



READING & WRITING

Termly Impact Report

Autumn Term 2023

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Context

Further to the launch of four new curriculum pathways at Wood Bank in September 2022, reading and writing now has an increased profile at whole school level and sits at the heart of the school's strategic ambition. This has resulted in a renewed energy to promote pupils' reading and writing skills which is prioritised under the Quality of Education section of the School Development Plan. The four curriculum pathways are designed to encourage purposeful teaching strategies of reading and writing in accordance with pupils' needs.

Furthermore, reading and writing has also been identified as a key whole school responsibility with designated distributed leadership to an Assistant Headteacher role. The span of focus includes:

- Implementing high quality Read Write Inc. (RWI) phonics across pathways.
- Delivering bespoke teaching where applicable such as sensory phonics.
- Encouraging early reading and writing skills.
- Monitoring and evaluation of pupils' progress.
- Undertaking regular deep dives to identify areas for improvement.
- Developing skills across class teams; Teachers and Teaching Assistants.
- Creating literacy rich environments and mobile library facilities.
- Bridging the link of reading with home.

Prior to 2022, reading and writing skills were taught through the earlier versions of curriculum pathways with a concerted effort to promote these skills through a variety of different schemes including: See & Learn, Read, Write Inc, Oxford Reading Tree. Much work was done in this period to move the school to a much stronger literacy rich environment. However, further to extensive deep dive reviews and the timely launch of the new curricula, SLT made the decision to implement a single cohesive phonics approach with Read Write Inc. With strong subject leadership knowledge combined with a SLT passion to raise expectations on reading and writing for all pupils, a new appetite for driving pupil progress in literacy skills whilst making it viable for a special needs school has been realised.

Impact across Discover Pathway

The Discover pathway is an entry level pathway for pupils who join Wood Bank in reception. The main intention with this curriculum is for pupils to discover their new school life through an assessment year following the EYFS framework.

The development of reading and writing skills is encouraged based upon each pupil's ability and understanding. This is slowly built up into the timetabling schedule between Autumn and Spring terms. For some pupils this will be through a daily structured phonics teaching scheme, for others it will be encouraged through provision and sensory strategies to build early reading and writing capabilities. Much of the teaching is through observation and baselining to best determine the curriculum destination for year one pupils, this decision point will be influenced by the individual pupil's reading, writing and communication ability levels.

There are currently two classes in the Discover pathway: Ducklings and Robins. As at the time of reporting there is a handful of pupils, 5 in total, from the two classes accessing a daily phonics session currently learning the initial 5 sounds in the Set 1 Speed Sound group. The other pupils will be monitored with an entry assessment at the end of Autumn term to kick start their phonics teaching in Spring Term One. It is anticipated that both classes will run three separate phonics groups as per pupils' needs. Table One below shows the current picture.

Table One

Discover Pathway Autumn Term 2023 Data		
	Ducklings	Robins
Number of Pupils	10	9
% accessing phonics daily	20%	33%

In addition, teachers run daily writing workout sessions at the start of the Literacy hour to encourage the development of both gross and fine motor skills. Communication skills are also encouraged to build the foundation blocks for early reading and writing skills. Approaches used to promote the skills include: Environmental Sounds, Instrumental Sounds, Body Sounds, Rhythm and Rhyme, Alliteration, Voice Sounds and Oral Blending.

Impact across Engage Pathway

The Engage pathway has been designed as a multi-sensory curriculum that places the pupil at the heart of their learning across four interconnecting key areas: Cognition & Learning, Communication & Interaction, Sensory & Physical and Social, Emotional & Mental Health (SEMH). Many pupils in this pathway are non-verbal with complex needs including profound physical and learning needs. Early reading and writing skills are encouraged through a discrete blended literacy focus which will build upon strategies such as:

