

Phonics Rationale

Lister Infants Phonics Rationale

“Respect for all, Learners for Life”

Our school motto is the motivation behind our school and what makes our school curriculum unique. It is our core belief that entwines and leads the curriculum at our school.

Vision

At Lister Infant School we aim to create a safe, happy, caring and inclusive school where children, staff, parents and visitors feel valued, are encouraged to succeed, are treated with respect, love learning and activity work together to be the best they can be.

We strive to ensure that all children become successful, fluent readers by the end of Key Stage One and believe this is achievable through a combination of strong, high quality, discrete Phonics teaching combined with a whole language approach that promotes a ‘Reading for Pleasure’ culture.

Intent

At Lister Infant School we provide a high quality Phonics curriculum that is accessible by all, underpinned by our school values, ‘Respect for all, Learners for Life.’ We believe that all children should get the best teaching possible in this crucial area so we deliver the important skills and knowledge of phonics through a combination of strong, high quality, discrete phonics teaching combined with a whole language approach to ensure all children achieve and succeed to their highest potential. This approach has been shown to provide a quick and efficient way for most young children to learn to read and write words on the page, fluently and accurately and we endeavour for children to develop this skill so that it becomes automatic. ‘The ability to read is the key to educational achievement. Without a basic foundation in literacy, children cannot gain access to a rich and diverse curriculum. Poor literacy limits opportunities not only at school, but throughout life, both economically and in terms of a wider enjoyment and appreciation of the written word’. (Education and Skills Committee)

Key drivers:

- To provide an exciting and engaging phonics curriculum that is accessible to all pupils.
- To provide a culturally rich phonics curriculum, relevant to our children so they have breadth of experience.
- To ensure there is breadth, depth and progression in teaching and learning across the phonics curriculum, within and across year groups to increase pupil’s knowledge, skills and understanding.
- To have high expectations of all our pupils by providing challenge.
- To foster a love of reading and to make every child a reader.
- To develop pupils speaking and listening skills and wider understanding of language with a focus of enhancing vocabulary. We aim to provide a language rich school by exposing our

children to a wealth of vocabulary to deepen understanding and positively impact all aspects of English.

- To use a balanced and engaging approach to developing reading, which integrates both word reading and comprehension skills.
- To develop our pupils ability to communicate effectively in speech and writing.
- To be able to read a range of materials fluently for enjoyment and information.
- To encourage our children to persevere and aspire to be their best.
- To expose our children to a multitude of enrichment through trips, visitors, enhancements, themed weeks and days to inspire our children and switch them on to learning and achieving.

Implementation

To ensure that each child develops the skills and knowledge to be able to read, write and spell at Lister Infants, we use a discrete, systematic phonics programme called Letters and Sounds in the EYFS and we follow Liverpool School Improvement phonics plans for KS1. Both schemes are supplemented with Jolly Phonic actions to support each phoneme taught to create a multi-sensory approach. We have a 20 minute session every day and the children are grouped into sets depending where they are up to in the programme.

Letters and Sounds is divided into six phases, with each phase building on the skills and knowledge of previous learning. Children have time to practise and rapidly expand their ability to read and spell words. They are also taught to read and spell 'tricky words', which are words with spellings that are unusual and cannot be segmented or blended (sounded out).

Phonics Progression

Nursery – Phase 1

Reception – Phase 2/3/4

Year 1 – Phase 3/4 and Year 1 Phonics (LA Plans)

Year 2 – Year 1/Year 2 Phonics (LA Plans by School Improvement Liverpool)

Each Phonics lesson includes the following sections and follows a clear sequence:

Revise – The children will practise something they have learned before and help build their confidence in the lesson. (This usually involves flashcards, sentences, word games and magnetic letters)

Teach – Introduce a new grapheme/word/skill – this will be taught in a fun multisensory way and may well involve: songs, actions, pictures, puppets, writing giant letters in the air.

Practise – Develop GPCs (grapheme phoneme correspondences) /read and spell new words. The children play fast, fun games to practise the new thing they have just learned.

Apply – The children will have a quick go at reading or writing sentences that involve the new learning.

Assess – Monitor progress within each phase to inform planning.

At Lister Infants, when children enter Nursery they take part in high-quality phonics sessions every day which is referred to as 'Speaking and Listening Time'. These are fun sessions involving lots of speaking, listening and games, where the emphasis is on children's active participation. They learn to use their phonic knowledge for reading and writing activities and in their independent play. From a very early stage, children develop awareness of different sounds in spoken language. They develop

understanding that spoken words are made up of different sounds (phonemes) and they learn to match these phonemes to letters (graphemes).

