



Whitestone Infant School



# Reading & Phonics Policy

December 2024

NAMED PERSONS RESPONSIBLE AT WHITESTONE		
POSITION	NAME	SIGNATURE
Reading Leader	P. Hill	
Headteacher	N. A. Green	
Link Governor	Ruth Warwick	

This Policy was ratified on: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of next review:

Autumn 2028

**This school is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.**

# Whitestone Infant School Reading and Phonics Policy

“Children who read –

- Are more likely to do better at school and make more progress across the curriculum.
- Are more likely to develop empathy and creativity.
- Are more likely to be happier, healthier and experience better mental wellbeing and self-esteem.
- Are more likely to overcome disadvantage caused by inequalities.”  
Book Trust (see the Book Trust for more information.)

Our **Vision** at Whitestone Infant School

At Whitestone we know that teaching our children to read is of vital importance. We know from research that teaching them using a phonics scheme that is Systematic and Synthetic (blending letters to make words) is proven to help children to learn to read. At Whitestone we use the Read Write Inc phonics scheme. We believe that the children should have experience of a wide range of books throughout all curriculum areas, to develop a love of books, stories, rhymes and poems that will lead to a lifelong love of reading and learning.

**Aims** -

- To value the importance of talk and of developing language understanding.
- To learn phonics and how to decode words to read and spell through a Systematic, Synthetic phonics program – Read, Write Inc. Starting as soon as the children start in reception.
- Once children can decode words we aim to develop their understanding, comprehension and reading fluency.
- To experience quality stories, rhymes and poems. To have these read and reread in story times and English lessons. (see our book spine Appendix 1)
- To read for purpose and pleasure, non-fiction and fiction in all other areas across the curriculum.
- To give children access to a wide range of books so they can experience the joy of reading and develop an understanding of different authors, genres and subjects. We are careful to choose quality texts that have often been given awards or are classics, or are reflecting our pupils and school community.
- To ensure all children begin their reading journey and are supported if they fall behind their peers with structured interventions. That children with SEN and D make progress with targeted support if needed.
- That all staff receive regular training and coaching so that they can teach reading confidently.

This has been compiled with reference to the Department for Education Reading Framework 2023

You can find magic wherever you look.  
Sit back and relax,  
all you need is a book.  
-Dr Seuss



## **How we teach reading at Whitestone**

In conjunction with –

- the DFE Reading framework 2023
- the National Curriculum English 2014
- the Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Curriculum 2024

At Whitestone Infants we teach the children to read in conjunction with their parents/carers as soon as they start school.

## **The language of phonics**

You will hear many words that are used in phonics please do not worry about these they will be explained on many talks at school and they are mentioned in many documents listed at the end of this policy. You may hear your child mention phonemes, this means one sound represented by one letter 'o' or more than one 'ou'. When we write sounds as letters these letters are called graphemes.

## **In Reception**

The children follow the Early Years Foundation Stage Statutory Curriculum 2024.

“It is crucial for children to develop a life-long love of reading. Reading consists of two dimensions: language comprehension and word reading. Language comprehension (necessary for both reading and writing) starts from birth. It only develops when adults talk with children about the world around them and the books (stories and non-fiction) they read with them, and enjoy rhymes, poems and songs together.” EYFSSC 2024

When children start Reception in Whitestone they have access to a wide range of books to take home and share with parents, these may be familiar classics or books that have won awards, or books that help children see the diversity of the world they live in. The children should come home with a ‘Sharing Book’ every week, these are for you to read with your child. You can read these over and over and talk a lot about the pictures and what the story is about, some of these books have no words so your child can tell their own story.

The children also start on the Read Write Inc phonics reading scheme learning particular letters in a set order, how they sound and how to write them. The RWI approach is taught considering the 5 Ps:

Praise – Children learn quickly in a positive climate.

Pace – A good pace is the key to ensure all children are engaged and on task.

Purpose – Every part of the lesson has a specific purpose.