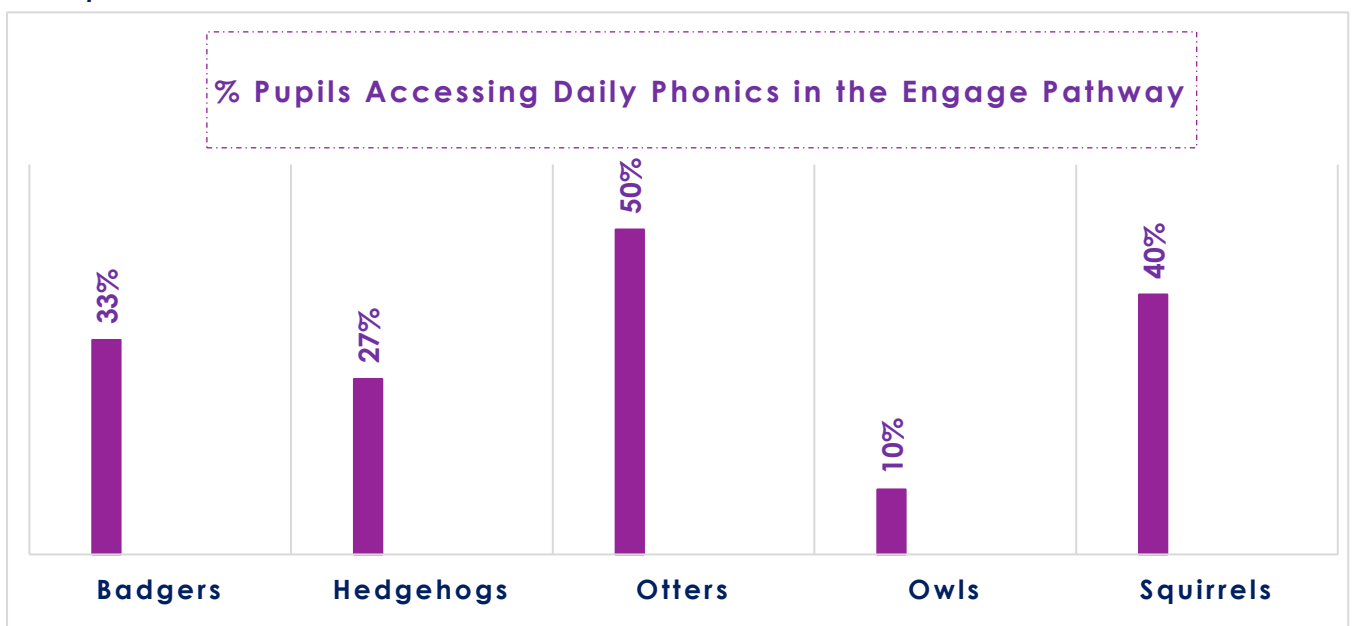
Gross Motor Skill Development: Dancing, movement activities, hand-eye co-ordination, obstacle courses, pushing and pulling.

Fine Motor Skill Development: Cutting, construction, sorting, dough disco, threading, scribbling, art and crafts.

Mark Making & Writing Activities: Water play, painting, chalking, colouring, marks with hands in sand, rice, flour, jelly, playdough.

There are currently five classes in the Engage Pathway: Badgers, Hedgehogs, Otters, Owls and Squirrels. Each have a unique pupil population with varying levels of access currently to regular phonics teaching, currently 16 pupils are accessing daily phonics as seen in Graph One below:

Graph One



Impact across Develop Pathway

The Develop pathway supports pupils by bridging play-based learning and semi formal learning to provide more time to develop and flourish. The two classes Butterflies and Stags teach across 6 subject areas including Literacy which includes a daily teaching commitment of a half hour phonics session. The 22 pupils in both classes are at variable levels of access to phonics which include:

- Nonverbal phonics with sign language
- Sensory phonics
- Standard phonics

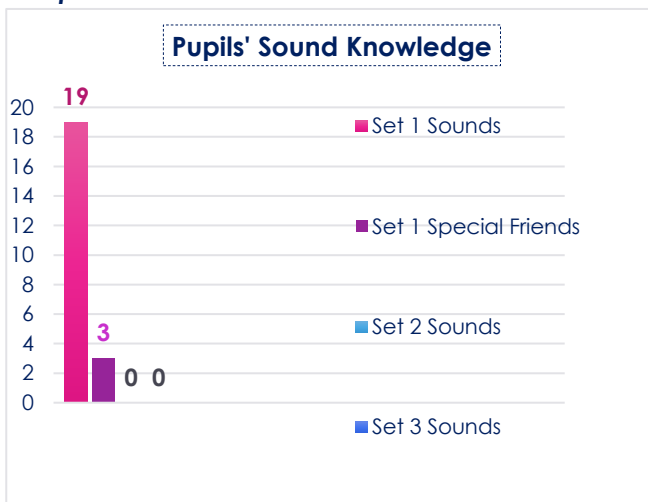
The class teams work closely with their respective teaching groups to follow the RWI scheme. An end of term assessment shows the following levels of progress as seen in Table Two below.