In Reception, Letters and Sounds is taught through a daily, discrete phonics session for a twenty-minute period to ensure that all children are reaching their full potential within a challenging and supportive environment. Phonics skills are also embedded in writing and reading tasks in small group sessions throughout the day and through a rich environment of continuous provision.

By Year 1, most children have become more confident in their reading and phonic ability and move onto Year 1 phonics. The children have access to high quality, daily, discrete phonics sessions for twenty minutes to ensure all children reach their full potential. As well as new learning, there is a key focus on consolidation to ensure that children have the opportunities to practise and embed their phonic knowledge, building on their knowledge and understanding to apply these skills in their independent reading and writing.

Phonics is still taught daily throughout Year 2 in our school, however, there is a greater emphasis on the spelling strategies. When spelling words, children will learn to choose the correct spelling patterns to represent the sounds in words. Good phonics knowledge and skills help all children to read words fluently and spell words confidently, but they need to understand what they are reading and understand the processes and purposes for writing too.

Outside of the phonics session we give lots of opportunities to apply the new skills that they have learned in all the lessons that they do. The more opportunities they are given the sooner they will become confident with these skills.

Children who have not reached the expected level by the end of their year will have extra individual phonics support through Precision Teaching and intervention groups.

Inclusion

Our school is an inclusive school and in each class there are children with a range of additional needs including ADHD, Dyslexia, Speech and Language, ASD and moderate learning difficulties. Our school recognises that children, with these different needs, benefit from an adapted lesson to allow all children to be successful and access activities at a level appropriate to their skills and needs. Resources are used to cater to the needs of individuals and support provided by staff as necessary. Any pupils with special educational needs are identified and teachers ensure lessons are catered to suit to every pupil's needs through adapting tasks, using resources and staff as necessary. We want all our pupils to apply what they know with increasing fluency and independence.

Family links

Parents have a considerable contribution to make to a child's success in school. They are strongly encouraged to be fully involved in their child's education. Parents are invited to review their children's school books (during open afternoons and parent evenings) and to support their child in responding to their teacher's feedback. Parent comments are added to topic books to share their view on progress, enjoyment and attainment. Parent workshops and Phonics demo lessons are held to inform parents how to support their child with Phonics at home and these are always well attended. Lister Infants shares learning through Twitter and the school website which is a great way for our families to access what the children are experiencing in the classroom and to continue that learning at home.

Impact

Phonics is given high priority at Lister Infants and we are proud to continually achieve results in line with national figures for the Year One Phonic Screening Test.

At Lister Infants the purpose of monitoring and evaluation activities is to raise the overall quality of teaching and levels of pupil attainment. The quality of teaching and learning throughout the school is consistently monitored through book scrutiny, lesson observations, learning walks and pupil voice. Children are assessed half termly by class teachers to ensure that structured intervention can take place as soon as necessary. In order to ensure consistency in assessment, all staff have been trained in moderation work by a phonics expert and we complete moderation of work each term. The coordinator feeds back to the Senior Leadership Team each term by completing a termly report monitoring data for all children including specific key groups. As a result of analysing data, actions are shared with staff and monitored by the co-ordinator. Additionally a learning walk takes place where lessons, books and pupil voice are triangulated to ensure high quality learning is happening. At the end of each academic year, a subject action plan is devised, which is then monitored throughout and reviewed at the end of the following year.

Our staff are experts in the teaching of early reading, which ensures all of our pupils make progress in their reading and writing. We expect all pupils to make progress which we see as knowing more and remembering more of the intended curriculum over time. We ensure all staff receive regular CPD in order to provide the highest quality of education to our pupils. Staff who have attended CPD training, feedback to colleagues at staff meetings to ensure good practice is implemented by all. To guarantee that progress is made for all children in phonics, the staff at Lister Infants ensure that we follow the teaching sequence of Letters and Sounds and Local Authority planning for KS1. We are able to embed the knowledge required through the teaching sequence and provide exciting opportunities for all children to be actively participating. We consistently build on the children's prior learning to deepen their understanding and build confidence in their own ability to read and write and to use their skills and knowledge in all areas of the curriculum. As a result, we expect most children to be secure in their knowledge of Phase 3 and working competently within Phase 4 by the end of Reception. Year 1 will have completed Phase 4 and Year 1 phonics in order to successfully complete the Statutory Phonics Screening Check and be ready to begin Year 2 phonics upon entry into Year 2. Year 2 will successfully complete Year 2 phonics while revisiting earlier phases to reinforce previous learning and to also re-experience 'tricky words' that they have encountered before.