

Berkeley Primary School

Headteacher:
Deputy Headteacher:

Anna Cvijetic BEd (Hons)
Wendy Howlett BA (Hons)

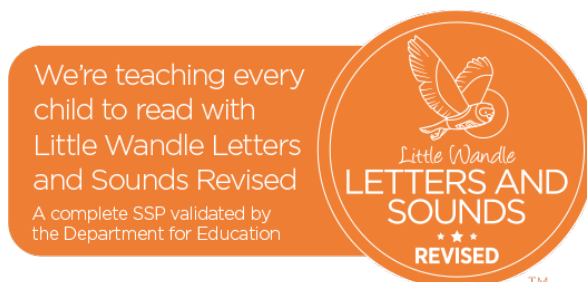
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30th January 2025

Dear Parents and Carers,



We are writing to inform you about our **new phonics and early reading program that we will introduce after February half term** and how you can support it at home. We are very excited about this change for our school to ensure our children's reading becomes even better than it currently is. In order to maximise the opportunities for all our EYFS and Year 1 children we have purchased beautiful new resources for teaching phonics, received training for the whole school staff and purchased hundreds of brand new books!

Phonics Programme

Our school has chosen to move over to **Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised** as our systematic synthetic phonics (SSP) programme to teach early reading and spelling. Little Wandle is a complete teaching programme, which is fully resourced and sets expectations of progression that are aspirational yet achievable.

We will work through the entire Little Wandle Programme until your child can successfully use their phonic knowledge and blending skills to read fluently. Children need to learn to read as quickly as reasonably possible, so they can move from learning to read, to reading to learn, giving them access to the treasure house of reading.

What's happening in school?

Phonics in Nursery

In our Nursery we prepare our children by teaching them the foundations of phonics. We use engaging games to teach oral blending and phonemic awareness. We support language development and a love of books through: sharing high-quality stories and poems, learning a range of nursery rhymes and action rhymes, activities that develop focused listening and attention and pay attention to high-quality language with children.

Phonics in Reception, Year 1 and beyond

As usual, children in Reception and Year 1 will continue to have daily phonics lessons. They will be taught 4 new grapheme phoneme correspondences (GPCs) per week, plus a review lesson on a Friday. Knowing a GPC means being able to match a phoneme (sound) to a grapheme (written representation) and vice versa.

Every Child • Every Chance • Every Day

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The children will also learn a series of 'tricky words'. Tricky words are those words which cannot be sounded out using their phonemes. We will build into the timetable some weeks for the children to consolidate what has been taught so far. We assess your child every six weeks to check progress. Any child who needs extra support will have keep-up sessions planned for them.

Some Year 2 children and Key Stage 2 children need extra support on their phonics journey and will be using the Little Wandle resources, including Little Wandle Rapid.

Reading practice

Children in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 will also take part in Reading Practice Sessions. We will be using our gorgeous brand new books published by HarperCollins for Little Wandle. In the Reading Practice sessions throughout the week, we work on decoding (sounding out the words), prosody (reading with expression) and then look at comprehension (understanding what the book is about). We will be developing reading fluency. The more our children see the words and practice, the more they begin to read them automatically without having to sound them out.

The book will then be sent home the following week for you to share and continue this practice. By then, the children should be reading 95% of the book fluently with ease. The children will also continue to bring home a 'reading for pleasure' book for you to read and share with your child.

Supporting phonics at home

We will be sending a phonics meeting date for parents and further information about how you can support your child's reading journey shortly – it is really important you work with us on this as it is essential we have your help.

The Little Wandle website is amazing, and you will be able to watch videos made for parents so you are saying the right sounds – forming and pronouncing them correctly. Take a look at; <https://www.littlewandlelettersandsounds.org.uk/resources/for-parents/>

We are very excited about this lovely new scheme and look forward to you joining us in helping your children read.

Best wishes

Anna Cvijetic
Headteacher

Jayne Elsagood
Phonics Leader

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