



Phonics Policy

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Regional Director		Principal			Vice Principal		
Head of Foundation Stage		Head of Primary			Head of Secondary		

Phonics Policy Newlands School Dubai

Rational

At Newlands School Dubai, we believe that every child has the right to become a confident, fluent reader. We recognise that strong phonics teaching is the foundation for early reading, spelling, and writing success. To achieve this, we implement the Read Write Inc. (RWI) phonics programme from FS1 through Year 3.

Our approach ensures that:

- Phonics is taught systematically and consistently across all year groups.
- Children are assessed regularly and placed in appropriate phonics groups that match their ability.
- Teachers receive continuous professional development to deliver high-quality phonics lessons.
- Reading fluency and comprehension are supported through a structured progression model.

Curriculum Progression

FS1 (Foundation Stage 1)

- Phonics begins in Term 1B.
- Children are taught one sound per week from Set 1.
- Lessons are standalone (not streamed).
- Focus is on developing:
 - Listening and attention skills.
 - Early sound recognition.
 - Oral blending and segmenting through games and activities.
- No formal screening takes place, but teachers keep observational notes and records.

FS2 (Foundation Stage 2)

- Formal phonics teaching begins in Term 1B.
- A baseline phonics screening is conducted in September.
- Based on results, children are streamed into groups according to ability.
- Groups are fluid: children can move up or down depending on progress.

- Children are taught 1–2 sounds per week, depending on:
 - Baseline data.
 - Ongoing formative assessments (exit tickets).
- Daily phonics lessons take place first thing in the morning.
- Exit tickets (mini-assessments) are completed at the end of each session to check understanding and inform next steps.

Year 1

- A baseline phonics screening is conducted in September.
- Based on results, children are streamed into groups according to ability.
- Groups are fluid: children can move up or down depending on progress.
- Children continue RWI in streamed groups.
- Daily phonics lessons consolidate Set 1 and 2, progressing into Set 3 sounds.
- Fluency in blending and segmenting is strengthened.
- Exit tickets (mini assessments) and termly assessments are conducted to check understanding and inform next steps.
- The Year 1 Phonics Screening Check is prepared for and internally administered in line with UK standards.
- End of Year 1 goal: Children should be able to read, and spell using all 40+ graphemes and apply these in simple sentences.

Year 2

- A baseline phonics screening is conducted in September.
- Based on results, children are streamed into groups according to ability.
- Groups are fluid: children can move up or down depending on progress.
- Phonics continues for children who require additional support. Phonics lessons take place twice a week.
- Children continue RWI in streamed groups.
- Fluency in blending and segmenting is strengthened.
- Confident readers transition from RWI to Guided Reading and Comprehension sessions.
- Exit tickets (mini assessments) and termly assessments are conducted to check understanding and inform next steps.
- End of Year 2 goal: Most children should be fluent in all RWI sounds, reading age-appropriate texts with increasing comprehension and fluency.

Year 3

- A baseline phonics screening is conducted in September.
- Based on results, children are streamed into groups according to ability.
- Groups are fluid: children can move up or down depending on progress.
- Phonics continues for children who require additional support. Phonics lessons take place once a week.
- The majority of students move into comprehension-based guided reading lessons, consolidating phonics knowledge and spelling patterns.
- Exit tickets (mini assessments) and termly assessments are conducted to check understanding and inform next steps.
- End of Year 3 goal: All children are fluent readers, able to decode unfamiliar words and demonstrate age-appropriate comprehension skills.

Phonics progression table

Year Group	RWI Focus	Assessment Points	Expected Outcomes
FS1	Set 1 (1 sound/week), Oral blending, Listening skills	Observational notes	Recognise some Set 1 sounds, Begin oral blending
FS2	Baseline screening, 1-2 sounds/week, Streaming begins, Set 1-2 focus	Baseline Sept screening, Exit tickets daily, End-term assessments	Read simple words using Set 1/2, Begin short decodable books
Year 1	Daily phonics, Set 1-3 consolidation, Year 1 Phonics Screening	Exit tickets daily, Mini-assessments, End-term assessments, Year 1 Phonics Check	Secure Set 1-3, Read RWI books fluently, Pass screening check
Year 2	Intervention for support, Fluent readers move to Guided Reading, Set 3 mastery	End-term assessments, Progress meetings	Fluent reading & spelling, Transition to comprehension
Year 3	Targeted phonics only if needed, Guided Reading focus, Comprehension skills	Ongoing assessments, Reading comprehension focus	Fluent, confident readers, Decode unfamiliar words, Age-appropriate comprehension

Teaching and Learning – Read Write Inc. Approach

- Lesson Structure:
 - Speed sound review.
 - Teaching new sound.
 - Blending and segmenting practice.
 - Reading decodable words and sentences.
 - Exit ticket activity for assessment.
- Materials Used:
 - RWI Speed Sound Cards.
 - Fred the Frog (blending puppet).
 - RWI decodable books.
 - Magnetic letters/whiteboards for spelling practice.
- Scaffolding & Differentiation:
 - Small, focused groups.
 - Use of visual aids, repetition, and modelling.
 - Additional intervention sessions for struggling learners.
 - Challenge tasks for advanced readers.

Assessment and Tracking

- Baseline Assessment:
 - FS2 - Year 3 children screened in September using RWI Assessment 1.
- Formative Assessment:
 - Daily exit tickets for FS2–Y3.
 - Teacher observations and pupil responses.
- Summative Assessment:
 - End-of-term RWI Assessments (three per year).
 - Results recorded in the Phonics Tracker.
 - Progress shared in termly Progress Meetings, with individual next steps identified.
- Expected Progress:
 - Children not making the expected progress receive targeted intervention.

- Importance of Screening:

Screening ensures:

- Early identification of gaps in knowledge.
- Correct group placement.
- Personalised teaching to accelerate progress.
- Tracking of long-term impact on reading and writing.

Professional Development

- Teachers receive ongoing CPD throughout the year on:
 - Delivering high-quality phonics lessons.
 - Accurate assessment of children's progress.
 - Effective scaffolding and intervention strategies.
- CPD is delivered through:
 - Termwise training sessions.
 - Peer observations.
 - Coaching and mentoring from class teachers and year group leaders.

Outcomes – What we aim to achieve

By following the RWI phonics programme at Newlands School Dubai, we aim for:

- End of FS1: Children recognise and begin to recall some Set 1 sounds, developing blending skills orally.
- End of FS2: Children read simple words using Set 1 and Set 2 sounds and begin to read short decodable books independently.
- End of Year 1: Children secure Set 1, 2, and 3 sounds, blend accurately, and read age-appropriate RWI books fluently. Most children pass the Year 1 phonics screening check.
- End of Year 2: Children read fluently and with expression, apply phonics to spelling, and transition towards comprehension-based reading.
- End of Year 3: Children are confident, fluent readers who can decode unfamiliar words, read age-appropriate texts, and demonstrate comprehension in line with curriculum expectations.

Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed annually by the Head of Early years, ensuring it continues to meet the needs of students and aligns with best practice in phonics teaching.