



KS1 Reading Update: Little Wandle Letters and Sounds

16th September 2022

Dear Parents and Carers,

Welcome back! We wanted to take this opportunity to update you on the teaching of reading at Hiltingbury Infant School. You may remember from communications in May that we have adopted the Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised phonics programme as a school. Your children all experienced teaching and learning from the scheme throughout the spring and summer term and this will continue until they secure all the knowledge and skills to meet the expectations of the programme. This letter will provide an update and explain how we will continue to teach reading at Hiltingbury.

Online Collins 'Big Cat' Books

As you are aware, we trialled the use of e-books throughout the previous term. We are fully aware of the limitations and barriers this can cause. We would like to assure you that we understand it is not feasible to buy new technology for children to read books on. We also recognise that using technology when reading; often at bedtime is not something we would promote. However, we would like to assure you that any reading you do at home with your child is fantastic. It is our role to teach your child to read. Therefore, we need to ensure we have enough decodable books in school to ensure children access three high quality reading practice sessions each week with their teacher. Please do not worry if your child is not accessing the decodable books at home. As long as you are finding opportunities to share books together, read together and discuss vocabulary, your child will make progress. We are extremely lucky to have such a supportive parental community and would like to thank you for your support.

How we teach reading at Hiltingbury

To be able to read, children need to be taught an efficient strategy to decode words. That strategy is phonics. Phonic decoding skills must be practised until children become automatic and fluent reading is established.

Little Wandle Letters and Sounds is a complete systematic synthetic phonics programme (SSP) that we adopt at our school. We prioritise the teaching of phonics and teach it daily within Year 1 and 2. It is vitally important that children review and revisit Grapheme Phoneme Correspondences (GPCs) and words; daily, weekly and across terms and years, in order to move this knowledge into the children's long term memory. Our consistent approach to phonics ensures that children are given the best possible foundations for reading, writing and language skills.

Children need to learn to read as quickly and reasonably as possible, so that they can move from learning to read, to reading to learn, giving them access to the treasure house of reading. Our expectations of progression are aspirational yet achievable; children who are not keeping up with their peers are given additional practise immediately through daily keep-up sessions.

Children enjoy a range of multi-sensory resources to support their phonics learning. On-going assessment of children's progress takes place and the books children read in school are fully decodable and matched to children's secure phonics knowledge. These books can also be accessed online for children to read at home. As well as the fully decodable books which are accessed online, children will also bring home a non-decodable book for sharing, that can be either read to or with them. These books play an essential role in developing a love of reading; an 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.

Reading Practice Book – Fully Decodable – Online Collins 'Big Cat' Books

This book has been carefully matched to your child's secure phonic knowledge and they will be able to read this independently.

This will enable them to use the GPC's they know to decode the words and, with practise, develop fluency when reading. Each week your child will have a new book assigned to them which you can access at home online (login details to follow). This book will be familiar to your child because throughout the week; they will practise reading this book with their teacher three times. If your child is reading it with little help, please do not worry that it is too easy; your child needs to develop fluency and confidence in reading. We recognise that accessing a text online with technology is not the same as picking up a physical book. However, sadly we are unable to send the books home due to the cost of replacing any that are lost or damaged. It is crucial that teachers have full sets of books in school so that the children are able to access three high quality reading practice lessons with their teacher each week.

A Sharing Book and Library Book – Non-Decodable

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. These books are for you and your child to share and enjoy together; reading for pleasure.

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 (in school and online at home if possible).

Support for Parents:

- We will be adding some useful resources to our website. These will also be shared within curriculum updates if relevant to your child's learning.
- Please visit: <https://www.littlewandlelettersandsounds.org.uk/resources/for-parents/> to find many resources to help you support your child with saying their sounds and writing their letters. You will also find some useful videos so you can see how your child is taught at school and feel confident about supporting their reading at home.
- We have also attached a glossary of Little Wandle Letters and Sounds terminology to help explain some of the terms we have used within this letter alongside other terminology you will hear your child using throughout the year.

Finally, we just want to say a massive thank you in advance for all your support in your child's reading development. Reading and discussing books has a positive impact on your child's ability to:

- Understand words and sentences
- Use a wide range of vocabulary
- Develop listening and comprehension skills.

Studies show that it's the enjoyment and chat that matters! The more you discuss the book and things that interest your child, the more impact it has. Remember; the most important thing is that you and your child have fun and develop a love of reading! If you do have any further questions then please do chat to your child's class teacher or myself.

Thank you as always, for your support

Laura Flood

English Lead