



## Phonics Policy

November 2021

Signed:

Chair of Governors

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## **Rigby Hall Phonics Policy**

At Rigby Hall we believe that the ability to read is fundamental to all our pupils' development during their time at school and beyond, regardless of ability or need. Reading is central to our ability to understand, interpret and communicate with each other and the world around us, whether it be with words, objects of reference or symbols. Success in reading has a direct effect upon progress in all areas of the curriculum; therefore, we pride ourselves on the fact that reading is given a high priority at Rigby Hall School. Reading skills enable the children to become enthusiastic, independent and reflective readers across a wide range (and types) of literature, including different text types and genres.

We believe pupils at our school require a systematic approach to learning to enable them to develop their reading skills. We deliver an inclusive, high-quality education in English. We recognise (that for our pupils, some of whom have complex learning needs) that we need to provide systematic teaching with multi-sensory aspects (including signing, movement and sight reading strategies) for individuals that require an approach that best suits their learning needs.

To ensure children reach their full potential in reading, teachers are expertly trained in special needs and strategies that can be applied to teaching methods to ensure children learn the required reading skills for their development. Phonics is taught consistently to children in Early Years, Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 using a systematic, synthetic government approved scheme known as Bug Club Phonics.

### **Aims**

At Rigby Hall School we believe that phonics provide the foundations of learning to support our children to become independent readers and writers. The reading and writing of Standard English, alongside rich language development is the key to unlocking the rest of the curriculum. Phonics is a method for teaching the reading and writing of the English language by developing phoneme awareness. Through phonics children learn the sounds of graphemes. Children then use this knowledge to segment words to support their spelling ability and blend sounds to read words.

We value reading as a key life skill, and are dedicated to enabling our pupils to become lifelong readers. We acknowledge that children need to be taught the key skills in segmenting and blending to be equipped with the knowledge to be able to complete the phonics check at the end of year 1. We also value and encourage the pupils to read for enjoyment and recognise that this starts with the foundations of acquiring the knowledge of letter sounds, segmenting and blending skills. The teaching of phonics is of a high priority here at Rigby Hall.

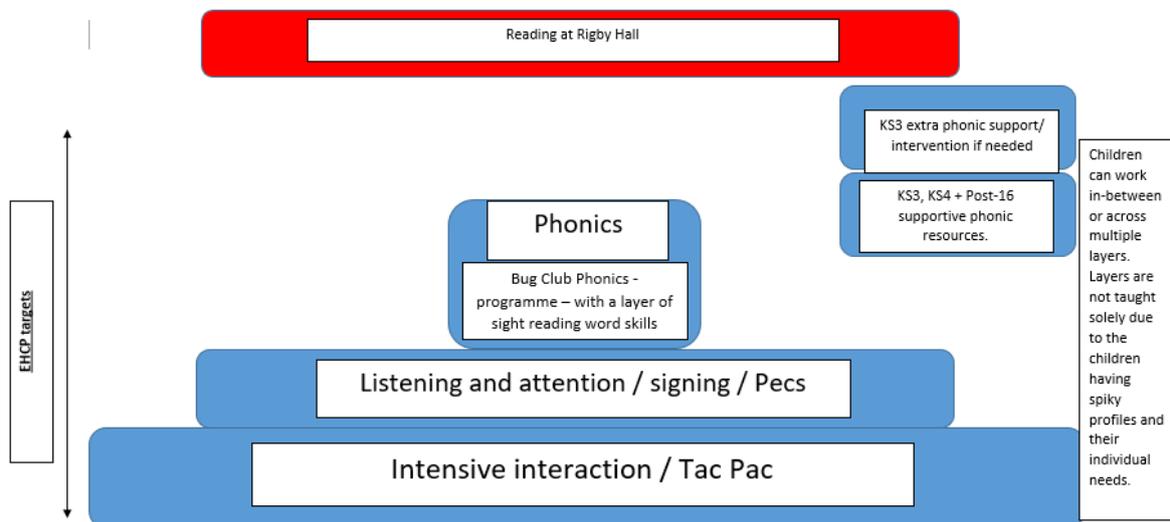
### **Teaching and Learning**

Rigby Hall School teaches and celebrates reading through various methods. Some of these are generic across the whole school, whilst others are specific to key stages. These may be implemented by the class teacher or by intervention staff.