Passion – This is a very prescriptive programme. It is the energy, enthusiasm and passion that teachers put into the lesson that bring the teaching and learning to life!

Participation – A strong feature of RWI lessons is partner work children work together.

**Learning sounds** - The children in Reception are taught all the set 1 sounds in the first few weeks. (See appendix 2 for all sounds) It is important they learn clear sounds that do not end with an 'uh'. Children will have **Pinny time**, which is extra sound practise at school to ensure they keep up with learning the sounds. Parents/carers can help with learning the sounds, please check your child's reading diary to see which sounds your child needs to learn. Please follow the link below to see how to say these sounds.

<https://schools.ruthmiskin.com/resources/search/?searchtext=how+to+say+the+sounds>

<https://home.oxfordowl.co.uk/reading/reading-schemes-oxford-levels/read-write-inc-phonics-guide/> for lots more parent guides and information.

**Blending** - When the children know some sounds they will learn how to 'Fred Talk' this is how to blend the sounds together to make words. Fred is a toy frog, we say he can say the sounds but not the word. We play Fred games like this: Fred says h—o—p and then we wait to see if the child can say 'hop'. If not we model the word. Then say Fred says r—u—n and again wait to see if the child can say the word 'run'. Once children can blend like this orally, they then use the letters to make words and blend those together to read. See the next video for more ideas of how you can help your child to blend.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vqvqMtSNswo> – Please play these games with your child at home as often as you can until they can orally blend the words themselves independently with confidence. Once they do this the children take home blending books to read and share. The children then learn their set 1 special friends: sh th ch qu ng nk ck, once they can do this the child will move on to reading paper Ditties and Red reading books.

## Assessment

Every half- term your child will have an assessment on the next book level to see if they know the sounds and can decode words at that level fluently enough to move on.

RWI book order	Ditty Start	Red	Green	Purple	Pink	Orange	Yellow	Blue	Grey
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They progress through all the colour books. As your child starts a new colour you will get a sticker in their reading journal telling you how you can help your child in this level, and what they need to do or learn now.

The children are grouped into their colour group and work with a variety of adults across the year group. All teachers and teaching assistants are RWI trained. They all follow the systematic RWI reading scheme which includes reading and spelling lessons.

## **Spelling**

The Read Write Inc scheme supports children to learn to write letters clearly and has handwriting patterns that children follow from reception. The children have a sound lesson at the start of each phonics lesson. In this the children learn a single sound or a digraph – two letters that make one sound like -ay = a, or three letters that make one sound this is called a trigraph – igh = I. Children learn how to say and read these sounds blending them, they then learn how to use these sounds to write relevant words using their Fred Fingers to sound out the word segmenting it as they spell it. For example, if they learn -igh- they would then learn to write night, light, sigh etc. The children also learn to spell common exception words in each year group, these are taught through RWI and English lessons. Children also learn how to spell more complex words and include suffixes and pre-fixes. Please see your year group pages for copies of these words. Children will also have class/year group spelling homework to complete from time to time.

## **In Year One**

All children progress differently but by Year One we would expect most children to be blending well, know all set one sounds and be confidently reading red or green books. Many children will have exceeded this. In Year One the children are assessed every half term and progress through the colours as above. Here we help the children learn to decode and read quickly often blending in their head, we call this 'Fred in Your Head'. We encourage your child to think about the words they are reading and what they mean. We also encourage the children to think about and talk about what they have read. When the children read yellow and blue books they are expected to read with pace 50-60 + words a minute and understand what they have read. We expect the children to be reading Blue level books when they move to Year Two. Some children may be above this level. Children in Year One have a Phonics Screening Check in June. This is a National screen and checks children's ability to recognise sounds, blend and read words, half of the words are real and half are called alien words, these do not make sense and really test the children's ability to blend. In Year One more information on this check is given throughout the year including a talk in November at school. Look at the Year One section of the website for more information.

