



LAURUS
TRUST

Early Reading and Phonics at our Laurus Trust Primaries



Success for All 
Phonics

The Laurus Vision is for everyone regardless of background or circumstance to be inspired, to thrive in all environments, to recognise what it takes to succeed, to set aspirational goals and work hard to achieve them.

Reading is at the heart of our Curriculum offer across all our Laurus Trust Primary Schools as we recognise that it is the key that unlocks learning across the whole curriculum, but furthermore reading opens doors in terms of opportunity, enjoyment, lifelong success as well as academic success. It is paramount for us that all our pupils are able to read confidently, fluently and accurately, but also that they develop a genuine love of reading.

We ensure children have the skills, knowledge and understanding to become confident and enthusiastic readers and writers. We believe that high-quality phonics teaching improves literacy levels and gives all children a solid base on which to build and develop their reading habits so that they read widely and often for reading and information.

Through daily, systematic and consistent high-quality phonics teaching, children learn to blend and segment words for reading and spelling. To allow our children to develop a strong phonic awareness and effective blending, decoding and comprehension skills, we have chosen to use a DfE Validated synthetic phonics programme (SSP) called FFT Success for All Phonics from FFT. The programme supports our intentions to teach children to read and write independently so that they are able to access a broad and exciting curriculum and flourish as learners throughout their time at our school.

What is Phonics?

Phonics is a body of knowledge that is necessary for children to learn to read and spell. It involves matching the sounds of spoken English (phonemes) with individual letters or groups of letters (graphemes), children are taught explicitly the correspondences between letters and sounds (graphemes and phonemes) as well as the skill of blending the individual sounds together to read. To decode words, children are taught to look at graphemes in written words from left to right and to say each corresponding phoneme in turn. Then they blend the phonemes to say the whole word. The skill of segmenting words into their individual sounds is needed for spelling. This understanding of Phonics will also help children know which letters to use when they are writing words.

Implementation of Phonics using FFT Success for All Phonics



The effective teaching of Phonics and early reading is a priority in all Laurus Primaries. We maintain fidelity in the implementation of our phonics teaching by using FFT Success for All Phonics which allows the children to learn phonics through a highly structured programme of daily lessons across Reception and Key Stage 1, using a variety of fun activities in multi-sensory and systematic ways.

The daily lesson plans within the programme cover all the main Grapheme–Phoneme Correspondences (GPCs) and Common Exception Words (CEWs) to provide children with the phonic knowledge and skills required for success in the Year 1 Phonics Screening Check and to become fluent, confident readers by the end of Key Stage 1. This systematic progression is carefully sequenced in a progressive, yet ambitious way from the beginning of Reception to the end of Year 1 through a six-phased progression.

Each phonics session gives an opportunity for children practise the skills of blending and segmenting as new GPCs are introduced and then reinforces and revisits these throughout the programme. It also develops an increasing bank of accessible words, including Common Exception Words (CEWs).

Each session follows the teaching principles of:

- *Revisit and Review*
- *Teach and Model*
- *Practise and Apply*
- *Celebrate Achievement and Assess*

Throughout the programme, time is incorporated to allow for consolidation so that children can secure their skills, knowledge and understanding.

Regular Monitoring and Assessment

Children’s progress is closely monitored at all stages of their early reading journey. They are regularly assessed informally by the teacher within the lessons and over a sequence of lessons to ensure they keep up. If children need additional support, they are provided with keep-up sessions to ensure they stay on track with the rest of the class.

More formal assessments are completed every half term using FFT’s Reading Assessment Programme which covers all KS1 assessments including phonics skills, decoding, reading fluency and comprehension. Children who require further additional support (catch-up) are identified using a range of assessment information and are supported through additional small group or one-to-one interventions. This additional support runs through Key Stage 1 and into Key Stage 2 where needed.

At the end of Year 1 children are statutorily assessed using the Phonics Screening Check. This screening check confirms whether the child has met the appropriate phonics standard and can be used diagnostically to identify areas that need further attention going forward. Children who do not meet the required standard will continue their phonics lessons so that they are ready to retake the screening at the end of Year 2.

Through the FFT Success for All Phonics programme and our commitment to phonics teaching, children will be equipped with the skills, knowledge and understanding to decode unfamiliar words using a range of strategies. They will have a firm phonic base to support them on their literacy journey through school. They will develop their fluency and comprehension skills, take pleasure in exploring the rich literary world around them, acquire a love of reading and flourish as readers.

