



## Reading Policy

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.

Date Approved by Governing Body:	Jan 2026
Review Period:	1 years
Next Review Date:	Jan 2027

Chair of Governors:	Teresa Cutler
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## Rationale

At Uffculme School, every individual is valued. We recognise that our students have many barriers to learning and so we aim to deliver a curriculum that offers motivation and purpose for each individual and builds on and celebrates each small step of progress.

At Uffculme School, we acknowledge that learning to read in its widest sense is central to the curriculum intent of the school. Progress in reading enables our students to access opportunities both in school and the wider community with independence and confidence. Reading provides students with rich communication opportunities and supports them in achieving their desired outcomes on leaving school.

**Every child deserves success right from the start. We know that the sooner children learn to read, the greater their success at school. This is why we put reading at the heart of what we do.**

## Aims

At Uffculme School, we want our students to develop reading skills appropriate to their needs and ability. We consider that some of our students have limited speech. We adapt our curriculum to meet each learners' needs. We want our students to:

- Use objects, photos, and symbols to anticipate, predict and communicate.
- Develop their vocabulary and language.
- Improve their pre reading and pre phonic skills.
- Improve their phonic knowledge and reading skills.
- Develop their reading fluency.
- Develop the features of prosody.
- Develop the 6 skills of reading through purposeful reading lessons.
- Read for pleasure and foster a love for stories and literature.
- Read purposefully to gain information using non-fiction texts.
- Improve their vocabulary through listening to good quality texts that are planned carefully into the curriculum.
- Apply their reading skills to engage with the wider community in preparation for life after school.
- Encounter characters, situations and viewpoints that mirror their own lives, so they understand that they matter.
- Have a window into the lives of others through books, where they meet people whose social and cultural backgrounds and values differ from their own.

## How we teach children to read and write

At Uffculme School we make sure that students are ready to embark on the phonics scheme. The stage before this is vital for our students at Uffculme School. This stage is called pre phonics and was originally Phase 1 of Letters and Sounds.

## Pre Phonics

Pre phonics is part of the communication, language and literacy area of learning within the Early Years Foundation Stage. At Uffculme School pre phonics is taught beyond EYFS to students who need this phase before moving onto the phonics scheme.

Pre phonics supports the linking of sounds and letters in the order in which they occur in words, and naming and sounding the letters of the alphabet. At Uffculme School music, rhythm, rhyme and creativity play a key part in developing children's language and vocabulary. We teach children important basic elements of the phonics programme such as oral segmenting and blending of familiar words. The aim at Uffculme School is to embed the pre-phonics into a language-rich provision that serves the best interests of the children by fully recognising their propensity for play and its importance in their development. We believe that high-quality play activities will offer lots of opportunities to enrich children's language.

At Uffculme School we deliver pre phonics activities arranged under the following seven aspects:

- Aspect 1: General sound discrimination – environmental sounds
- Aspect 2: General sound discrimination – instrumental sounds
- Aspect 3: General sound discrimination – body percussion
- Aspect 4: Rhythm and rhyme
- Aspect 5: Alliteration
- Aspect 6: Voice sounds
- Aspect 7: Oral blending and segmenting

The overarching aim is for children to experience regular, planned opportunities to listen carefully and talk extensively about what they hear, see and do. Activities within the seven aspects are designed to help children:

- listen attentively
- enlarge their vocabulary
- speak confidently to adults and other children
- discriminate phonemes
- reproduce audibly the phonemes they hear, in order, all through the word
- use sound-talk to segment words into phonemes.

## **Read Write Inc.**

When students are beginning to meet standard 1 of the Pre-Key Stage 1 standards in English language comprehension and reading, they are then ready to begin the Read Write Inc. phonics scheme. This means that they are beginning to develop language comprehension so that in a familiar story/rhyme, the pupil can, when being read to by an adult (one-to-one or in a small group):

- Indicate correctly pictures of characters and objects in response to questions such as 'Where is (the)...?'
- Show anticipation about what is going to happen (e.g. by turning the page)
- Join in with some actions or repeat some words, rhymes and phrases when prompted.

By using Read Write Inc., we make sure every child can read the last set of phonic stories before they progress to our higher-level programmes, Comprehension and Spelling. Children start the programme when they are ready and continue with it at the level and pace appropriate to them throughout the primary and secondary provision. Please refer to the Uffculme Reading Provision for guidance.

During this time, we group children by their reading progress for 40 minutes to one hour a day (20 to 45 minutes in Reception) and re-assess children at least every term so we can place them in the group where they'll make the most progress. We provide extra daily one-to-one sessions for children who need a bit of a boost to keep up.

### **How do we teach children who are pre-verbal or who have limited speech?**

We adapt and scaffold the learning for all of our children. We use communication aids and pictures to support the learning of children who are pre-verbal and those with limited speech. Children are supported to read, blend and spell with magnetic letters.

### **How do we make phonics easy for children to learn?**

*Read Write Inc.* Phonics depends upon children learning to read and write sounds effortlessly, so we make it simple and fun. The phonic knowledge is split into two parts.

First we teach them one way to read and write the 40+ sounds in English. We use pictures to help, for example we make 'a' into the shape of an apple, 'f' into the shape of a flower. These pictures help *all* children, especially slower-starters, to read the sounds easily. Children learn to read words by sound-blending using a frog called Fred. Fred says the sounds and children help him blend the sounds to read each word.

Then we teach children the different spellings of the same sounds, for example, they learn that the sound 'ay' is written ay, a-e and ai; the sound 'ee' is written ee, e and ea. We use phrases to help them remember each sound for example, ay - may I play, a-e – make a cake?

### **How do we ensure children can read every book?**

The first thing we do is to give children books we *know* they can read – without any guessing. (We read lots of other stories to them, but do not expect them to read these for themselves.)

