



Reading and Phonics Curriculum Statement

King's Academy Northern Parade



Intent

At King's Academy Northern Parade we believe that our English curriculum should develop children's love of reading, writing and communication skills. We believe that all children need to develop a secure knowledge-base in Literacy, which follows a clear pathway of progression as they advance through the primary curriculum. We feel that reading is a key that unlocks children's imagination and enables them to become learners of the world. Therefore, on entering, our reception year children start their reading journey using a systematic synthetic phonics approach which can be applied across all areas of the curriculum, this continues throughout the school.

Implementation

After careful research and discussion our school has been using Essential Letters and Sounds since 2022 as the Systematic Synthetic Phonics (SSP) programme. This is a validated programme delivered by Oxford University Press. In the Early Years and Year 1 children receive an hour of phonics teaching per day. This consists of a morning session and a review and application session in the afternoon. Within the reading provision a range of individual and group phonics application activities are planned for. In the years 2-6 if children are not on track in their phonic knowledge they receive half an hour per day and intervention where needed to close phonic gaps.

Across KS1 & KS2 English and reading sessions are taught daily. To give children further reading opportunities and drive our text led curriculum all pupils engage in 'shared reading' sessions. It is a collaborative approach aimed at improving reading skills, comprehension, vocabulary, and language development. In KS2 this is known as 'destination reader'.

Throughout the week every child in the infant phase is heard read as part of a group in a guided reading group. The texts selected are linked to their reading age to enhance discussion and wider reading skills.

A drive for love of reading is a key priority for our school community. A reading spine is in place that covers a wide range of texts and genres. Year groups use these to read aloud to their classes each day and model expert reading.

The importance of phonics

Phonics gives children the key to unlocking the English alphabetic code for reading and spelling. Children's knowledge of this code - how letters or groups of letters represent the

sounds of the language - supports their reading and spelling. Using the ELS programme, children are systematically taught the phonemes (sounds) and graphemes (written letters), how to blend the sounds all through the word for reading, and how to segment the sounds in order to write words. They are taught to use their phonic skills and knowledge as their first approach to reading, but are also taught high frequency words (harder to read and spell words) which do not completely follow the phonic rules. The implementation of the 'Essential Letters and Sounds' programme will ensure that our children will be taught to read aloud accurately books that are consistent with their developing phonic knowledge.

Assessment

As part of the review section in our phonics programme we aim for all children to complete an assessment every 5-6 weeks. We use a Phonics Tracker as an assessment tool to identify progress and gaps to inform future teaching and support. This means that quick revisits can be made if necessary and adjustments in the lesson can take place almost instantly. Children in Year One undertake three mock phonic screening tests across the year to build stamina for word reading and gap identification. Once a child has completed the phonics programme they move onto a reading age assessment tool in order to become a free reader.

Reading at home

It is an expectation across the school that all children read at home for 5-10 minutes each day. All children are expected to bring a book bag to school that holds their reading record and home reading books. We have invested heavily in fully phonetically decodable reading books published by Oxford University Press which link directly to the phonemes that children are learning. New books are sent home on a Friday to ensure that children have had exposure to those sounds through high quality teaching. Each child is also provided with a banded book that is linked to their reading age; these help them to develop comprehension and narrative skills. Weekly library sessions are part of our curriculum, children are able to select books of their choice to share at home.

Reading Intervention & Support

Children who require additional support in acquiring their sounds will be given this in addition to their daily phonics lessons. Interventions are run by experienced members of staff and they use the model of recap, apply and read. We appreciate that children build upon knowledge of sounds and apply reading skills at different rates. In order to support our lowest 20% it is an expectation that teachers aim to hear each child read at least 3 times a week. At King's Academy Northern Parade we are proud of our 'reading pledge' whereby each child is heard to read individually and aim to build reading relationships with all staff across the school that act as reading role models. All staff have access to Phonics Tracker and can use this as a tool for gap analysis.