics Lesson includes: a daily Speed Sound Lesson, spelling practice, and a guided read. Skills taught in RWI Phonics Lessons are then utilised and practised within their reading and writing lessons.

Each child takes home a RWI reading book that matches the sounds they are learning and the 'Progress Group' they are working within. This ensures the children are experiencing early reading success and gain confidence and fluency.

Once the children have been assessed and identified as completing the RWI Phonics Scheme, they move onto Reading Gems. It is important to note that any Key Stage 2 children who have not yet completed the RWI Scheme continue to access RWI Phonics lessons but are also taught comprehension skills. As soon as children have completed the RWI Scheme, they move onto Reading Gems.

### **Reading:**









At Abingdon, we view reading as a fundamental element of children's education. Our aim is to ensure all children in our school are taught to read fluently and accurately whilst fully comprehending what is happening in a wide range of texts. We believe that being able to read is crucial for independent learning and success across the whole curriculum. We strive to ensure children at our school can read successfully and with genuine enthusiasm, as we know that when children love to read, endless opportunities are opened for them.

We encourage children to read a wide range of literature, including: fiction and non-fiction, poetry, news reports, comics, posters, play scripts and song-lyrics. We provide opportunities

for reading across the whole curriculum and ensure that texts are diverse so that all children can feel represented and valued, and have a greater understanding of the world we live in.

**Reading Gems:**

From Year 2 (once children finish RWI), we teach reading through Reading Gems. This is an approach to teaching reading which includes in depth teaching of the skills needed to become a fluent and resilient reader which will last a life time. The teaching and application of the reading skills are key if children are to understand fully what is being read. The key skills (gems) are: retrieve, define, infer, predict, compare, summarise, explore and relate.

<b>Define</b> 	<b>Retrieve</b> 	<b>Summarise</b> 	<b>Infer</b> 	<b>Predict</b> 	<b>Relate</b> 	<b>Explore</b> 	<b>Compare</b> 
2a: Give/explain the meaning of words in context	2b: Retrieve and record information/identify key details from fiction and non-fiction.	2c: Summarise main ideas from more than one paragraph	2d: Make inferences from the text/explain and justify inferences with evidence from the text	2e: Predict what might happen from details stated and implied	2f: Identify/explain how information/narrative content is related and contributes to meaning as a whole.	2g: Identify/explain how meaning is enhanced through choice of words and phrases.	2h: Make comparisons within the text
Multiple choice	Ranking / ordering	Matching	Labelling	Find and copy	Short response	Open-ended response	
		10-30%			40-60%		20-40%

In reading lessons, one specially selected text is focused on each week. The children are focussed on one gem each week. During the weekly cycle, the skills are taught and modelled explicitly, with lots of opportunities for children to practise, apply and embed these skills. It is also important that a range of different text types are used each term to ensure children have a rich and varied reading diet. Full coverage of all of the gems takes place throughout the year so that children are able to build a bank of knowledge which is needed to be a successful and confident reader who can fully comprehend a text.

**Speaking and Listening:**

We believe that the ability to speak and listen is vital to pupils' language and social development. It is an essential tool for all areas of the curriculum because speaking and listening reinforces learning and thinking. We provide our pupils with many and varied contexts for speaking and listening throughout our curriculum.

By the time the children leave our school we aim for them to: communicate effectively with others, listen to the views and opinions of others, participate in discussions and debates, retell stories and poems and to respond to questions with confidence and relevance. Circle times are also an important contributor to developing children's speaking and listening skills as they allow children to practise and apply taught skills whilst discussing a range of topics in a safe environment.

At Abingdon, we use also use DEAL strategies across the curriculum to help children develop their speaking and listening skills. Many opportunities to develop these skills are also incorporated into our writing lessons in English.

