



Stepping Stones (Short Stay) School

Phonics Policy 2025-27

Phonics

At Stepping Stones School, we want to develop all children's love for reading and writing. During a child's time at our school, we are keen to encourage all of our children to be active readers and writers who have the knowledge, understanding, skills, confidence and ability to be independent.

We use a Systematic Synthetic Phonics (SSP) programme throughout the school. The validated programme which we have used from 2022 onwards is Success for All Phonics. The Systematic teaching of phonics enables children to learn to read and write.

English Leader	Jo Dowker
Reading Leader	Jo Dowker
Phonics Leader	Jane Meacham
Assessment Leader	Jane Meacham

INTENT

Our Aims

- To establish consistent practice, progression and continuity in the teaching and learning of phonics throughout the school with a focus on quality first teaching.
- To ensure that systematic synthetic phonics (following the Success for All- SFA phonics programme) is the first approach pupils use to help with their reading and spelling within KS1; and lower KS2 pupils working below ARE's ie within Y1/2 attainment
- To have robust assessment procedures to check progress and identify pupils in need of intervention.
- For pupils to apply their phonic knowledge in their reading and writing across the whole curriculum.
- For pupils to develop a love of reading and enjoy reading for pleasure, confidently across a range of genres.

Our Objectives:

- For our children to learn to read and write all 44 graphemes in the English language.
- To encourage the use of segmenting and blending so that decoding skills provide a solid foundation for reading, writing and spelling.
- To ensure children have specific strategies to identify and decode common exception words ('red' words within SfA).
- To ensure that the teaching of phonics is lively, interactive and investigative.
- To encourage children to apply their phonic skills in all curriculum areas.

IMPLEMENTATION

Assessment and Organisation

Children are assessed on Entry to the school on their **reading of and written recall** of the 44 phonemes. This enables the phonics lead to know what their baseline is and to ensure they are grouped appropriately.

All children in Reception, Y1 and 2, are streamed for phonics into the following groups.

- Phase 2
- Phase 3
- Phase 5- 6

When needed due to a child's gaps in phonic knowledge, children in KS2 will be assessed and access the appropriate phonic phase to support their reading and writing and access to the Curriculum.



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Children in Key Stage 2, have specific spelling teaching and learning, as per the National Curriculum English programme. Our children may have gaps in their learning regarding spelling. Therefore, the class teacher may group them into appropriate small groups, based on on-going assessment, enabling them to access teaching and learning of spelling appropriate to them.

Teaching

As outlined children are grouped according to their ability. All children receive a daily phonics / spelling / SPaG session of up to 25 minutes dependent on their age, maturing and attention.

Every staff member who is part of phonics teaching including Senior Leaders have undertaken the training from Success for All in order to deliver the phonics teaching consistently with fidelity to the scheme. Staff have access to the on-line training sessions in order to be able to refresh their knowledge and skills in delivery of the scheme e.g. when changing class groups; or are new to the school.

When children are moving through Phase 6 into the Y2 spelling rules the class teachers plan, develop and deliver lessons from Spelling Shed. This scheme is successfully delivering the spelling rules Y2 and KS2 children require; alongside, revisiting the phonemes from phase 5 and 6. This enables the staff to address gaps in the children's learning on arrival at Stepping Stones.

Even within each group adaptations are required in order to ensure all children make appropriate progress. This may be the teacher adapting the materials, presenting them in a multi-sensory manner or focusing on key elements for specific children who may need over learning and different approaches.

Interventions and Catch Up

Ideally, we would hope that by streaming the children into appropriate groups and providing a rigorous, robust high quality first teaching group, children would make good or better progress and close the gap between where they were and the year group expectations within the national curriculum. However, there are times where children may require more consolidation, additional guidance and a higher level of support.

These children are identified through regular assessment opportunities.

We also use the following programmes to support catch up and in order to secure progress.

- Success for All Lightning Squad
- 1:1 direct teaching
- SfA Class catch-up programme – This can also be used for individuals within our setting.

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. Pupils are encouraged and supported to apply their phonic knowledge to read and write across all Curriculum subjects. In our EYFS & KS1 classroom, direct adult led learning, continuous provision and enhanced provision are provided to give opportunities for pupils to develop their writing, from mark making into early writing.



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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 which remain consistent with Success for All, to ensure all pupils access the lessons and make accelerated progress.

Additional Supportive Assessment

Assessment is carried out termly and on Entry and Exit to Stepping Stones to assess the pupils' knowledge and to determine appropriate groupings within each class.

The Spelling assessment (Schonell); Reading Assessment (Salford), PIVATs and/or KLIPs statements completed on entry/exit and termly for each pupil; provide the teacher with information re: gaps/next steps.

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

The English Leaders will assess a sample of independent writing pieces on a termly basis to look for content, coverage, application of phonics for spelling and to support identifying next steps.

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. Year 2 pupils who did not attain the expected level at the end of year 1, will take part in the screening in the summer term of year 2.

If there are Y1 children on referral placement, they sit the test here at Stepping Stones and the results are passed to their mainstream school.

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/ daily practice

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

Spellings may be taken from the recommended spelling lists of common exception words, or based on spelling patterns being learnt in class, including those drawn from the Key Learning Documents for Reading and Writing. **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.**

Success for All Phonics Resources

The school has purchased an annual subscription to Success for All Phonics which includes training, teaching resources, lesson plans and matched decodable books to be used in the lessons and by staff across the school. These are to be used within the daily 25 minutes phonics teaching sessions and writing sessions for those pupils accessing phonic teaching



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and learning. This includes pupils in EYFS & KS1, as well as pupils in KS2 appropriate to their needs.

Additional Resources and Support Materials

- Whiteboards, magnetic letters
- SPaG Curriculum 2014
- Spelling Shed programme
- Weekly spelling lists
- Multi-sensory materials

Reading

For the full reading procedures and policy please refer to the separate policy as this is a summary.

All children working on the Success for All phonics programme should have a matched text (decodable reader). They will be encouraged to read the text several times for the following reasons.

- 1) Reading to decode
- 2) Reading for fluency
- 3) Reading for comprehension

Children will also have a choice of reading book for pleasure using the Book Banded scheme in school.

There is also a selection of books matched to children's needs for home reading.

Impact

The impact of teaching phonics through the Success for All Phonics programme will be monitored by SLT.

Each teacher will be provided with feedback and identified next steps.

Progress is reported termly to The Committee by the Assessment Lead.

The subject leader will write a termly report on the impact of the phonics programme on pupil progress.

Policy reviewed September 2025 by Jo Dowker

Next review due: June 2027