



# Stonehill Nursery School

## Early reading and Phonics Policy

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Policy reviewed by: Lucy Redhead Date: 18 July 2023

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An enjoyment of reading, sharing picture books, songs, rhymes and stories and being read to out loud is one of the most important experiences children should have in their early childhood.

Nurturing a love of reading from a young age builds the foundations for child development, giving them a head start in their learning journey. Reading is a fundamental part of language development in early childhood as it helps children to understand words and is crucial for speech development.

At Stonehill Nursery School we believe that:

“Children are powerful learners. Every child can make progress in their learning, with the right help.”

Development Matters 2021

### **Love of Reading**

Research has demonstrated that children's attitude towards reading is one of the strongest predictors of their later academic and life success (OECD, 2002).

Our curriculum is planned around Core Texts, where adults model the love and joy of sharing books. From the start of Nursery, children have lots of opportunities to engage with books that fire their imagination and interest, as well as immerse them in language they may not otherwise be exposed to. Staff model language and provide opportunities for the children to role play and immerse themselves within the story lines. Children are provided with a range of high-quality books to choose and read in their own words.

### **Communication and language** *(see Stonehill Communication and Language policy)*

We recognise the importance of Communication and Language skills for all learning and development, and that language development is vital to every child's social, emotional and intellectual development. At Stonehill, children's linguistic contributions are always valued and staff attend sensitively to what is being communicated. We value all languages and embrace the multi-lingual abilities that many of our children bring to school.

Tuning into sounds and developing Listening and Attention is at the heart of everything we do, as without these skills, children are not able to tune into their learning or retain new information. Our staff are trained in a number of approaches including Elklan and Hanen and ensure every interaction with a child is meaningful and purposeful.

Access to a school mini bus provides opportunities for the children to experience places of educational interest that they may not experience outside of the Nursery. This is to enhance vocabulary development and establish purposeful communication.

### **Nursery rhymes and action rhymes**

Singing a range of nursery rhymes and action rhymes is part of the daily routine. Children experience a rich repertoire of nursery rhymes and action rhymes that include multi-sensory experiences, such as action rhymes in which they have to add claps, knee

pats or foot stamps, or move in a particular way. They build a stock of rhymes through hearing them in different contexts.

We share nursery rhymes and action rhymes in an effective way by:

- using a wide range of nursery rhymes and action rhymes.
- repeating these often, so that children learn the words and actions for themselves.
- using actions and clapping.
- using different voices and sound effects.

### **Our approach to teaching Phonics**

Phonics at Stonehill contributes to the provision for 'Communication and Language' and 'Literacy' and sits alongside our stimulating language-rich provision. We provide a balance of child-led and adult-led experiences for all children that meet the curriculum expectations. 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.

Phonics for our youngest children is taught through daily music and language sessions, plus two group sessions a week. Our approach is underpinned by Letters and Sounds phase 1 phonics which is divided into 7 aspects of listening and attention (see Appendix A). The enhancements we make to our continuous provision are used as an opportunity to extend the children's listening and phonological skills.

In line with our federated school we have adopted the Little Wandle scheme and our children are introduced to 'Foundations for Phonics'. This approach teaches phonemic awareness of alphabet sounds and oral blending in preparation for learning grapheme-phoneme correspondence (GPC) at phase 2 in Reception.

Using planning adapted from 'Tuning into sounds' progression and planning documentation, children have timetabled phonics provision to build their focused listening and attention. Small group activities are taught in short engaging sessions which use phonic 'games' to grow these skills in a fun and age-appropriate way, with one phonemic awareness focus and one oral blending focus each day.

Every adult in our nursery has received training through Little Wandle so that all staff have the same expectations. We all use the same language, routines and resources to lower children's cognitive load and the associated prompt cards and 'How to' videos ensure teachers have a consistent approach and structure for each session.

## Phase 1 Letter and Sounds overview

Phase 1 is divided into seven aspects. These aspects are:

- General sound discrimination – environmental, General sound discrimination
- Instrumental sounds, General sound discrimination
- Body percussion,
- Rhythm and rhyme,
- Alliteration,
- Voice sounds
- Oral Blending and segmenting