Reading and Shared Readers

Alongside daily Phonic lessons, children will also have daily Reading lessons where they can apply their knowledge of Phonics to the skill of reading itself.

These lessons will involve reading 'Shared Readers' which are fully decodable books linked to the progression of sounds in the children's daily phonics lessons. This allows children to practise reading the new and recently taught Grapheme-Phoneme Correspondence as well as the Common Exception Words they have been introduced to. The 'Shared Reader' book will include 'Green words' which are GPCs the children have been taught and 'Red words' which are words that are not completely decodable because they contain a 'tricky' GPC that does not follow the general rules. They are also known as Common Exception Words.

To support both teachers and children, the Shared Reader lessons follow a consistent daily structure with clear timing goals for each activity. This consistent approach enables lessons to be taught with pace as everybody understands the routine and what is expected.

During the reading sessions in school, children are provided with the opportunity to develop comprehension, fluent reading and to consolidate letter formation, spelling and sentence writing. Within these sessions, children are introduced to conventions for grammar and punctuation, so they learn how they impact on reading. Understanding these conventions also aids comprehension and their ability, eventually, to write with meaning.

Each 'Shared Reader' is read daily before being sent home at the end of each week for children to continue to practise. This allows the book to now be familiar to the children which helps with practising segmenting and blending (if needed), and allows for fluency to be built on.

Expert Reading Teachers

We have strong fidelity to the programme because we ensure that training is of the highest quality. All staff have access to regular training and share best practice in school and with others. We are well supported by the team at FFT Success for All who offer responsive and up-to-date information and professional development. As a result, our staff are well trained and proficient in the teaching of phonics and early reading. The shared, school-wide approach engenders a focus on outcomes for children and a collaborative team effort across all staff in our school.

How does reading progress?

As pupils move from the Early Years to Year 6, they develop both their reading ability and their independence. Below is a summary of how Phonics and Early Reading develops from Early Years throughout Key Stage 1 and where needed, into Key Stage 2.

Some children in Year 2 and beyond may need to continue to follow FFT Success for All Phonics Programme to support becoming a fluent reader, this includes any children who did not meet the required standard of the Phonics Screening Check taken at the end of Year 1. These children will access daily Phonics and Reading lessons using a 'Shared Reader' book which is matched to their current phonic ability so they can use their phonic knowledge to tackle decodable words and build their fluency by reading to adults in school and at home.

Progression of Phonics throughout Key Stage 1

Below is a summary of how Phonics and Early Reading develops from Early Years throughout Key Stage 1, and where needed into Key Stage 2:

Early Years / Reception

In Reception, children will bring home a 'Shared Reader' book at the end of the week, which will then be collected in the following week. This book is matched to their current phonic ability so they can use their phonic knowledge to tackle decodable words and build their fluency by reading to adults in school and at home.

Children will also be sent home with 'Red words' that have been identified from their Shared Reader and have been taught in school, this is so they can practise reading the word as well as practise writing and spelling the word too. This list will grow as children move throughout the steps outlined in the FFT Success for All programme.

Children will visit the school library and will choose and bring home a book to read together. These books will not have been taught and may not be decodable, but are for parents and carers to read, share and enjoy together with their child. These books will include stories that will excite our children and instil a love of reading.

Parents and carers are asked to comment in their child's Reading Record after reading at home. Both Reading books and Reading Records should be brought into school each day.

Year 1

In Year 1, children will bring home a 'Shared Reader' book at the end of the week, which will then be collected in the following week. This book is matched to their current phonic ability so they can use their phonic knowledge to tackle decodable words and build their fluency by reading to adults in school and at home.

Children's weekly spellings will include 'Red words' which have been identified from their Shared Reader and have been taught in school. The list of these 'Red Words' will continue to grow as children move throughout the steps outlined in the FFT Success for All programme.

Children will visit the school library and will choose and bring home a book to read together. These books will not have been taught and may not be decodable, but are for parents and carers to read, share and enjoy together with their child. These books will include stories that will excite our children and instil a love of reading.

Parents and carers are asked to comment in their child's Reading Record after reading at home. Both Reading books and Reading Records should be brought into school each day.

