

LONSDALE



Lonsdale School

Reading Policy

2024/2025

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Pupils at Lonsdale School have a wide range of learning requirements ranging from those with complex needs through to those who have a physical difficulty but who can access education at a level comparable to their mainstream peers. It is essential that our approach to teaching phonics and reading is accessible to all learners, regardless of background.

The following definition of reading supports us to make our reading policy inclusive to all pupils:

'...reading may be interpreted as any activity that leads to the derivation of meanings from visual or tactile representation'. (QCA 2001)

All pupils at Lonsdale are entitled to be a part of the reading process at whatever level they are able to access it and using the methods that are most appropriate and suitable to their learning needs. These methods may be accessed visually, orally, through touch, or through the use of electronic devices and it is in this way, and by using such resources, that pupils learn that one thing can represent something else.

It is important to respond to directives from DfE to make good and regular use of a phonics approach; however, we are aware that whilst this will work well for some pupils, other pupils will develop their reading skills more readily in a variety of other ways.

We are aware that pupils with Autistic Spectrum Disorders (ASD) may have difficulty combining sounds to make meaningful words and that they do not necessarily see phonemes as building blocks for words. They may also have the ability to decode more complex words and texts, but without taking relevant meaning from the words they read. Using phonics to decode words can also be difficult for pupils with hearing impairments, as it requires good auditory discrimination of sounds. Similarly, reading can also present specific challenges for pupils with Physical and Neurological Impairments (PNI), encompassing such physical challenges as page turning as well as visual-perception difficulties that may cause words to appear backwards or with an inconsistent pattern.

There is therefore no 'one size fits all' approach to the teaching and learning of reading at Lonsdale and we will plan for each individual pupil so that they are at the centre of their reading experiences and will achieve according to their unique abilities and learning styles.

Intent

Aims and Objectives

- For all pupils to enjoy reading for pleasure and leisure; either being read to, sharing a book with an adult or choosing and reading a book independently
- For all pupils to have access to a wide range of literature to enrich and broaden their experiences both at school and at home
- For all pupils to develop and use pre-reading and reading skills to extract meaning from visual, tactile or electronic representation in order to enhance their communication and literacy skills
- For all pupils to develop functional reading skills that enable them to communicate choices, interact with others and access and apply information at school, home and in the wider community

Phonics

At Lonsdale School we give all pupils, regardless of their age, access to high quality daily phonics teaching through 'Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised', which is a systematic synthetic phonics programme. We start teaching Little Wandle Foundations and phase 2 in our Early Years provision then, from Key Stage 1 through to Post 16, pupils are streamed into daily reading groups. Our phonics groups follow Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised progression through phase 2 to 5, which ensures pupils build on their growing knowledge of the alphabetic code, mastering phonics to read and spell as they move through the programme. Pupils undertake regular phonics assessment to track their progress through each phase, and groupings are adjusted termly to ensure all pupils continue to be challenged and supported throughout their phonics journey. This supports all pupils to progress at their own pace, and ensures pupils developing pre-reading skills can begin their phonics journey at any age.

As a result, pupils are better able to tackle unfamiliar words as they read and are better able to access learning across the curriculum with increasing independence. At Lonsdale School, we also model the application of the alphabetic code through phonics in shared reading and writing, both inside and outside of the phonics lesson and across the curriculum. We have a strong focus on language development for our pupils because we know that speaking and listening are crucial skills for reading and writing in all subjects. We work closely with our AAC team to ensure that both low

and hi-tech communication aids are supportive of both our phonics programme and subject specific vocabulary. Lonsdale staff are offered regular phonics, in support of our chosen phonics programme 'Little Wandle'.

Comprehension

At Lonsdale School, we value reading as a crucial life skill. We aim for pupils to read confidently for meaning and regularly enjoy reading for pleasure, in whichever context this may be possible for each pupil. Our fluent readers develop the tools to tackle unfamiliar vocabulary and to see themselves as readers for both pleasure and purpose through daily 'Everybody Read' sessions. These 30 minute sessions focus on skills such as fluency, comprehension in a variety of contexts, interpreting the news and current events, building oracy and debating skills, and deciphering exam questions.

