

Phonics at Barlby Primary School



At Barlby Primary School, Phonics is taught daily and very effectively following the Little Wandle Phonics Programme in association with the Big Cat Phonics scheme. Phonics teaching begins in Nursery and progresses throughout KS1. It is essential that our approach to teaching phonics and reading is accessible to all learners, regardless of background.

Intent

Phonics (reading and spelling)

At Barlby, we believe that all our children can become fluent readers and writers. This is why we teach reading through *Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised*, which is a systematic and synthetic phonics programme. We start teaching phonics in Nursery/Reception and follow the Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised progression, which ensures children build on their growing knowledge of the alphabetic code, mastering phonics to read and spell as they move through school.

As a result, all our children are able to tackle any unfamiliar words as they read. At **Barlby**, we also model the application of the alphabetic code through phonics in shared reading and writing, both inside and outside of the phonics lesson and across the curriculum. We have a strong focus on language development for our children because we know that speaking and listening are crucial skills for reading and writing in all subjects.

Children are assessed regularly within each of the phases, ensuring they are revisiting and reviewing prior sounds and learning new sounds at a pace that suits them. In addition to our half-termly phonics assessments, there is a national Phonics check for Year 1 in the Summer term. All children will be assessed on their ability to decode 40 real words and pseudo words. Children who may not reach the required pass mark are able to repeat the phonics check in Year 2 after deep consolidation and extra support if necessary.

At Barlby, we value reading as a crucial life skill. By the time children leave us, they read confidently for meaning and regularly enjoy reading for pleasure. Our readers are equipped with the tools to tackle unfamiliar vocabulary. We encourage our children to see themselves as readers for both pleasure and purpose.

Implementation

See below the Phonics phases taught in each year group:

- Nursery: Foundations for Phonics
- Reception: Phase 2, 3 and 4
- Year 1: Phase 3 & 4 (review) and Phase 5
- Year 2: Phase 5 (review) and the bridge to Spelling

Foundations for phonics in Nursery

- We provide a balance of child-led and adult-led experiences for all children that meet the curriculum expectations for 'Communication and language' and 'Literacy'. These include:
 - sharing high-quality stories and poems
 - learning a range of nursery rhymes and action rhymes
 - activities that develop focused listening and attention, including oral blending
 - attention to high-quality language.
- We ensure Nursery children are well prepared to begin learning grapheme-phoneme correspondences (GPCs) and blending in Reception.

Daily phonics lessons in Reception and Year 1

- We teach phonics for 30 minutes a day. In Reception, we build from 10-minute lessons, with additional daily oral blending games, to the full-length lesson as quickly as possible. Each Friday, we review the week's teaching to help children become fluent readers.
- Children make a strong start in Reception: teaching begins in Week 2 of the Autumn term.
- We follow the Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised expectations of progress:
 - Children in Reception are taught to read and spell words using Phase 2 and 3 GPCs, and words with adjacent consonants (Phase 4) with fluency and accuracy.
 - Children in Year 1 review Phases 3 and 4 and are taught to read and spell words using Phase 5 GPCs with fluency and accuracy.

Daily Keep-up lessons ensure every child learns to read

- Any child who needs additional practice has daily Keep-up support, taught by a fully trained adult. Keep-up lessons match the structure of class teaching, and use the same procedures, resources and mantras, but in smaller steps with more repetition, so that every child secures their learning.
- Year 2 consolidate Phase 5 learning before moving on to a bridge to spelling programme.
- We continue to support any child in Year 2 and above who is not fully fluent at reading or has not passed the Phonics screening check. These children participate in the Rapid Catch-up programme to identify the gaps in their phonic knowledge and teach to these using the Rapid Catch-up resources.
- These short, sharp lessons last 15-20 minutes daily and have been designed to ensure children quickly catch up to age-related expectations in reading.

Teaching reading: Reading practice sessions five times a week

- We teach children to read through reading practice sessions five times a week. These:
 - are taught to small groups of approximately six children
 - use books matched to the children's secure phonic knowledge using the *Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised* assessments and book matching grids
 - are monitored by the class teacher, who rotates and works with each group on a regular basis.
- Each reading practice session has a clear focus, so that the demands of the session do not overload the children's working memory. The reading practice sessions have been designed to focus on three key reading skills:
 - decoding
 - prosody: teaching children to read with understanding and expression
 - comprehension: teaching children to understand the text.
- In Reception these sessions start in Week 4. Children who are not yet decoding have daily additional blending practice in small groups, so that they quickly learn to blend and can begin to read books.
- In Years 2 and 3, we continue to teach reading in this way for any children who still need to practise reading with decodable books.

Home reading

- The decodable reading practice book is taken home to ensure success is shared with the family.
 - Reading for pleasure books also go home for parents to share and read to children.
 - Additional information can be found on the Little Wandle website to further support and share information about phonics, the benefits of sharing books, how children learn to blend and other aspects of our provision, both online and through workshops: [Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised parents' resources](#)

Ensuring reading for pleasure

'Reading for pleasure is the single most important indicator of a child's success.'

(OECD 2002)

'The will influences the skill and vice versa.' (OECD 2010)

We value reading for pleasure highly and work hard as a school to grow our Reading for Pleasure pedagogy.

- We read to children every day. We choose these books carefully as we want children to experience a wide range of books, including books that reflect the children at Barlby and our local community as well as books that open windows into other worlds and cultures.
- Every classroom has a wide range of rich reading resources that encourages a love for reading. We curate these books and talk about them to entice children to read a wide range of books.
- In Nursery/Reception, children have access to the reading areas, both inside and outside, every day in their free flow time and the books are continually refreshed.

- Children from Nursery/Reception onwards have a home reading record. The parent/carer records comments to share with the adults in school and the adults will write in this on a regular basis to ensure communication between home and school.
- As the children progress through the school, they are encouraged to write their own comments and keep a list of the books/authors that they have read.

Impact

Assessment

Assessment is used to monitor progress and to identify any child needing additional support as soon as they need it.

- **Assessment for learning** is used:
 - daily within class to identify children needing Keep-up support
 - weekly in the Review lesson to assess gaps, address these immediately and secure fluency of GPCs, words and spellings.
- **Summative assessment** for Reception and Year 1 is used:
 - every six weeks to assess progress, to identify gaps in learning that need to be addressed, to identify any children needing additional support and to plan the Keep-up support that they need.
- **Fluency assessments** measure children's accuracy and reading speed in short one-minute assessments. They are used:
 - in Year 1, when children are reading the Phase 5 set 3, 4 and 5 books
 - with children following the Rapid Catch-up programme in Years 2 to 6, when they are reading the Phase 5 set 3, 4 and 5 books
 - to assess when children are ready to exit their programme. For Year 1 children, this is when they read the final fluency assessment at 60–70+ words per minute. Older children can exit the Rapid Catch-up programme when they read the final fluency assessment at 90+ words per minute. At these levels, children should have sufficient fluency to tackle any book at age-related expectations. After exiting their programme, children do not need to read any more fully decodable books.
- A **placement assessment** is used:
 - with any child new to the school in Reception and Year 1 to quickly identify any gaps in their phonic knowledge and plan and provide appropriate extra teaching.

Statutory assessment

- Children in Year 1 sit the Phonics screening check. Any child not passing the check re-sits it in Year 2.