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## Reading skills

- Children with phonological processing difficulties are more vulnerable to developing speech and literacy processing problems, therefore it is vital children are provided with individual plans and strategies if they are not ready to be taught phonics. Teachers initially assess if children are ready to be taught phonics by using the Bug Club Phonics Entry assessment. If children are not ready they will be taught according to the table below.



- Once children are ready, high quality phonics is taught according to the Bug Club phonics programme on Active Learn. Quality phonic teaching in Early Years, Key Stage 1 and 2 allow children to learn the basic skills of sound recognition, segmenting and blending. Children begin to recognise words more frequently through sight reading strategies embedded within the phonic lessons. As a result of this, children begin to read more fluently and start to read for pleasure as their skills improve.
- Phonics is taught sequentially using high quality teaching methods. Teachers plan interactive sessions with multi-sensory activities. Opportunities are provided for children to frequently recap previous learning to consolidate learning.
- Teachers use their expert skills to carefully plan a structured approach to teaching phonic skills and essential reading skills.
- Sight reading strategies are embedded within phonics lessons for children who struggle with phonic skills. Both phonic and sight reading strategies work in tandem and are tailored towards the individual to meet the needs of our children.
- In EY-KS2 Phonics sessions take place daily. Pupils are taught one phoneme (letter sound) per week, alongside its corresponding grapheme (letter name). Each week, one lesson introduces a new phoneme, as well as revisiting previously taught phonemes. Pupils also engage in a reading and writing sessions to consolidate the taught phoneme/grapheme, using a multi-sensory approach. Pupils in Early Years to KS2 read at least once weekly, using a book to support their current phonics knowledge. Pupils also engage in guided reading sessions (KS2 and KS3) as well as shared reading across the curriculum.

- Pupils in KS3 access reading through 1.1 sessions with an adult, guided reading sessions and cross-curricular reading. Children consolidate their previously taught phonics skills by reading phonics books at their level which are age appropriate. During 1.1 and guided reading sessions children work through individual targets and discuss a text at their level within these sessions.
- Pupils in KS4 and KS5 work towards appropriate accredited courses suited to their ability levels and pathways.

### **Reading and Homework**

Parents and carers are strongly encouraged to be actively involved in their children's reading, by listening to them read, reading to their children, and by promoting a home environment in which books are valued. We have high expectations here at Rigby Hall School. Listeners are encouraged to write in their child's reading record when they have heard them read, to support the communication between home and school. Children can access reading online through our Active Learn programme where suitable books can be allocated to individual children that are set at their reading level. Various reading incentive schemes such as vending machines and reading to a therapy dog are in place to raise the profile of reading at home. Additionally, as a whole school, reading at home is celebrated during weekly achievement assemblies.

### **Assessment and Moderation**

Assessment is used to inform the planning and teaching of reading. We assess reading strategies as well as reading comprehension, using the National Curriculum objectives, which are inputted into our SOLAR assessment system, alongside regular moderation. Throughout the school, children are assessed by their teachers on a termly basis, with class teachers using both formative and summative assessments to inform their judgements. This enables them to monitor closely the progress that the children make and record this accurately using the school's assessment tracking systems.

Assessment of reading at Rigby Hall School considers all of the strands of the National Curriculum domains in the following ways:

- Individual reading records to record progress and achievements of reading (targets placed at the front of books).
- Teachers use Solar to assess – these have statements related to all English areas.
- KS1, KS2, KS3, KS4 and KS5 pupils are assessed termly using a phonics tracking assessment, in which children are assessed against Bug Club phonics phases and gaps in learning are identified in inform future planning.
- Reading tracking sheets using the colour-coded book bands are collected each term to track book levels.
- Reading record books, in which parents and staff note children's reading achievements and any areas on which they need to focus.
- Phonics Screening Check at the end of Year 1 if appropriate.

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Staff regularly meet to discuss and evaluate the children's work and their assessments as part of our internal moderations. Furthermore, pupil progress meetings, between each class teacher and the head teacher take place at the end of every term, in which children's progress, achievements and areas for development are identified and steps put into place to close any gaps.

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