



Early Reading Rationale

God's Love in Action

Our children are at the heart of everything we do through **Christian values and relationships**. **Living and learning together** we celebrate the uniqueness and diversity of everyone in our family. We nurture a sense of **self belief, mutual respect and belonging** through Social Emotional Learning and academic excellence. We are dedicated to building the foundations for **happy and successful life-long learning**.

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1. Curriculum Vision

At St Thomas we believe that all our children can become fluent readers and writers. This is why we teach reading through *Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised*, which is a systematic and synthetic phonics programme. We start teaching phonics in Nursery/Reception and follow the [Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised progression](#), which ensures children build on their growing knowledge of the alphabetic code, mastering phonics to read and spell as they move through school. Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised is a complete early reading programme. We recognise that high-quality phonics provision is essential for developing life-long readers.

As a result, all our children can tackle any unfamiliar words as they read. At St Thomas, 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 children because we know that speaking and listening are crucial skills for reading and writing in all subjects.

2. National Curriculum

The programmes of study for reading at key stages 1 and 2 consist of two dimensions:

- word reading
- comprehension (both listening and reading).

It is essential that teaching focuses on developing pupils' competence in both dimensions; different kinds of teaching are needed for each. Skilled word reading involves both the speedy working out of the pronunciation of unfamiliar printed words (decoding) and the speedy recognition of familiar printed words. Underpinning both is the understanding that the letters on the page represent the sounds in spoken words. This is why phonics should be emphasised in the early teaching of reading to beginners (i.e., unskilled readers) when they start school. Good comprehension draws from linguistic knowledge (of vocabulary and grammar) and on knowledge of the world.

Comprehension skills develop through pupils' experience of high-quality discussion with the teacher, as well as from reading and discussing a range of stories, poems, and non-fiction. All pupils must be encouraged to read widely across both fiction and non-fiction to develop their knowledge of themselves and the world in which they live, to establish an appreciation and love of reading, and to gain knowledge across the curriculum. Reading widely and often increases pupils' vocabulary because they encounter words they would rarely hear or use in everyday speech. Reading also feeds pupils' imagination and opens a treasure-house of wonder and joy for curious young minds. It is essential that, by the end of their primary education, all pupils can read fluently, and with confidence, in any subject in their forthcoming secondary education.

3. Intent

We want to teach every child to read!

At St Thomas, we value reading as a crucial life skill. By the time children leave us, they read confidently for meaning and regularly enjoy reading for pleasure. Our readers are equipped with the tools to tackle unfamiliar vocabulary. We encourage our children to see themselves as readers for both pleasure and purpose.

Because we believe teaching every child to read is so important, we have a Reading leader and Phonics leader who both drive the early reading programme in our school. These leaders are highly skilled at 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.

We use all of Little Wandle's programmes such as the rapid catch-up (for those children who are in Year 2 or above who cannot read at age-related expectations and needs urgent targeted support) the Foundation programme (for Nursery and Reception) and their SEND programme (for those children with SEND needs who may need a graduated approach.)

In addition to practising their independent reading with decodable books, it is vital that children experience a wide range of other quality children's books that are either read to or with them. These books play an essential role in

developing a love of reading. They can be shared or discussed, and provide a stimulus for other activities, including role play, music, art, dance, writing and storytelling. The important distinction is that these books are being shared with the children, but they are using fully phonically decodable books to practise their independent reading. Our children take home both a fully decodable book linked to their letters and sounds revised progress and a reading book for pleasure to share with adults at home.

4. Implementation

Foundations for phonics in Nursery

- 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'. 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 ensure Nursery children are well prepared to begin learning grapheme-phoneme correspondences (GPCs) and blending in Reception.

Daily phonics lessons in Reception and Year 1

- We teach phonics for 30 minutes a day. In Reception, we build from 10-minute lessons, with additional daily oral blending games, to the full-length lesson as quickly as possible. Each Friday, we review the week's teaching to help children become fluent readers.
- Children make a strong start in Reception: teaching begins in Week 2 of the Autumn term.

- We follow the [*Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised expectations of progress*](#):
 - Children in Reception are taught to read and spell words using Phase 2 and 3 GPCs, and words with adjacent consonants (Phase 4) with fluency and accuracy.
 - Children in Year 1 review Phase 3 and 4 and are taught to read and spell words using Phase 5 GPCs with fluency and accuracy.

5. Impact and assessment

Assessment is used to monitor progress and to identify any child needing additional support as soon as they need it.

- [**Assessment for learning**](#) is used:
 - daily within class to identify children needing Keep-up support.
 - weekly in the Review lesson to assess gaps, address these immediately and secure fluency of GPCs, words and spellings.
- [**Summative assessment**](#) is used:
 - every six weeks to assess progress, to identify gaps in learning that need to be addressed, to identify any children needing additional support and to plan the Keep-up support that they need.
 - by SLT and scrutinised through the *Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised* assessment tracker, to narrow attainment gaps between different groups of children and so that any additional support for teachers can be put into place.

Statutory assessment

- Children in Year 1 sit the Phonics Screening Check. Any child not passing the check re-sits it in Year 2.

7. Rapid Catch-up

Every child in Year 2 or above who cannot read at age-related expectations needs urgent targeted support so that they can access the curriculum and enjoy reading as soon as possible. Little Wandle Rapid Catch-up is a complete catch-up programme that mirrors the main phonics programme but has a faster pace. It has been created to help children catch up quickly.