Table Two

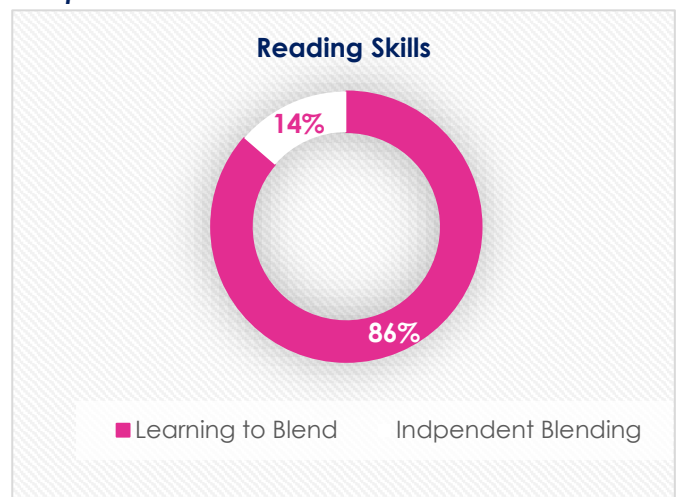
Develop Pathway Autumn Term 2023 Data										
Sound Blending	Ditty Group	Red Group	Green Group	Purple Group	Pink Group	Orange Group	Yellow Group	Blue Group	Grey Group	RWI Comprehension
19	3									

Pupil sound knowledge is revisited daily with fun re-cap elements built into the structure of daily sessions. New sounds are encouraged to build fluency and confidence. Pupils in this pathway are starting to make encouraging progress across the Read Write Inc system in terms of 'Sound Knowledge' and 'Reading Skills' as seen in Graph Two and Three respectively.

Graph Two



Graph Three



Impact across Explore Pathway

The Explore pathway is designed to encourage greater independence and interpersonal skills through a range of semi-formal subjects. Reading and writing skills are taught through all subject areas including English which comprises of comprehension, composition and VGP. In addition to daily English and Maths, phonics is taught daily for 30 minutes to boost skills and to keep pace and momentum.

There are three classes in the Explore pathway: Foxes, Kingfishers and Kestrels. The combined pupil population of 31 pupils each access a formal phonics teaching session and undergo regular half termly assessment. Pupils now have their own phonics workbooks to encourage progress and build on prior learning and skills. The Explore pathway was the first focus area for the implementation of the RWI scheme and this included in depth training and support for all staff with phonics teaching modelled throughout and regular monitoring of pupil progress.

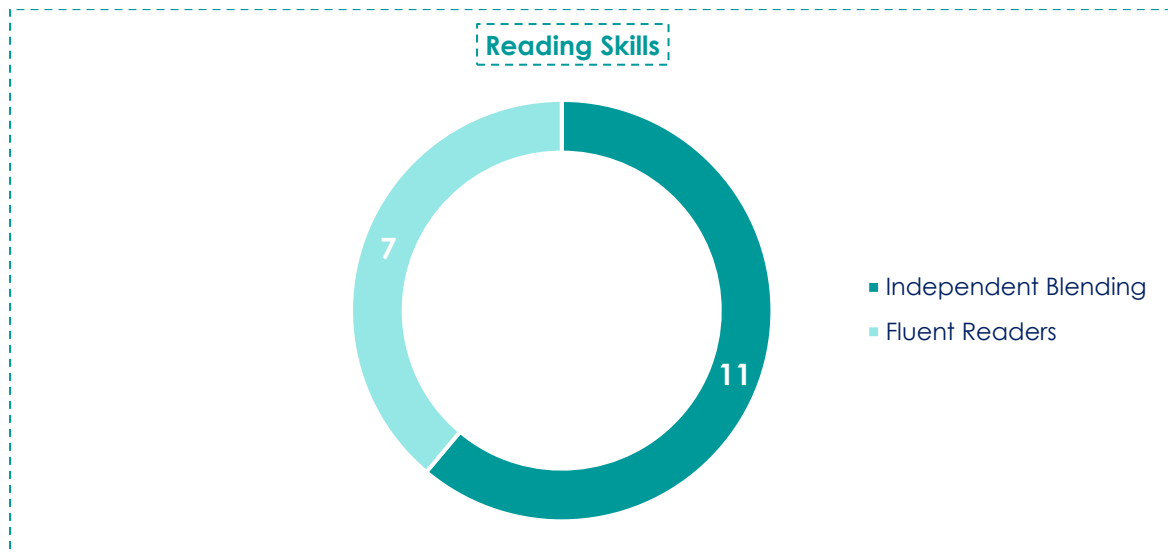
Table Three below show the reading ability levels across all three classes. We are encouraged by the reading progress in the pathway as pupils continue to demonstrate pride and enjoyment with their newly found capabilities. The 42% of children who are still at sound blending stage receive additional daily tutoring to boost skills and confidence.