## **In Year Two**

Children will continue to read from the reading level they have achieved in Year One. They will continue to work on their phonics skills if they do not pass the Year One Phonics Screening Check. In Year Two the Blue and Grey reading books get progressively harder and have more difficult vocabulary. The children need to develop their fluency skills at this level and their comprehension skills, it is vital that they understand what they are reading, so please ask your child what they have read and discuss any vocabulary that they don't understand. In Year Two after the RWI scheme children will bring home a wide variety of

books, some scheme books to aid vocabulary extension, as well as a wide range of non-fiction books, fiction including poems, rhymes, classics and graphic novels. These books encourage your child to develop a reading bug, a love of reading, so that they enjoy reading pick their favourite genre or author and make reading part of their life, the children that enjoy reading and read for pleasure will obviously become more confident readers. Please continue to encourage your child to read a wide range of books and talk about what they are reading and ask if they understand vocabulary. Year Two also teach children reading skills in structured Guided Reading sessions when they are off the RWI scheme. The children learn about the vocabulary and they learn to think about the book in more detail. They have a wide range of texts and develop their comprehension skills.

### **How can you help at home?**

Your child's education is a partnership between home and school and a parent/carer is essential to ensuring their child learns to read and continues to develop this skill and a love of reading to last them a lifetime.

Children will bring home a black and white RWI book, exactly the same as the one they will read every day in their phonics group, please make sure they are in their book bag in school every day. They will need to know all the sounds highlighted in the front and the Speedy Green words, Red words and Story Green words before they read the book. Red words are not decodable and so children need to learn to read these by sight. Once they can read these words speedily, encourage your child to read the book at least three times a week to develop fluency, expression and a clear understanding of what the book is about. Make sure these times are fun, and positive with lots of praise, if they are struggling stop, try again later, the next day, or see your teacher for extra support and ideas. Children will also bring home a RWI Book Bag book, this they should be able to practise and read themselves, but they may need more help initially, they may not have read this at school. This may come home over the weekend when you have more time to read together.

Your child will have a Sharing Book, which could be: a classic story, a poem, or a non-fiction book. This book is something to share with you, to develop an interest in reading and a love of sharing and exploring books. Your child will bring home a reading diary this will have a sticker about the level of RWI your child is on and give you. Points relating to what they need next. It is also a place where you can write down how they are reading at home. We would like each child to read for a minimum of three times a week. The teacher will read the comments you write here and keep you up to date with their level.

### **Interventions and SEN and D**

It is proven that children with SEN and D learn to read best by following a systematic, synthetic approach. Children at Whitestone are all assessed and they are put into groups as they start. If they are struggling to keep up then there may be many reasons for this. The

reading lead will meet with the child and assess their individual needs, discuss this with their class teacher and put in intervention support as needed. Children are given targets to improve and parents will be informed about what they can do at home. Whitestone has members of staff who are designated reading support and they will take the child three times a week to support them with their individual targets. Please do not hesitate to get in touch with the class teacher, in the first instance, if you have any concerns about your child's reading progress.

### **In English lessons**

Reading is a fundamental part of many lessons in many curriculum areas. We focus on children's abilities to retell stories and use story language with confidence. We use Talk for Writing, please see the writing policy for more information. Children have the opportunity to experience a wide range of quality stories, rhymes and poems in their English lessons. Please see appendix 2 for our school book spine and see how they progress through the school. Talk and story-telling are intrinsic to many reading and writing tasks and the children's ability to use their imagination and use their reading knowledge are developed across the curriculum. Children have English lessons to work on handwriting, reading and spelling as well as writing skills.

### **Book times and story times**

At Whitestone we know the importance of a designated time each day to have a story, poem or share a non-fiction book. We encourage children to re-read books shared in class and recommend books they have read to each other – this is called Book Time. Reading, sharing and discussing books developing a child's understanding of what they have read, or the vocabulary they have encountered, all contribute to their growing understanding and comprehension skills. Children also have class reading time when they can read a book of their own choice for pleasure. This is a quiet time when they can just get lost in a book.