## **Reading for Pleasure**

At Abingdon Primary School, we understand the importance of reading for pleasure and encourage all children to read for pleasure as regularly as possible both within school and at home. Within classes, teachers read to children each day to share short stories and whole books as appropriate for the age of the children. It is important that children read, enjoy and discuss books without then being tasked to 'work' on that book.

- Within each key stage is an inviting, well-stocked library. The children are able to enjoy the libraries and to choose books to take home to read.
- Each class has a class library from which the children can read and enjoy in the classroom.
- Author visits – in-person and virtual – are enjoyed throughout the year to allow children to meet and question real authors. The aim is to inspire the children to see themselves as potential authors of the future.
- Drop Everything and Read (DEAR) sessions take place in all classes at least once a week and each term there is a DEAR session that parents can attend.
- Book recommendations are presented in school and class libraries.
- Reading Ambassadors help to manage the libraries and to promote a love of reading across school.
- Celebrating World Book day across the whole school each year.
- Additional reading initiatives, such as participation in the Stockport Children's Book Awards, the 'Abingdon Reading Challenge', and the library Summer Reading Challenge.

## **Impact**

### **Monitoring and Assessment**

#### **Monitoring**

In order to ensure there is consistency in high quality reading teaching and learning at Abingdon, there is monitoring schedule that sets out which aspects of the reading offer are to be looked at, and when.

#### **Phonics:**

- The quality of teaching, delivery and learning
- Staff CPD (RWI Coaching)
- Children's progress
- Interventions taking place as required
- Resources being organised and ready

#### **Reading for Pleasure/Reading Gems:**

- Adherence to the Abingdon Reading Gems Scheme for planning
  - 4-day plan being followed rigorously
  - Dual coded vocab

- Track the reader, choral reading, echo reading, partner reading
- Adherence to the Abingdon Reading Gems Scheme for teaching delivery
  - Staff skills and knowledge
  - Learning behaviour
  - Pre-teaching key vocabulary when needed
  - Required phonics/reading interventions taking place
- Daily story/read-aloud time.
- Weekly library sessions
- Drop Everything and Read sessions

At Abingdon Primary School, we use Reading Records to log how much children are reading at home. Parents and Carers are expected to record when they have heard their child read at home. This also creates a running commentary, between home and school, which helps us monitor children's reading progress, as well as their overall enjoyment. It is expected that all children read aloud to a member of school staff, at least once a week. Any children who are identified as needing additional support with their reading, should be targeted by the class teacher and support staff, for additional 1:1 reading, throughout the week. Any reading that is done with a member of school staff, must be recorded in the child's reading record, using a purple pen.

### **Assessment**

#### **Phonics:**

In Phonics, children are formatively assessed throughout each lesson and the teaching is adjusted to meet the needs of the class within each lesson, and sequence of lessons.

All children are assessed by the Phonics Lead, at the end of every half term. The Phonics Lead then groups the children into 'Progress Groups' to ensure each child is working at their 'challenge level'. Any children who are making rapid progress are assessed and re-grouped sooner. Any children who are at risk of falling behind RWI's expectations, are given additional support following the RWI 1:1 Tutoring Programme.

Children in Year 1 complete the Statutory Phonics Screening Check in June each year. Any child who does not achieve the expected standard, repeats the Phonics Screening Check in Year 2.

Children from Year 1 and upwards who are still accessing RWI Phonics, also complete an NFER assessment each term. (Year 1 starts from Spring Term). The assessments focus on comprehension skills.

#### **Reading:**

In Reading Gems, children are formatively assessed throughout each lesson to ensure that the children are making appropriate progress in developing their reading: decoding, prosody

and comprehension. In addition to this, each half term children are 'benchmarked' for decoding and comprehension skills to check their progress and adjust the level reading book they are taking home as their home reader. Children not making progress are then prioritised as daily readers for the following half term. Each term the children also complete an external assessment (such as NFER Reading Assessment) which provides additional information about the areas of need for that child, group of children, or class. All assessment information is used to inform future teaching and learning opportunities for the children and to drive progress.