Because we believe teaching every pupil to read is so important, we have a Reading Leader who drives the early reading programme in our school. This person is highly skilled in teaching phonics and reading, and they monitor and support our reading team, so everyone teaches with fidelity to the Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised programme alongside any necessary adaptations to make reading accessible for all our pupils.

Implementation

The development of reading skills relies on the progressive acquisition of skills together with a broadening and reinforcing of acquired reading skills. An important aspect of the acquisition of reading skills is access to a rich and varied range of motivating, high quality texts for individuals (at home and at school), small group and whole class reading.

The broad curriculum at Lonsdale focuses on developing pre-reading skills at the earliest stages before beginning to teach reading skills to those pupils who will learn to read print in a more formal way.

Foundations for phonics in Early Years

- We provide a balance of child-led and adult-led experiences for all children that meet the curriculum expectations for 'Communication and language' and 'Literacy' at their individual starting points. These include:
 - sharing high-quality stories and poems
 - learning a range of nursery rhymes and action rhymes
 - activities that develop focused listening and attention, including oral blending
 - attention to high-quality language.
- We prepare children in our Early Years to begin learning grapheme-phoneme correspondences (GPCs) and blending as soon as their knowledge of and engagement in pre-reading skills show that they are ready
- Little Wandle Foundations is aligned to the non-statutory guidance on Development Matters and Birth to 5 Matters as well as the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) statutory framework. We use it as part of our wider provision for Communication and Language, and Literacy. It supports children to:
 - develop their phonological awareness, including rhyme, alliteration, syllables, initial and voice sounds, and oral blending
 - love stories and rhymes, and learn by heart a bank of familiar favourites
 - increase their vocabulary and confidence to communicate
 - improve their listening and ability to take part in back-and-forth conversations, both verbally and with the support of AAC.
- We believe that the priority in Nursery should be to build the foundations for phonics for all children. Research tells us that disadvantaged children start Nursery behind their more fortunate

peers. By leaving formal phonics teaching until children are ready, Foundations allows us to devote more time to working with children who need extra help to develop the skills and behaviours that underpin successful reading

- Research tells us that nursery rhymes can support children to develop their language, their awareness of sounds within words and even their later reading (Bryant et al. 1989).
- We use the Little Wandle Rhyme time films and accompanying phonological awareness planning to complement and reinforce our Phase 2 teaching.

Foundation for Phonics and sensory input at Key Stage 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5

Pupils at Lonsdale School who are not yet ready for formal phonics teaching access a daily sessions focused on pre-reading skills and early communication. Each sessions lasts 30 minutes and is planned to develop a range of relevant skills at an appropriate level through a range of approaches, including Tacpac. TACPAC is a communication resource that draws together the sensory languages of touch and music to create a structured period of sensory communication between two people. Anecdotal evidence has long suggested that TACPAC significantly improves the lives of those living with sensory processing and communication difficulties and complex and other needs by the use of Sensory Alignment within a TACPAC session. Sensory Alignment is achieved through TACPAC's unique model of the exact correspondence of music, objects and activities. This method means that what Receivers see matches what they hear and what they feel, and thus their sensory input is exactly aligned.

Pre-reading skills are taught in a variety lessons and will include activities that promote the development of:

- Communication, play and thinking/problem solving skills. Opportunities to develop pupils' communication skills at all levels from pre-intentional communication, through learning to anticipate, share joint attention, make choices, and join in with imaginative play and small world play learning activities.
- Listening attention skills, starting with developing awareness of environmental sounds such as birds and a car passing and including the sound of familiar voices. Using sensory stories, maintaining attention, learning to anticipate what will happen next in a predictable sequence, favourite story or rhyme
- Visual attention skills; developing visual attention skills such as looking at light sources, making choices from photos and pictures, progressing to identifying elements within a picture, commenting and labelling pictures, linking real things with a symbol or words and symbol or word matching
- An appreciation of the sounds and the patterns of language through songs and rhymes.
- An enjoyment of books and stories through positive and exciting encounters with printed media, including access to books from a variety of genres and including non-fiction texts and poetry.
- An understanding of single words through the consistent and systematic use of photographs and symbols and labels. For all pupils this will begin with learning the names of objects, people, places and actions that a pupil needs to acquire in order to make sense of the world and influence events.
- The development of an increasing vocabulary by using an individual pupil's preferred symbolic representation and with the aim of supporting all areas of the curriculum.
- The introduction of early phonics skills though interactive multisensory phonics sessions and Little Wandle Foundation for Phonics

Formal Teaching of Reading at Key Stage 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5

For pupils who are able to develop strong pre-reading skills, the next step will be to extend their understanding of phonics, begin to decode words and to develop a sight vocabulary. For these pupils

the development of phonological awareness will start with the learning of single letter sounds and corresponding letters.