### **Extra-curricular activities.**

The children at Whitestone enjoy many activities including doing activities around National Poetry Day and World Book Day. For world book day children are encouraged to dress up as their favourite book character and bring in their favourite book to share.

Each year the school has a Visiting Author or poet. They run workshops with the children and encourage the children to develop a love of reading and the opportunity to see themselves as a story teller or writer. This is something they may aspire to when they are older.

Once a year there is a Book Fair that visits the school, please look out for information. This is a great opportunity for your child to choose a book to read and share at home, ask for recommendations if you are not sure what your child might like to read. The school gets some commission and is able to buy books for school so please support if you are able.

Friends of Whitestone run an Easter reading competition and give out prizes to the children who read the most. We also encourage the children to join Nuneaton Library and become a book borrower, this is encouraged every summer over the holidays.

### **Libraries at school**

The children also have the opportunity to go on our Big Red Book Bus on the field, it is a lovely library of books mostly donated by parents and carers that children can take home.

We also have a lovely Non-Fiction library at school which is stocked by subject leads these books are used in class to support all areas of the curriculum.

In class children have their own class library of Sharing books which the children can choose from to bring home and share in Reception, Year One and Year two.

Please look after any books that come home, please keep them in book bags when not being read to protect them, return to school and do not put drinks bottles in book bags as books often get wet and damaged this way. Please let us know if you have had an accident with a book, or have lost a book or diary, so we know what book to replace. Thank you.

Useful websites

<https://home.oxfordowl.co.uk/reading/reading-schemes-oxford-levels/read-write-inc-phonics-guide/>

Ruth Miskin Parents' Page:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i5O4yvZSOsc> to watch Ruth Miskin top ten tips.

<https://www.ruthmiskin.com/parents/>

Ruth Miskin Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/miskin.education>

<http://www.oxfordowl.co.uk/Reading/>

Free e-books for home reading:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/early-years-foundation-stage-framework--2>

EYFS framework

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-curriculum-in-england-english-programmes-of-study>

National curriculum

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/664f600c05e5fe28788fc437/The\\_reading\\_framework](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/664f600c05e5fe28788fc437/The_reading_framework)

## The Reading Framework

<https://www.booktrust.org.uk/globalassets/resources/research/benefits-of-reading>

Book Trust

<https://wordsoflife.org.uk/>

National Literacy trust

Appendix 1

Reading spines

Book Spine – Foundation stage by the reading lead.

Autumn 1 We are special Favourite Stories	Autumn 2 We are special Favourite Stories	Spring 1 A world of stories	Spring 2 A world of stories	Summer 1 The world around us	Summer 2 The world around us	
<b>Fiction</b> Rainbow fish Owl babies We are going on a bear hunt Goldilocks and the three bears	<b>Fiction</b> The story of Rama and Sita The Family Book The Colour Monster The Christmas Story	<b>Fiction</b> Cuddly Dudley Penguins Can't Fly The penguin who wanted to fly Poles Apart	<b>Fiction</b> The gingerbread Man Chicken Licken Little Red Hen	<b>Fiction</b> Handa's Surprise The Enormous Turnip Jack and the Beanstalk Zog Jasper's Beanstalk	<b>Fiction</b> Jack and the Flum flum tree The Bad-Tempered Ladybird The Hungry Caterpillar The Gruffalo Dear Zoo Class 2 at the Zoo Elmer Giraffes Can't Dance We are going on a lion hunt	
<b>Other Fiction read at any time and left in the book corner for the children to enjoy.</b>						
The gingerbread Man Owl babies Hairy Maclary Whatever next Shh Jaspers Beanstalk The everywhere bear.	JD The Enormous Turnip The way back home On the way home Goodnight moon Peace at last Brown Bear, Brown Bear Goldilocks	Each Peach, Pear, plum Chicken Licken	Jack and the Beanstalk The Hungry Caterpillar The Gingerbread Man Tyrannosaurus Drip The elephant and the bad baby Cat in the hat The Elves and the Shoemaker	The Little Red Hen Farmer Duck Six dinner Sid Jack and the Flum flum tree	I am a tiger Mega Boy Mr Gumpy's outing Look up	Rosies Walk Mog
<b>Non-fiction</b> Information books about homes, bears, our bodies, families, Autumn, Divali	<b>Non-fiction</b> Divali Bonfire night Christmas	<b>Non-fiction</b> Information books about cold countries, Arctic, Antarctic, animals, Winter.	<b>Non-fiction</b> Lifecycle of a hen Information books about Spring and Easter.	<b>Non-fiction</b> Growth Plants Information books about castles, plants, being healthy.	<b>Non-fiction</b> Information books about hot countries, Minibeasts, Zoo animals and in the wild. Lifecycle of a butterfly	