Year 2

Within Year 2 some children may need to continue to follow the FFT Success for All Phonics Programme to support becoming a fluent reader, this includes any children who did not meet the required standard of the Phonics Screening Check taken in Summer term of Year 1. These children will access daily Phonics and Reading lessons using a 'Shared Reader' book which is matched to their current phonic ability so they can use their phonic knowledge to tackle decodable words and build their fluency by reading to adults in school and at home.

Children's weekly spellings will include 'Red words' which have been identified from their Shared Reader and have been taught in school. The list of these 'Red Words' will continue to grow as children move throughout the steps outlined in the FFT Success for All programme.

For those children who have completed FFT Success for All Phonics they will then follow FFT Routes to Reading. This programme builds on children's phonemic knowledge and decoding skills from Year 1 and further develops reading skills of fluency and comprehension through exploring a range of specially written, engaging texts.

Children take part in daily reading sessions which offer opportunities to develop reading skills by using comprehension strategies in a combined way so that children develop the ability to predict, clarify, question and summarise for a meaningful reading experience and to comprehend the chosen text. Within each session, children are given the chance to read and discuss the text in a structured way allowing for the progression from decoding to increased fluency and comprehension.

The texts used feature a range of genres including fiction, non-fiction and poetry. Children will explore a text for about two weeks; as taking time to delve deeper into the text allows children to practise and consolidate their reading skills and provides times for retention and recall.

As the texts are explored in-depth for a longer period of time through structured sessions, these books will not be sent home for further reading practise. Instead, children will be able to choose a high-quality text from their year-group library to bring home to enjoy reading and sharing with parents and carers. These books have been hand-picked to ensure they are age-appropriate, include a wide-range of genres and our books that will excite, engage and enthuse our children.

All children will visit the school library and will choose and bring home a book to read together. These books will not have been taught and may not be decodable for all children, but are for parents and carers to read, share and enjoy together with their child. These books will include stories that will excite our children and instil a love of reading.

Parents and carers are asked to comment in their child's Reading Record after reading at home. Both Reading books and Reading Records should be brought into school each day.

Key Stage 2

As children move into Key Stage 2, most should be able to read a wider range of books and poetry at an age-appropriate level; doing this accurately, fluently and confidently. However, for some children, who did not meet the required standard by the end of Key Stage 1, or who have been identified as having gaps in their Phonics knowledge, daily Phonics teaching is still needed to help secure that phonic base to support them on their literacy journey through school.

These children are provided with small group, or 1:1 daily Phonics and Reading lessons using a 'Shared Reader' book which is matched to their current phonic ability. Children's progress is closely monitored at all stages of the reading journey with regular assessments built in to ensure children are able to read fluently and meet age-related expectations in reading.

For some children, where a specific area of need has been identified (for example identifying GPCs, decoding or fluency) specific interventions are able to be delivered in small-groups to ensure they keep up.

For our Key Stage 2 children who are still need to follow the FFT Success for All Phonics Programme, their weekly spellings and Home Learning will reflect this. Their weekly spellings will include 'Red words' which have been identified from their Shared Reader and have been taught in school. On alternate weeks, the Home Learning that is set for children is Reading.

Parental Support/Engagement

To support our parents, FFT Success for All have provided a Parent Portal where you can find resources to support your child's phonics and early reading. These resources include videos containing the proper pronunciation of all Grapheme-Phoneme Correspondences taught in the FFT Success for All Phonics programme and tips for reading at home (this includes the Key Phonics terms). To access the [Parent Portal](https://parents.fft.org.uk/) please follow the hyperlink: <https://parents.fft.org.uk/>

In addition to the above portal, we also invite Key Stage 1 parents and carers to attend a workshop about systematic synthetic phonics and its importance in developing early reading skills. This enables a strong home-school partnership and empowers parents to support their child when decoding texts i.e. by identifying initial letter sounds and applying their understanding of how to segment and blend using decodable books.

Frequent opportunities to apply these skills provide the crucial stepping stones needed to become confident, fluent readers. We actively promote the idea of 'reading miles' with parents and carers. 'Little and often' is our mantra when supporting them in establishing the habits of lifelong readers in our pupils. Recommended reads are provided and updated to signpost quality texts to pupils and their families.

Opportunities for pupils to develop the four interdependent strands of language: speaking, listening, reading and writing are actively sought and creatively delivered.



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