	Learning Intentions	Key vocabulary	Activities/Group time	Provision	Books	
Aspect 1: Environmental sounds FOCUS FOR 2 YEAR OLDS	<p><b>To develop children's listening skills and awareness of sounds in the environment</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- To stop when they hear a familiar sound and look where it is coming from.</li> <li>- To identify what that sound is.</li> <li>- To respond to a signal e.g bells for tidy up time.</li> </ul>	Stop Listen Ears Hear Loud Quiet Noise Sound Same What can you hear?	Sound lotto games Listening walks Identifying sounds within the nursery environment. Responding to sounds and signals throughout the nursery session E.g tidy up song, bell for group time. Opportunities within provision <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Alexa</li> <li>- Puppets</li> <li>- Imaginative play – brrrm, wooo</li> <li>- Small world</li> <li>- Listening to each other</li> <li>- Instruments – listening to same sounds</li> </ul>	<p><b>Continuous</b></p> Musical instruments Alexa	Peace at last – Jill Murphy	
Aspect 2: General sounds discrimination – Instrumental sounds Focus for 2 year olds	<p><b>To experience and develop awareness of sounds made with instruments and noise makers.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- To explore different ways of making noise with instruments</li> <li>- To listen to the noise they make</li> <li>- To identify an instrument from the sound.</li> </ul>	Loud Quiet Slow Fast Speed Rhythm/beat Tap Names of instruments Low sound High sound	Music time (Every day, see timetable) -creating own music -Accompanying taped music, using instruments -Instruments hidden under cloth. Body beats Simon says games Beat baby What's in the box? Dramatizing a scenario using instruments. Snake using the rainmaker. Music instruments – book area	<p><b>Indoor</b></p> ICT- Old Mc Donald, monkey ducks and frogs. Musical instruments – in baskets both in out. Alexa – asking to turn it down. Record player Tape player Music room – Open for short periods of time	The diddle that dummed – Kes Grey	
Aspect 3: Body Percussion Focus for the 2 year olds	<p><b>To develop awareness of sounds and rhythms</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-To distinguish between sounds and to remember patterns of sound.</li> <li>- To talk about sounds we make with our bodies and what sound means</li> </ul>	Rhythm Rhyme Beat Tap Sound	Nursery rhymes – EVERYDAY. Staff singing the nursery rhymes, humming the tune, doing actions. Makaton signs Sharing song of the week with parents on facebook/parent hub Music time Changing words to associate with the children	<p><b>Indoor</b></p> Nursery Rhyme books – with instruments Alexa	<p><b>Outdoor</b></p> Stage	Walking through the jungle.  We're going on a bear hunt  Brown bear, brown bear

Aspect 4: Rhythm and Rhyme	<p><b>To experience and appreciate rhythm and rhyme and to develop awareness of rhythm and rhyme in speech.</b></p> <p>To develop their phonological awareness, so that they can</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- To increase awareness of words that rhyme and to develop knowledge about rhyme</li> <li>- Count or clap syllables in a word</li> <li>- Recognise words with the same initial sound, such as money and mother</li> <li>- To listen to rhyming stories</li> <li>- To join in rhyming games</li> <li>- To identify two words that rhyme</li> <li>- To continue a rhyming string</li> </ul>	Rhythm Rhyme Beat Tap Sound Same Ending	<p>Nursery rhymes – EVERYDAY. Staff singing the nursery rhymes, humming the tune, doing actions. Makaton signs Sharing song of the week with parents on Facebook/parent hub/Instagram Music time Changing words to associate with the children</p> <p>Group time focus</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Clapping out syllables of name</li> <li>- Rhyming games</li> </ul>	<p><b>Indoor</b> Nursery Rhyme books – with instruments Alexa <b>Outdoor</b> Stage</p>	<p><b>Rhyme</b> Oi frog series by Kes Grey Shark in the park Macca the Alpaca Room on the broom Where's my teddy? <b>Rhythm</b> Walking through the jungle Were going on a bear hunt</p>
Aspect 5: Alliteration	<p><b>To develop understanding of alliteration.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- To listen to sounds at the beginning of words and hear the differences between them</li> <li>- To explore how different sounds are articulated, and to extend understanding of alliteration.</li> </ul>	Sounds Same First Beginning Match Different Identical	<p>Large books - Finding things in a picture Emphasis on the initial sounds in words Games to find initial sounds Digging for treasure Mirror play Using names to add alliteration e.g Marvellous Muhammed</p> <p>Silly soup</p>	<p>Sound baskets – objects with the same initial sounds</p> <p>Adults using opportunities in provision to use alliteration e.g slithering snake</p>	
Aspect 6: Voice sounds	<p><b>To distinguish the difference in vocal sounds, including oral blending and segmenting.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- To distinguish between the differences in vocal sounds</li> <li>- To explore speech sounds</li> </ul>	Different Copy Sound Repeat Make Loud quiet Wiggle Body parts	<p>Blowing bubbles, feathers Mirror games Magic Microphone Metal mike Sound story time Core books – link to voice sounds</p>	<p><b>Indoors</b> Sensory room – sound buttons, sounds cards Walkie talkies Microphone App – Ipad Sound toys - <b>Outdoors</b> Telephones</p>	
Aspect 7: Oral blending and segmenting	To develop oral blending and segmenting in words.	Beginning Listen Sound Phoneme Blend Segment Breaking up Different Say it Squash it	<p>Bertha the bus Body gym Clapping syllables and sounds. Toy talk Say the sounds Talking about sounds Cross the river Eye spy Which one</p>	<p>Different fonts and texts in the environment <b>Indoors</b> Phonics area Writing area – alphabet cards Posters</p> <p><b>Outdoors</b> Writing boxes with the phoneme cards.</p>	<p>Any book with lots of CVC words in it. Adult to not read whole word, to sound it out.</p> <p>Link games with books</p>