Oakley School

Skills for Life and Independence

Reading Policy

Date written: September 2024

Date agreed and ratified by Governing Body: October 2024

Date of next review: September 2026

Appendices: 0

The Aim of this Policy

To set out a clear rationale for how reading is taught across the school and provide consistency in our approach and progression in reading skills from Phase 1 to Phase 4 in line with the Department for Education Reading Strategy.

Introduction

Reading is an essential life skill. It is important that all pupils at Oakley have access to high quality teaching of reading, opportunities for reading throughout the school day and their parents/carers are supported to provide opportunities for reading at home as well. Pupils will have access to engaging literature that is both age and stage appropriate. Pupils at Oakley will be taught systematically building on pre-reading and when ready (and appropriate) will use our Phonics Programme Rocket Phonics and Rising Stars Reading Scheme. It is important that whilst we achieve consistency across the school in our approach that we are able to adapt it to the individual needs of our pupils. This policy will set out the core standards for consistency and suggested adaptations that will be adopted across the school.

Language Development

The development of language is fundamental to pupils being able to access reading. The school works with Speech and Language Therapists to support pupils' acquisition of language and we use a Total Communication Approach across the school. Pupils' understanding and development of vocabulary is underpinned by the use of visuals and Makaton.

Pupils are provided with rich opportunities to develop language through activities such as:

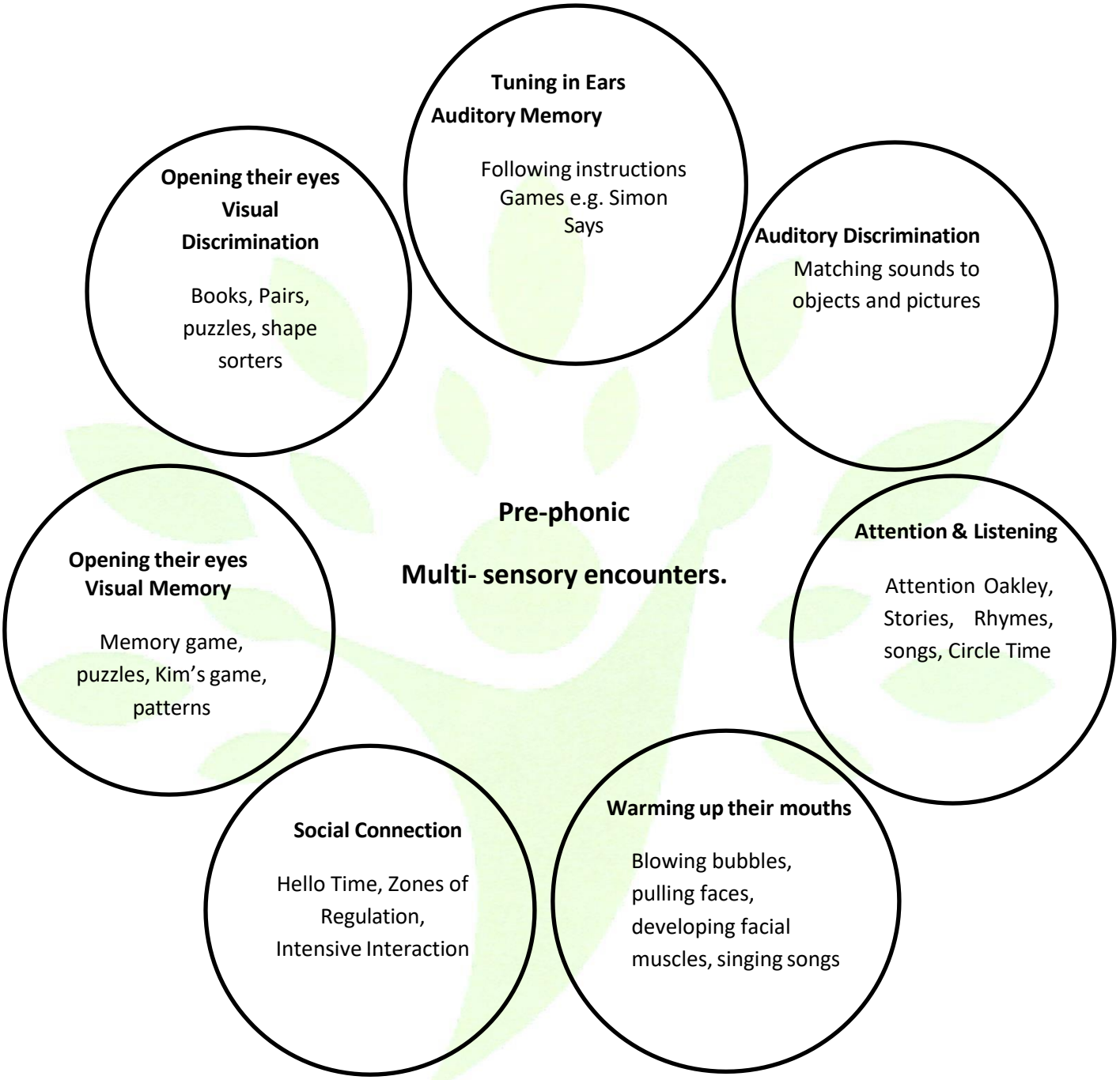
- Story time
- Singing
- Rhymes
- Circle time
- Adult supported play and free play
- Role play
- Paired/ group activities
- Wider curriculum such as Forest School or trips to the local community
- Attention Oakley
- Intensive Interaction

Pre verbal pupils are supported by the use of Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS) and staff are trained in the use of PECS on a rolling programme. When pupils are ready, they move on to communication books and Voice Output Communication Aids (VOCAs).