Pupils will learn phonic skills using the Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised programme. This scheme sets out a detailed and systematic approach to teaching phonic skills with the aim of pupils becoming fluent readers as they progress through the five phonics phases. Pupils across the school access Little Wandle phonics through daily 30 minute sessions, in which they are grouped by phonics phase. Pupils progressing from pre-reading to formal reading begin at phase 2. Pupils new to the school are assessed to determine the Little Wandle phase that they are currently working at, and begin their journey through The Little Wandle scheme in the corresponding group.

The Little Wandle is well supported with resources, and may be adapted to include sensory elements to support pupils with visual, hearing speech, physical or sensory impairments. We recognise that many of our pupils need additional time to process and consolidate new learning, and so the speed at which the scheme is taught is determined by the teacher, who will deliver input at a pace suited to the pupils in their group whilst maintaining fidelity to the sequence of progression.

As part of their phonics learning, pupils will also learn high frequency or 'tricky' words that are not decodable using phonics methods.

Some pupils may participate in the Year 1 Phonics Screening Check and by the end of Key Stage Two and they may also take their National Curriculum Tests (SATS).

Alongside daily phonics sessions, pupils at Lonsdale school continue to develop their reading skills through formal reading activities. Formal reading activities will include:

- Speaking, listening, reading and writing activities, which allow pupils to explore and practice their phonics knowledge, blending and/or segmenting skills both independently and with adult support
- Shared reading and/or writing sessions led by an adult who demonstrates reading and writing strategies (including phonics) in a meaningful way - the teacher models the reading process and the pupils are actively involved
- Shared or whole group reading sessions where pupils listen to the text being read aloud, join in, following the reading, and contributing to discussion and response
- Opportunities for pupils to learn how to apply the knowledge and skills they are acquiring in their word level work in other areas of the curriculum
- Activities that give pupils opportunities to interpret and make sense of what they have read.

Fluency and Comprehension

As pupils develop their reading skills, it is important that they learn to understand and take meaning and information from the words and sentences that have been decoded. Some pupils, and particularly those with ASD, can become proficient at reading, often using the 'look and say' method, but do not read for pleasure or meaning.

At Lonsdale School, we have a broad scheme of 'reading practice books', which are fully decodable and carefully sequenced to match the progression of our phonics scheme. Pupils regularly read a reading practice book at their phonics level 1:1 with either a Teacher or Learning Support Assistant, During 1:1 reading pupils are supported to decode and improve fluency, derive meaning from what they have read, read with expression and form opinions.

Through questioning, pupils will develop the ability to understand the meaning of what they have read or had read to them. From the earliest stages of engaging with books, they will learn comprehension skills through looking at and talking about stories and pictures, anticipating what will happen next in a familiar story, describing characters and relating idea and events in a story to their own experiences. This will extend into to activities such as sequencing the events in a story, answering more complex 'how' and 'why' questions, the re-reading of text to improve fluency skills such as predicting and drawing inferences from what they have read. We use Assessment for

Learning (AfL) and our professional judgement to assess each pupil's progress in reading, so we can ensure that they have the right books to meet their needs. Comprehension is taught through dialogic talk and teachers use their AfL to quickly address misconceptions and develop pupil's curiosity and engagement with each book.

Once pupils become fluent readers, they are grouped to access daily 30 minute sessions to build their fluency and comprehension skills. These sessions are named 'Everybody Reads' and coincide with phonics sessions, meaning the whole school is engaged in reading activities at once.

