



**Ivington C of E  
Primary and  
Pre-school**

*Reaching together with the Fruit of the  
Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23)*

**Phonics and the Teaching of  
reading and writing (RWI)  
Policy**

## Approval of the Governing Body

This document is a statement of the aims, principles, and strategies for:

### **Phonics and the teaching of reading and writing (RWI) Policy**

At

**Ivington C.E. (VA) Primary and Pre-school.**

It was revised during the:

**Spring Term 2025**

It has been agreed and is supported by the teaching staff and the governing body.

We aim to review this policy during the:

**Spring Term 2028**

Or sooner if necessary.



## **Linking with our Vision – Reaching together with Love, Joy and Peace (Galatians 5:22-23)**

**To provide a caring, Christian ethos for the school, which inspires and excites a shared enthusiasm for life and learning.**

At Ivington CE Primary and Pre-school, through our strong Christian ethos and focus on nine important Christian values, we are committed to providing a deeply nourishing, spiritual, ambitious, and broad curriculum.

Our motto, 'Reaching together' underpins our belief in equality of opportunity for all, where we actively endeavour to promote understanding and appreciation of our diverse society and give each child a special place in the world where they feel valued, essential to our community and equipped with the necessary skills to make a positive contribution.

We perceive our role to be opening a 'Window on the World', through which our pupils are actively encouraged to develop respect for the beliefs and cultures which enrich their everyday lives and encourage others to do likewise.

We strive to eliminate inequality through our deep Christian ethos of respect and understanding of all groups in society, which ensures that everyone at Ivington will be treated fairly despite his or her creed, colour, disability, or gender.

More details are available in our Inclusion, Racial Equality and Equal Opportunities policies.

The health, safety, and welfare of all the people who work or learn at our school are therefore of fundamental importance. We aim to provide a safe, secure, and pleasant working environment for everyone. The governing body, along with the LA, takes responsibility for protecting the health, safety and welfare of all children and members of staff.

## **How we teach children to read**

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.

We use a programme called *Read Write Inc. Phonics* to teach our children to read and write. We make sure every child can read the last set of phonic stories before they progress to our higher-level programmes, Comprehension and Spelling. Most children complete the programme in Year 2. Year 3 and 4 children who need extra support follow this programme too; struggling readers in Year 5 and 6 children follow a similar programme.

During this time, we group children by their reading progress for one hour a day (20 to 45 minutes in Reception) and re-assess children every half-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 get children to remember what we teach them?**

It's much easier teaching one child – we can get them to repeat what they have understood in their own words, step by step. Then, if they haven't understood, we can try different words and explanations. So, in order to replicate this back and forth dialogue with a group or class, we use partner work. Children answer every question with a partner, the teacher checks what they know and only moves on when they understand. It means that all children stay focused throughout the lesson. Partner talk is fundamental to the success of our school. We use, 'Turn to your partner' in every lesson throughout the day.

## **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 until they start to read the Grey Storybooks.)

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.

RWI spelling programme is used throughout the school to Y6 to ensure that children are still using their phonic knowledge throughout KS2.

### **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, every day.

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

Every half-term, we assess all children in YR to Y4 who have not yet met end of Key Stage 1 National Curriculum expectations for reading.

We also assess Years 5 and 6 children who are at risk of not meeting end of Key Stage 2 national expectations for reading.

The Reading Leader carries out all the online 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 at risk of falling behind their peers immediately. We make sure children 'keep up not catch up' from Reception.

The slowest progress readers in both KS1 and KS2 receive daily one-to-one tutoring for 10 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.

In Year 5 and 6 some children access the Fresh Start programme.

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

After two years of implementation, it is expected that:

- Reception children will be able to read Green Storybooks by the end of the summer term.
- Year 1 children will be able to read Blue Storybooks by the end of the summer term.
- Year 2 children will have completed the Phonics programme by the end of the spring term.

We have high expectations for our children to meet the expected standard in the Phonic Screening Check, and help *all* children to be accurate and fluent readers by the time they enter Key Stage 2.

**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 smaller tutoring groups for children who need extra support.

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.

The practice sessions set the agenda for the weekly coaching and feedback schedule. Reading teachers are coached and receive face-to-face feedback and practise of any steps that need further rehearsal.

**Story and poetry time**

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. Children learn to retell the story, learn the refrains by heart and act out the stories in the role-play area. Children

learn poetry too. We've chosen wonderful, memorable poems so children can learn them by heart.

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

The children take home two books every few days: a *Read Write Inc.* 'phonics' Storybook for children to read to parents, and an additional 'Book to Share' for parents to read to them.

*Read Write Inc.* 'phonics' Storybooks.

Children are given a RWI book that they can read to a grown up at home. These books contain words and phonemes the children are very familiar with and so can access them independently. We encourage parents not to say, 'this is too easy'!

There is guidance in the storybooks to guide parents too.

'Book to Share' books.

These are books the children are interested in, but are unable to read and will need an adult to read it to them. We encourage adults to read it expressively and, once they know the story, encourage their child to join in. We show parents how to talk about the pictures – to think about how the characters might be feeling and thinking. We explain that it's a great way for their child to learn new vocabulary – that even very early storybooks contain vocabulary that we don't often use in conversations- scurry, delight, scamper.

These books are 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.