Reading Spine - year 2

Autumn 1 Curious Creatures	Autumn 2 Curious Creatures	Spring 1 Marvellous Medicine	Spring 2 Marvellous Medicine Nurturing Nurses	Summer 1 A Flicker of Flames	Summer 2
<b>Fiction</b> Various texts by Beatrix Potter – Peter Rabbit Squirrel Nutkin The two bad mice Tale of Mrs Tigglywinkle Jeremy Fisher Fantastic Mr. Fox – RD	<b>Fiction</b> The hedgehog The Owl who was afraid of the dark	<b>Fiction</b> Georges Marvellous Medicine Flat Stanley	<b>Fiction</b> Charlie and the chocolate factory The story tree house books	<b>Fiction</b> Jack and the Beanstalk Jim and the Beanstalk Jack and the Baked Beanstalk	<b>Fiction</b> The boy who grew dragons Sir Scallywag The kiss that missed Dragon days The great Dragon rescue. Portrait of a Dragon The Egg The Knight and the dragon
<b>Other Fiction read at any time and left in the book corner for the children to enjoy. Links to guided reading books see books.</b>					
Meerkat Mail Amazing Grace Who's afraid of the big bad book Not now Bernard Tuesday Sam's Sandwich Gorilla Emily Brown and the thing Frog and Toad together	Evil weasel Flotsam Silly Billy Mr Wolfs Pancakes The disgusting sandwich <del>Baboushka</del> 100 hungry ants Percy the park keeper stories One smart fish	The Princess and the pea Horrid Henry Frog Prince Rapunzel The Tear Thief <del>Douglas's</del> Deep Sea Diary The Smartest Giant in Town Princess Smartie Pants Dogger	Mr Magnolia Five Minutes Peace The Tunnel Into the Forest The Prince of <del>Aburbia</del> The Twits		
<b>Non-fiction</b> The Boy the Fox and the Mole	<b>Non-fiction</b> Animals of the British Isles Hedgehogs	<b>Non-fiction</b> Safety information re-medicines.	<b>Non-fiction</b> Florence Nightingale Mary Seacole	<b>Non-fiction</b> The great Fire of London Samuel Pepys Diary	<b>Non-fiction</b> Castles Warwick Castle Knights

