

# Phonics and Early Reading



## Our Reading Philosophy

At Bourton Meadow, we refer frequently to the quote written by Gervase Finn, which reads:

Opening the covers of a book  
Is like lifting the lid of a treasure chest  
Look inside and you will find  
Golden stories and glittering characters.

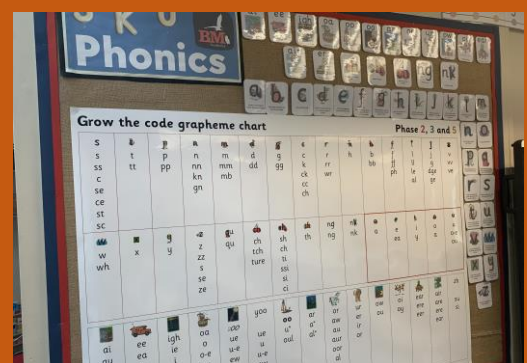
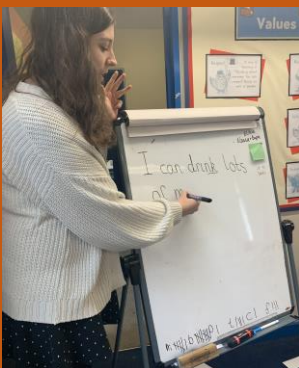
Some are given a map to show them where X marks the spot,  
Some are given the precious key to open up the lock,  
Some are helped to lift the heavy lid,  
But for some it will remain buried treasure.

We recognise that reading unlocks learning across all areas of the curriculum. From the moment children join us, we place great emphasis on this essential skill, creating an environment where reading is valued and encouraged. We wholeheartedly believe that every child should be supported to become a fluent reader, enabling them to access learning and lead successful lives as adults. We also believe that we should gift children with the wonder of reading, giving them a tool for escapism, joy and imagination through stories and texts.

## Why do our children believe reading is important?

*'In the future, reading will help me understand the world. When you read, you learn more words and can expand your imagination, in this world and new worlds.'* Year 6 child

*"Reading will help me when I am bigger because I every time I read, I learn new things. When I lo phonics, I learn new sounds to help me read, so every day the books I read are more interesting."* -Year 2 child



## Our Reading intent

Through the teaching and learning of reading, we are committed to providing children with the strategies they need to develop proficient skills in both word recognition and language comprehension to help them become successful readers. Alongside both processes, we promote an appreciation of how reading a variety of texts, genres and authors unlocks hidden treasures to allow escapism into new worlds and beyond. We believe that reading is a self- extending process: the more children read – the better they become.

### **Nursery**

Our journey to be accomplished, fluent readers begins in Nursery. As per the National Reading Framework (2022), we recognise that ‘becoming a fluent, skilled and attentive reader starts at the earliest stages.’ It is in this multi-sensory environment, our children are continuously promoted to engage in discussions about reading, experiment with role play, handle different kinds of reading material, experience different settings and characters and identify sounds, patterns and rhymes. We continuously remember, ‘book-related talk introduces children to language that they might not hear in ordinary conversation, especially the vocabulary of the book itself. This primes them to understand what they read later, in their leisure reading and across the curriculum.’ We also use Little Wandle ‘Foundations for Phonics’ in our nursery, where children are taught oral blending every day. These lively, ten-minute sessions are designed to help the children learn the routines and have fun with their learning.

### **Foundation Two and Year One**

In Foundation and Year One, children are taught daily phonics lessons, following the Little Wandle Phonics scheme.

This scheme provides the children with systematic teaching of phonics, which builds their phonic knowledge daily, in a way that develops their ability to decode words that are phonetic and recognise tricky words. This is teamed by a specially designed Reading practise approach, which helps the children strengthen their understanding of vocabulary, read with prosody and comprehend. By the end of Year 1, 92% of children will have completed their Little Wandle Phonics journey by reading Phase 5 phonics books and having passed the Phonics screening check.

This aim is achieved by our phonics delivery. The key to becoming a fluent reader starts with the ability to recognise sounds and decode. Decoding must be taught daily and systematically, first by identifying the sound, then identifying the sound within a word. The skill of decoding must be practised meticulously as it is only when this skill becomes secure and automatic, that the child can achieve fluency in reading and experiment with tone and expression.

From here, in Year Two and throughout Key Stage Two, children are able to strengthen their fluency, which in turn, secures their comprehension of a text and builds upon their bank of vocabulary, which we know broadens their knowledge across the curriculum and in life and influences their writing potential.

## Phonics and Reading implementation



At Bourton Meadow Academy, we follow the Systematic Synthetic Phonics (SSP) programme 'Little Wandle: Letters & Sounds Revised' for the teaching and learning of Phonemic Awareness and Phonics in Reception and Year 1.

This scheme promotes our vision for high expectations in reading for our children and ensures the confident practice of decoding, to ease later fluency and comprehension.

Further to this, our 'Beyond Phonics' approach, 'Big Cat Collins', which is practised in Year Two to Year Six, allows the children to experience a range of texts, all of which are fully decodable and allow steady and monitored progress. These texts support the growth of reading stamina and progression of fluency, as well as offering children differing complexities of comprehension and vocabulary choices.

Throughout school, our teachers provide a rigorous assessment system, which is updated continuously, to ensure our children are meeting expectations. This ensures children access the phonics teaching they need and receive reading books to suit their reading ability. It also allows us to identify children who are struggling and provide dedicated support, as early as possible, to ensure they keep up with their peers.

### As a reader leaving Bourton Meadow Academy, the children will be able to say:

- I rely upon a range of strategies to read aloud and in my head
- I have a range of self-checking and correcting strategies to improve my understanding
- I can ask a range of different questions to seek information about non-fiction and fiction texts
- I use my knowledge of root words, prefixes and suffixes to help me decipher the meaning of new words
- I have a love of reading
- I have been exposed to a wide range of text types, genres and cultural influences through varied texts
- I understand the structure of different texts
- I appreciate reading for different purposes
- I can recommend and justify books to my peers and give reasons for my preference
- I can discuss themes and devices across a wide range of texts
- I can compare within and across texts

These outcomes are carefully considered through our teaching and enjoyment of reading throughout school life. Our passion to meet these promises is underpinned by our

complete understanding that success in reading directly impacts opportunities later in life. Not only academically, but those that enjoy reading and see the benefits of reading just for fun, reap the rewards both socially and emotionally. We have a commitment to the children we teach; to instil a love of reading and to give them the ability to read with ease and confidence.

If you would like further information on Phonics or Early Reading or how to help your child at home then please get in contact with our Phonics and Early Reading Leaders, Miss Lowe and Mrs Harrison, by contacting the school office.