



# Stepping Stones (Short Stay) School

## Phonics Policy

### Phonics

At Stepping Stones we use systematic teaching of phonics to support pupils in learning to read and write. As the pupils progress in their phonic knowledge they will move on from learning letters and the sounds that they make, to using and applying this knowledge to read and write words, then into reading and writing sentences. Our pupils learn that segmenting words into their constituent phonemes for spelling is the reverse of blending phonemes into words for reading. We give them the opportunity to use and apply their phonic learning through games and a wide range of multi-sensory tasks and activities, so that they then use this in their independent reading and written work.

### Aims and Objectives

Our principal aim is to develop the pupils' phonological awareness, ability to segment and blend words and read tricky words on sight, i.e. to become fluent readers.

To ensure our pupils' progress in their phonic knowledge the following applies:

- Daily phonic sessions.
- Phonics being promoted as a tool to help pupils decode words to read and spell.
- Pupils being encouraged to use and apply their phonic knowledge in independent work and guided reading sessions.
- Ensuring pupils have access to a range of approaches – whole class teaching of specific spelling rules and patterns; daily discrete phonics teaching (and in KS2 as part of an intervention group where gaps in phonological knowledge has been identified); and ensuring opportunities to apply skills in cross curricular contexts.
- Encouraging repetition and consolidation, so that spelling becomes automatic.
- Teaching the pupils to learn to read and write all 44 graphemes in the English language.
- Teaching pupils specific strategies to help them remember 'tricky words'.
- Ensuring that the teaching of phonics is lively, interactive and investigative.

### Planning

At Stepping Stones planning is based on the Letters and Sounds document, YR to Y2. Pupils in KS2 that have not completed the phonics programme/arrive at Stepping Stones with gaps in their learning, continue on Phase 5/6 where they then move onto securing the spelling of the words from the NC-advised lists that follow on from the CE words. This is done through daily sessions on arrival as well as daily sessions working with an adult on activities drawn from the Spelling Bank and Support for Spelling documents as advised in Lancashire's Supporting Spelling publication.

The planning format includes the revisit/ review- teach- apply- assessment sections recommended by the Letters and Sounds document. In each class, pupils are split into differentiated groups for daily phonics sessions – each teacher plans for their own group and any teaching assistants who lead phonics groups will have plans provided for them by the class teacher.



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### Teaching

All pupils (YR- Year 2) have a daily phonics session of 15 minutes. YR pupils entering the school are assessed as to their phonemic awareness and then grouped accordingly alongside the KS1 pupils.

KS2 pupils practise the NC advised spellings from the Word Lists that follow on from the Common Exception Words daily on arrival at school. In addition to this, they receive 15 minute sessions, planned by the teacher, focusing on covering gaps in their Phonics Phase 5/6 learning. These sessions are drawn from the Letters and Sounds document. For children who are working beyond this, there are fifteen minute daily sessions where children are taught spelling skills and strategies drawn from the Spelling Bank and Support for Spelling documents as advised in Lancashire's Supporting Spelling publication.

Differentiation: We aim to encourage all pupils to reach their full potential through the provision of varied approaches to access phonics. We recognise that our phonics planning must allow pupils to gain a progressively deeper understanding of the phonetic structure of the English language to ensure all pupils are provided with the key tools needed to become a **fluent reader**. Where required, KS2 pupils access phonics learning through intervention groups; or those exceeding age-related expectations through enrichment. Stepping Stones has a variety of strategies to enable all pupils to have increased access to the curriculum through a broad-based, multi-sensory, visual, auditory and kinaesthetically planned phonics sessions.

### Cross Curricular Links

In the school we recognise the impact good phonics teaching can have on pupils learning to read and write, but we see it as part of a rich literacy curriculum. Pupils are exposed to a wide variety of books and texts to encourage their love of reading. During literacy sessions we encourage pupils to apply their phonic knowledge to read and write. In YR pupils are given the opportunity to develop their mark making into early writing through setting exciting contexts for writing for a purpose using their phonic knowledge.

### Equal opportunities

All pupils are given equal access to the phonics curriculum. Due to the need to continue to address pupils arriving at Stepping Stones who are significantly below ARE's, it is paramount that the phonics curriculum is taught using a wide range of resources and approaches to ensure all pupils access the lessons and make accelerated progress.

### Assessment

Assessment is carried out half-termly and on Entry to Stepping Stones to assess the pupils' knowledge and to determine appropriate groupings within each class. In KS2 this information is used to identify areas that need to be revised or repeated.

The Spelling assessment (Salford); Reading Assessment (X) and KLIPs statements completed on entry/exit and termly for each pupil; provide the teacher with information re: gaps/next steps in a pupil's phonological development.

Progress is monitored by the Assessment Leader and Curriculum Leader, in order to ensure appropriate progress and relevant interventions where applicable take place.



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### Standards

In Year 1 pupils take part in the national phonics screening test. This assessment gathers information on the pupils' ability to blend and segment decodable words to read, and their recognition of 'tricky' non decodable words.

Y2 pupils attending Stepping Stones on a referral placement, who were unable to take part in the screening test in Y1, will take the test at Stepping Stones when requested by their mainstream schools.

### Spelling Homework

- KS1 – 5 - 10 spellings per week
- KS2 – 10 – 15 spellings per week
- Individual need differentiated as required within each Key Stage

Spellings may be taken from the Letters and Sounds Document, the differentiated lists from weekly spelling lists (SPaG curriculum 2014); or based on spelling patterns being learnt in class, including those drawn from the Spelling Bank and Support for Spelling documents. It must be stressed that spelling should be based on prior attainment and phonological need and pupils' learning should be tested regularly to ensure that spellings are fit for purpose.

### Resources

- Letters and Sounds
- Support for Spelling
- Spelling Bank
- SPaG Curriculum 2014
- Weekly spelling lists
- Multi-sensory materials

Date written: May 2017

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Approved by Governors \_\_\_\_\_

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