Teachers will help pupils to recognise and name everyday objects in different contexts e.g. a rose, a photograph of a rose, a picture of a rose and a cartoon of a rose to help pupils develop their vocabulary.

Pre-phonic Development

Pupils need to develop auditory memory, visual discrimination, a visual memory and a secure understanding of vocabulary before they can access phonics. In Nursery, Phase 1 classes and the majority of pupils in Pathway 1 classes, the pupils will have multiple, multisensory encounters. Structured play guided by teachers will help to create opportunities for pupils to engage with resources and each other to develop pre-phonic activities



Teaching of Phonics

Pupils will develop their reading skills using the Rising Stars Phonic Scheme. This scheme is a Department for Education validated systematic, synthetic phonics programme. The scheme is adapted to meet the needs of individual pupils. In order for the pupils to have access to appropriate literature the scheme is supported by the Rising Stars reading scheme. The pupils will only have access to books that correspond to their phonic level and knowledge.

Due to our pupils' needs, it is not possible to deliver the scheme through whole class input. Teachers will identify the level each pupil is working at and deliver the programme on an individual basis, working at the pace that suits each pupil in their class. In some classes it might be possible to group individuals together who are working at a similar level and pace.

All teachers will follow the set format:

- Say a sound for each letter in the alphabet
- Reading the letters
- Hear the sounds and recall the letters for spelling
- Introduce digraphs (2 letters that make 1 sound e.g. ch, sh, th, ou, ar, er)
- Read words consistent with their phonic knowledge by sounding out (blending)
- Read aloud simple sentences and books that are consistent with their phonic knowledge including some common exception words (the, was, is etc.)
- Introduce trigraphs (3 letters making one sound e.g. igh)
- Introduce split digraph (one sound with another letter in the middle e.g. a-e as in cake)

Consolidation and practice is key so at the beginning of each phonics session the teacher will recap on previous learning. New sounds will be introduced using the format "I do, we do, you do" to encourage pupils to have the sound modelled by the teacher, teacher and pupil/s say the sound together and then the pupils sounding out independently allowing for all teachers to correct any mispronunciations. The same format can be applied to reading simple sentences that match the pupils' phonetic knowledge. Once the pupils are confident with saying the sound and being able to read the letter/s that correspond to the sound the teacher will then provide opportunities for the pupils to practice spelling the sounds to make words. Again, this will be modelled by the teacher (I do), supported by the teacher (we do) and then independent spelling (you do). At each phonic stage the pupils will be introduced to common exception words e.g. said and the.

There will be 3 assessments during the academic year (end of Term 1, Term 3 and Term 5) using the Pocket Phonics Assessment Tool to keep track of progress for all students and enable teachers to identify any misconceptions.
Teachers will use a variety of multi -sensory approaches to support the teaching and learning of phonics including magnetic letters, sound buttons, games and tracking activities.

Reading for Pleasure

Pupils will also have access to a range of literature to encourage a love of literature. This may not be limited to their phonological level and teachers will provide a range of opportunities for the pupils to enjoy different literature. Teachers will have a class story that they read aloud to the class daily. Pupils will also have access to audio books, reading pens and immersive readers.

Comprehension

The Rising Stars scheme has quizzes to check pupils' understanding and comprehension. Teachers will also use questioning when reading aloud to the pupils to help pupils to understand the texts.

Agreed Terminology

At Oakley we will use simple words that pupils already know, until they are ready to learn the more complex terminology.

- Sounds (phonemes)
- Written sounds (graphemes)
- Blending the sounds to make a word
- sounding out (segmenting)
- Digraph – 2 graphemes that make 1 sound
- Trigraph – 3 graphemes that make 1 sound
- Split digraph – 2 graphemes separated by another letter to make one sound.

Quality Assurance

The Headteacher has appointed the Deputy Headteacher as the Reading Lead.

The Reading Lead will conduct an annual audit of reading using the audit from The Reading Framework.

The Extended Leadership Team will undertake regular Learning Walks to ensure there is a consistent approach to the teaching of reading.

The Assistant Headteacher responsible for progress will analyse data and present to the Extended Leadership Team and Governors the impact the teaching of phonics is having on reading progress. This will inform further CPD required.

Additional relevant statutory guidance, circulars or legislation:

The Reading Framework January 2022 Department for Education

The Common Inspection Framework

This policy links with the following policies:

Teaching Learning and Assessment