Before they read the story they sound out the names of characters and new words, practise reading any of the 'tricky Red' words and we tell them a thought-provoking introduction to get them excited about the story.

Then over three days, children read the story three times: first to focus on reading the words carefully; the second to help them read the story fluently; and on the third, we talk about the story together for example, how characters might be feeling and why. By the time children read the story at home, they will be able to read it confidently with expression.

### **How do we teach children to spell confidently?**

We use just two simple activities: Fred Fingers to spell regular words and Red Rhythms for tricky words.

#### *Fred Fingers*

We teach children to spell using 'Fred Fingers': we say a word and then children pinch the sounds onto their fingers and write the word, sound by sound.

#### *Red Rhythms*

We teach tricky words with Red Rhythms. We say the tricky letters in a puzzled voice and build the letter names up into a rhythm, for example, s-**ai**-d.

Children learn to spell new words and review past words every week, they practise spelling them with a partner and – when they're ready – we give them a test to celebrate their spelling success.

### **How do we make writing simple for children to learn?**

We teach handwriting, spelling and composition separately, gradually bringing each skill together step-by-step.

We teach children to form letters with the correct pencil grip and in the correct sitting position from the very beginning. They practise handwriting every day, so they learn to write quickly and easily.

Once children can write simple words, we teach them to 'hold' a sentence in their heads and then write it with correct spelling and punctuation.

Very soon, children are able to write down their own ideas. We try out different sentences together, drawing on new vocabulary and phrases from the Storybook they've just read. They practise saying their sentences out loud first so they don't forget their ideas while they're writing. They also learn to proofread their own writing using ready-made sentences containing common grammar, punctuation and spelling errors.

### **How do we assess and track children's progress?**

For children to make the best possible progress, they will read Storybooks closely matched to their reading level.

This means we group children by their word reading and fluency – not by their progress in comprehension or writing, or by their age.

The Reading Leader and class teachers carry out the online and non-verbal assessments to ensure children are placed in the correct group.

We track each child's individual progress on the online assessment tracker. We use this to identify children who need more support through daily one-to-one tutoring.

### **How are slower progress readers supported?**

We identify those children who are making slower progress quickly.

We make sure children 'keep up not catch up'.

The slowest progress readers receive one-to-one tutoring for 5 minutes, in addition to their group session in the morning. Children practise reading sounds speedily, learn to blend sounds into words and read a Storybook that is matched to the sounds they know and the quantity they can read.

### **What are the expectations of children's progress on the *Read Write Inc.* Phonics programme?**

We have ambitious expectations for our children. We keep in mind that Read Write Inc. programme aims for mainstream children are to:

- be able to read Green Storybooks by the end of the first year.
- be able to read Blue-Storybooks by the end of the second year.

- have completed the Phonics programme by the end of the third year.

However, we treat each pupil individually and base our expectations on each individual pupil's needs. The class teacher and Reading Leader discuss all children after each assessment point to make decisions about each students' next steps.

The Reading Leader and class teacher will decide which students are ready to sit the Phonics Screening Check.

### **How is the programme led to ensure these expectations are achieved?**

The Reading Leader's role is vital to ensure that the teaching of reading is of the highest quality and all children make rapid progress. They organise one-to-one tutoring for children who need extra support.

Importantly, they are, where possible released from class teaching duties during *Read Write Inc.* sessions so they can ensure reading teachers achieve a high standard of teaching.

All staff have been thoroughly trained to teach reading. They attend a two-day Phonics training course and receive termly coaching from one of Ruth Miskin's training consultants to ensure that children are making the best possible progress. They also have access to all the training on the Ruth Miskin Training School portal.

The Reading Leader organises further training in weekly practice sessions. These ensure teachers get better at teaching every week: everyone practises together so they can teach reading confidently. They underpin the progress of all teachers and children.

### **Story Time Sessions**

Storytime is the highlight of every day. We have a canon of stories that children get to know really well, and others we read just for fun. An important part of literacy teaching is the exposure to a diverse range of texts during story time sessions. Texts are carefully mapped across the year for the whole school. Students will engage with texts above their reading ability, covering a broad range of themes, eras and cultures. We believe that our students should be exposed to texts that offer a window into other worlds and texts that reflect themselves. We use the Ruth Miskin Windows and Mirrors list to support us with our choices of texts. Teaching staff are directed to the Ruth Miskin training portal for CPD to support the high-quality delivery of these sessions.

Texts are high quality often using and promote meaningful discussions, drama-based activities and a celebration of literature. The texts chosen will go on to support pupil's understanding of the world and open doors for communication.

### **Reading for Pleasure**

To promote a love for reading, all classrooms have reading areas that are resourced with books that engage and motivate learners and that are matched to their cognitive level. The school library is accessible to all and contains story books, poetry, and a wide range of non-fiction texts.

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

Students who are accessing the Read Write Inc. story books have access to the book they are reading in class on the Oxford Owl platform. Children will have already read the 'phonics' storybook two or three times in the reading lessons so they should be able to read it confidently. We encourage parents not to say 'this is too easy!' There is guidance in the storybooks to guide parents too.

Parents also have access to the interactive, animated lessons from the Ruth Miskin Virtual Classroom so you and your child can join in with lessons at home. The online teachers help children to practice the sounds and words they have learnt in school.

The picture book is likely to be beyond their child's decoding ability, so we don't ask children to read the story to parents until they are able to read the later phonics storybooks.

## **After Read Write Inc phonics**

When students have successfully completed the Read Write Inc. phonics programme, they continue their journey with Read Write Inc spelling and guided reading where the students will develop fluency and comprehension. The Uffculme Reading Provision document details these stages.