Table Three

Explore Pathway Autumn Term 2023 Data										
Sound Blending	Ditty Group	Red Group	Green Group	Purple Group	Pink Group	Orange Group	Yellow Group	Blue Group	Grey Group	RWI Comprehension
13	2	3			2	5		6		

58% of pupils are either independently blending or are now classed as fluent readers as seen in Graph Four below. The 7 fluent readers include the 6 in the Blue Group and 1 pupil in the Orange Group. Wood Bank's criteria for fluent reading is pupils who can segment and blend any given word. In terms of the reading levels as seen above, these readers will be reading in the Yellow Group and above.

Graph Four



Daily tutoring is well established across the Explore pathway with 7 pupils currently working with the Tutor in regular 5 minute 'Speed Sound Booster' sessions. The focus addresses pupils' gaps from the most up to date assessment picture.

In addition, work is being undertaken to better align the phonics assessment process with the B Squared Assessment system with particular reference to reviewing the mastery of key targets around English: Reading.

A new system is being developed to promote a love of reading beyond school at home. The 'Wood Bank Reading Bear System' is being trialled in this pathway to encourage ongoing reading skills and enquiry at home with families. The scheme involves a selected pupil taking home a reading bag with the following contents:

- Reading book (for pleasure, not directly linked to the RWI phonics scheme).
- Scrapbook for notes.
- Wood Bank bear.
- 2 x hot chocolate sachets to enjoy whilst reading.

Professional Development

To date an extensive programme of professional development has been underway to build the RWI phonic skills. This programme has been designed for staff to acquire new skills and knowledge whilst increasing their confidence. The aim is to drive new behaviours across the staffing team so that the phonics knowledge is deepened and daily practice is improved. In achieving this, we anticipate higher levels of impact at pupil progress level.

Professional Development Data– Phonics Training			
	Teachers	Teaching Assistants	Specialist Staff
RWI Speed Sound Training	14	44	3
Storybook Training	3	12	
In-house Skills Development	7	22	
Phonics Coaching	5		

Although it can often be difficult to make a direct association with learning transfer from any professional development activity, we are confident that in this case, the access to high quality phonics training has impacted upon improved pupil progress in reading and writing.

Professional development has included direct training with the Ruth Miskin organisation for the Assistant Head Teacher and Teacher who lead on reading and writing. This is supplemented with a range of bespoke skills sessions and user-friendly resources to boost the staff teams' confidence and quality of teaching phonics.

To strengthen Wood Bank's evidence base, we regularly capture pupil case studies that highlight the remarkable and often inspiring journeys of pupils newfound reading capabilities.

Improvement Priorities

Further to ongoing scrutiny and leadership priorities for reading and writing at whole school level, there are a number of actions that will be taken forward during Spring Term as we continue to drive strong pupil progress and aspirations.

Re-write/develop the writing strategy so that it promotes practical activities that build early writing skills to be used as a teaching toolkit across the different pathways.

Undertake a deep dive process in the Engage pathway to explore the following:

- Adopting consistency of practice across all 5 classes.
- Create a bespoke phonics system for non-verbal pupils.
- Promote literacy blocks of teaching time timetabled accordingly.
- Set pathway expectations of daily reading & writing activities.

Review the viability of implementing the on-line assessment system in accordance with the Read, Write Inc licence purchased for 2023-2024.

Target specific groups of identified pupils as a feature of the POP process and assign interventions accordingly.

Quality assurance of the skills of staff following the INSET phonics day of training on 8 January 2024.

Write further pupil case studies that capture identified pupils' journeys to evidence holistic progress and impact to their lives.

Create and develop a 'Fast Track Tutoring Team' as an integral part of the ongoing implementation of high-quality reading and writing teaching and assessment.

Target an identified 20% of the Develop pathway to boost sound blending skills.

Increase parental engagement and a general pleasure of reading through the wider launch of the 'Wood Bank Reading Bear' system.