Comprehension groups will include:

- Applying phonics knowledge to spelling
- Reading for pleasure
- Comprehension questions for a wide range of text styles
- Reading, understanding and forming opinions on the news and current events
- 'Book group' style reading, involving sharing and discussing an excerpt or a whole text
- Developing oracy and debating skills through discussion based on articles or excerpts
- Preparation for formal examinations by unpicking and deciphering the language used in questions

Home School Reading

- All pupils accessing phonics are given a decodable reading practice book from our rich reading scheme, carefully matched to their phonics level. The decodable reading practice book is taken home to ensure success is shared with the family.
- Reading for pleasure books also go home for parents to share and read to pupils. We share the research behind the importance and impact of sharing quality pupil's books with parents through workshops, leaflets and the Everybody read! resources.
- We use the Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised parents' resources to engage our families and share information about phonics, the benefits of sharing books, how pupils learn to blend and other aspects of our provision, both online and through workshops.
- All pupils are encouraged to take books home to share with parents and other family members. A home school reading record book is used for both home and school to share information about each pupil's reading experiences. We ask parents to support pupils by reading with them at home and sharing reading opportunities wherever and whenever possible.

Ensuring reading for pleasure

'Reading for pleasure is the single most important indicator of a child's success' (OECD 2002).

'The will influences the skill and vice versa' (OECD 2010).

We highly value reading for pleasure and work hard as a school to grow our reading for pleasure pedagogy.

- We read aloud to pupils every day. We choose these books carefully as we want pupils to experience a wide range of books, including those that reflect the pupils at Lonsdale and our local community, as well as books that open windows into other worlds and cultures.
- Every classroom has an inviting range of books that encourages a love for reading. We curate these books and talk about them to entice pupils to read a wide range of books.
- In Early Years, pupils have access to the reading corner every day in their free-flow time and the books are continually refreshed.
- Lonsdale has a wide range of books that foster our pupils' love of reading and enrich their experiences. Our library houses both fiction and non-fiction books, including titles linked to curriculum topics, sensory books, large print books and big books. Our library has a visualizer, tactile books, Tony boxes and Yoto players to support pupils with visual impairments to access literature.

- We subscribe to Audible to access a wide range of audio books. Audible is accessible on a number of iPads in school.
- As pupils progress through school, we take time to get to know them as readers and ensure that we engage in meaningful conversations about the books that they have read. By doing this we can recommend authors and genres of books to expand their interests.

Impact

Assessment, Recording and Reporting

- Teachers and Learning Support Assistants assess pupil's phonics progression termly. This data is then used to group pupils by phase and ensure that they are accessing the Little Wandle programme at an appropriate pace and level.
- Our specialist-reading teacher tests our pupils' vocabulary, reading and comprehension skills annually using standardised tests, such as BPVS, Salford and Suffolk Reading Tests and Reading Now. The reading scores are logged on each pupil's Individual Learning Plan (ILP), and the reading-test data forms part of the whole-school assessment.
- As with other subjects, individual reading progress is documented and recorded on the school's New Horizons system.
- Reading progress is reported both annually as part of the annual review process and in curriculum reports.
- In phonics lessons Assessment for Learning (AfL) is used:
 - daily within class to identify pupils who require support, as well as words and GPCs that need additional teaching
 - to plan repeated practice throughout the day to ensure all pupils secure learning
 - to assess gaps, address these immediately and secure fluency of GPCs, words and spellings.
- Summative assessments for phonics are used:
 - to group pupils, ensuring they remain both challenged and supported
 - to generate visual reports
 - by teachers, Reading Leaders and SLT who drill down and look at the data at GPC, word, tricky word level
 - by SLT to scrutinise and to put in place any additional support for teachers.
- We formally assess:
 - termly to assess progress and to identify gaps in learning that need to be reviewed or retaught
 - to establish if learning is secure before new content is taught
 - to identify any pupils needing additional support
 - to identify pupils who are secure in phase 5 and ready to move on to a comprehension group
- A placement assessment is used:
 - with any pupil beginning phase 2 of Little Wandle, after securing pre-reading skills
 - with any pupil new to the school who has secure pre-reading skills, to quickly identify any gaps in their phonic knowledge and to plan and provide appropriate extra teaching
- Statutory assessment
 - Pupils in Year 1 or Year 2 may sit the Phonics Screening Check, if they are secure in phase 5 at this point.