Children in Year 2 and above who are not at age-related expectations for reading are assessed using the Rapid Catch-up phonics assessment and fluency assessment to check if they need to follow the Little Wandle Rapid Catch-up programme. By using these assessments, we can work out exactly what gaps these children have and put in place a robust programme to ensure they learn to read quickly. The assessments also help us to match children to the appropriate reading book.

The Rapid Catch-up fluency assessment is used to find out about children's reading accuracy and rate of reading as they become more confident readers in Phase 5 and tell us whether children have gained enough fluency and accuracy to exit the Rapid Catch-up programme. To understand the meaning of what they are reading, children need to be reading at approximately 90 words per minute.

Day 1	20-minute phonics lesson
Day 2	20-minute phonics lesson
Day 3	Review day: A quick review of the teaching from days 1 and 2 10-minute phonics lesson plus 10- to 15-minute Reading practice session. In Phases 2 and 3, you will use the blending practice books for this session.
Day 4	10- to 15-minute Reading practice session
Day 5	10- to 15-minute Reading practice session



We use 50 fully decodable books that exactly match the progression and ambition of the Rapid Catch-up programme. They have been written for children age 7+ and provide practice at the correct level for each phase as well as ensuring that children's vocabulary and language development is supported. The matching grid in the Rapid Catch-up assessment guidance on the Little Wandle website is used to match each child's secure phonic knowledge in reading to the appropriate decodable reading book for the next four weeks.



8. SEND Little Wandle

Little Wandle SEND is a complete programme that mirrors the main Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised phonics programme but with adaptations and support in place that make it possible for us to meet the needs of all our learners.

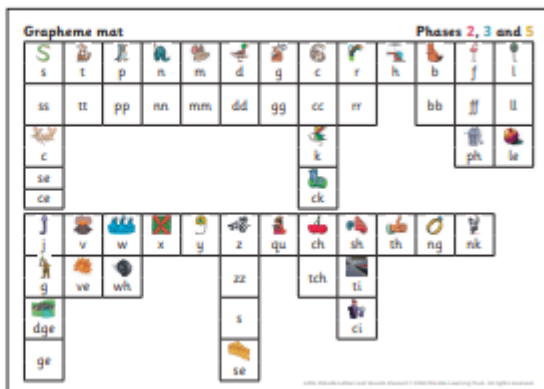
It has been created to help children learn to read using the right level of challenge for each child and using the graduated approach if needed.

We use the SEND Wandle assessments to work out which books match the children's secure phonic knowledge. The SEND assessment spreadsheet gives us the best match for each child, but we also use our professional judgement as well.

For some SEND children, the three reads may take longer. Reading practice sessions are adapted and taught to meet the needs of individuals or groups. A book can be taught over two weeks rather than one. Sensory elements, pictures and other adaptations are added to ensure children make strong connections between the book and their knowledge of the world. This enables them to read the book with the greatest level of success possible.

All our Big Cat for Little Wandle books follow the Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised progression. We use their decodable books; the blending practice books and the 7+ books that best suit our learners' needs and interests. Older SEND children sometimes prefer the content and look of the 7+ books.

Grapheme mats



Picture cards



Word cards for independent reading at Phases 3, 4 and 5.



The graduated approach to teaching children to the point of challenge is outlined in the SEND Code of Practice (2014). This section outlines how you can use the graduated approach within the Little Wandle pedagogy.

The graduated approach	
Assess	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work out which stage and GPC is appropriate for the child, using our assessments (the placement assessment or appropriate SEND assessments).
Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use the weekly grids to identify which GPCs and skills you are going to teach. Plan the steps and adjustments needed to successfully teach these. Give a clear timescale for this/decide when to review progress towards these steps.
Do	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teach and keep notes as needed for additional adjustments, successes and extra steps needed. From the activities described in the Prompt cards for teaching a new GPC, choose to start with either What's in the box? or Teach a new phoneme.
Review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure regular review occurs. Consider reteaching, where more input and practice is needed.

9. Progression through the school

Phonics allows young readers to develop their reading comprehension and decode new words as they read. With practice, this action becomes so automatic that they are able to easily understand the overall meaning of words while they are reading. We have developed a whole school approach to reading that naturally moves on throughout the early years, key stage one and into key stage two, which develops all children's fluency but continues to add to their knowledge and understanding of language and its etymology.

Much like the reading sessions in Y1 and Y2, rapid catch-up follows the same format using each reading session to build upon the foundations of comprehension.

Session 1: Decoding		Session 2: Prosody	Session 3: Comprehension
GPCs	Words		

This is then mirrored in the whole class teaching of reading in more depth from KS2.

Session 1: Decoding New meanings Etymology	Session 2: Prosody Expression and understanding of the text.	Session 3 Modelling of key comprehension skill questions.	Session 4 Revisit and review Links to other texts Analyse structure and layout	Session 5: Independent application of key comprehension skills.
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We have built this sequence of progression from previous training with the Little Sutton English Hub and using the teaching sequence that children become familiar with at the start of their reading journey with us using Little Wandle.

10. Staff CPD

All our staff are trained using the Little Wandle training materials, this includes their training videos, resources, and development tools for in school. We want all teachers and support staff to be able to deliver phonics in the same way using the Little Wandle teaching sequence and therefore ensure all staff are trained in the same way, from EYFS to KS2.

All staff receive:

- Online training from Little Wandle training and CPD sessions
- In house training from the reading and phonics leads
- Support and coaching from the phonics lead.
- Monitoring visits and feedback from the reading and phonics leads.
- 1:1 coaching on teaching reading and comprehension
- Access to Read and respond and Little Wandle resource materials.