Reading spine - Year 1

Autumn 1 All Aboard!	Autumn 2 Blast Off!	Spring 1 Rainforest Explores	Spring 2 Fun at the Farm	Summer 1 The Great in Great	Summer 2 Home and Away
<b>Fiction</b> <del>Lubna</del> and Pebble Naughty Bus You Can't Take An Elephant on a Bus Hundred decker bus Stone soup	<b>Fiction</b> Whatever Next! How to catch a star The way back home A Spacey Christmas	<b>Fiction</b> The Day the Crayons Quit The Great Kapok Tree The Tin Forest Flip Flap Jungle	<b>Fiction</b> The Three Little Pigs No lie pigs can fly The Great <del>Fairytale</del> Disaster My mum is fantastic	<b>Fiction</b> Katie in London Katie and the British Artist Queens hat Queens handbag Billy Goats Gruff	<b>Fiction</b> Bog Baby Where the Wild Things Are Town Mouse and Country mouse The Lighthouse Keeper's Lunch
<b>Additional fiction to be enjoyed at any time/ repeated and left in the book corner to enjoy.</b>					
Lost and Found <del>Beegu</del> Avocado Baby The Tiger who came to tea Jolly Postman Dr <del>Xargle</del> and the earth <del>lets</del>		Dogger Elmer Series Commotion in the ocean Wolves How big is a million Little Red	<u>The day the crayons came back</u> Little Red Riding Hood The Baddies		
<b>Read poetry from the anthologies in class at least once a week, recite and reread putting in actions. Pie Corbett Gingerbread man</b>					
<b>Non-fiction</b> Transport Seasons	<b>Non-fiction</b> <del>Guy-fawkes</del> Space The Christmas story	<b>Non-fiction</b> Rainforest animals Rainforest Uses	<b>Non-fiction</b> Pigs Farm animals	<b>Non-fiction</b> The Queen Patron Saints London	<b>Non-fiction</b> The Seaside
<b>Poetry</b> A tiny little apple seed	<b>Poetry</b> Two, One, Zero	<b>Poetry</b> Deep in the rainforest	<b>Poetry</b> Tractors busy day The Cow	<b>Poetry</b> The Queen of Hearts	<b>Poetry</b> Who's in? When I was one

Author Study Beatrix Potter Minibeasts Habitats Seashore	Owl information books Bats Mammals	Author study – Roald Dahl	How chocolate is made. Brazil	London Landmarks	Komodo dragons
<b>Poetry</b> The Owl and the Pussycat	<b>Poetry</b> T'was the night before Christmas	<b>Poetry</b> Shakespeare Macbeth Poem – potions. Mothers' Day Poem	<b>Poetry</b> Chocolate Cake MR	<b>Poetry</b> Fire of London	<b>Poetry</b> Dragon poems Roar Storm dragon
<b>Rhymes and songs</b> Beatrix Potter Rhymes Friendship songs	<b>Rhymes and songs</b> Christmas songs to perform	<b>Rhymes and songs</b> Revolting rhymes Mothers' day song	<b>Rhymes and songs</b> Rumble in the jungle	<b>Rhymes and songs</b> London's burning	<b>Rhymes and songs</b> Dragon days songs for the concert

Additional Charanga songs see plans.

Note these reading spines are frequently updated.]

## Appendix 2

### Speed sounds and *Read Write Inc.* Stages

If your child is learning to read at school with *Read Write Inc. Phonics*, they will be at one of the following stages:

#### Learning Set 1 Speed Sounds

These are the Set 1 Speed Sounds written with one letter:

**m a s d t i n p g o c k u b f e l h r j v y w z x**

These are the sounds written with two letters (your child will call these 'special friends'):

**sh th ch qu ng nk ck**

#### Learning Set 2 Speed Sounds

These are the Set 2 Speed Sounds:

**ay ee igh ow (as in *blow*) oo (as in *zoo*)**

**oo (as in *look*) ar or air ir ou (as in *out*) oy**

#### Learning Set 3 Speed Sounds

These are Set 3 Speed Sounds:

**ea** (as in *tea*)

**oi** (as in *spoil*)

**a-e** (as in *cake*)

**i-e** (as in *smile*)

**o-e** (as in *home*)

**u-e** (as in *huge*)

**aw** (as in *yawn*)

**are** (as in *care*)

**ur** (as in *nurse*)

**er** (as in *letter*)

**ow** (as in *brown*)

**ai** (as in *snail*)

**oa** (as in *goat*)

**ew** (as in *chew*)

**ire** (as in *fire*)

**ear** (as in *hear*)

**ure** (as in *pure*)