

Phonics Policy

Context:

“Those who do not master reading at school go on to struggle with essential tasks of life, so children mastering the art of reading during their school years is vital.” (Bilton, 2021)

Al-Islamia Institute for Education is a school that welcomes pupils of all demographics and backgrounds. Our current context is a cohort made up of over 80% of pupils speaking a non-English language in the home, with most the total cohort working within Band A – C of the Babcock Proficiency Assessment. 7.6% of the children have an IEP, an identified SEND need and/or an EHC Plan.

We have high mobility across the school, with at least one child leaving from each year group, but the space is quickly taken by children on our ever-growing waiting list. Exit interviews suggest that mobility is due to:

- School fee costs
- Distance from sibling schooling/home
- Ensuring space allocation in preferred secondary settings by applying and enrolling to partner/feeder schools
- Decision to home-school/remove from institutionalised education system

Intent

At Al-Islamia, reading is central to our curriculum, and our children’s access to learning and exploring the world around them. It is of vital importance that children are scaffolded and provided with the necessary knowledge and skills to be able to read fluently and thereby comprehend age-appropriate meaning and content with ease.

Phonics has been identified as the most successful strategy that children can draw on to develop early reading skills. At Al-Islamia we are determined that this strategy is implemented and engaged with effectively and consistently throughout our Early Years’ provision and at Key Stage 1, and in fact, drawn on to support fluency and word blending later in the primary phase as well.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the English Reading Policy.

The Phonics curriculum that we deliver is the *Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised*, a DfE-approved synthetic phonics programme. The programme delivered in Year 1 is a progression from the teaching that is delivered in our EYFS phase, per the [Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised programme](#).

All children in Year 1 will be completing the programme as planned, which ensures consolidation of previously learned letters and sounds alongside high-quality teaching of new letters and sounds.

Children in Year 2 who were unable to meet the threshold in the Phonics Screening test the previous July will work through a paced review of Phase 3, 4 and 5 from September to December.

We would like our children to meet appropriately measured expectations by the end of the academic year, namely:

Year 1 – A secure understanding and foundation of Phonics to Phase 5 by July, and ready and able to complete a Phonics Screening (if implemented by DfE)

Year 2 – Completion of the Year 2 No Nonsense Spelling scheme, which consolidates learning from Phase 5 and implements statutory spelling rules for Key Stage 1. Children who did not pass the Screening test in Year 1 will be reassessed in Year 2.

By implementing the No Nonsense scheme in Year 2 within a Phonics environment, we hope to introduce and acclimatise the children to exploring words as writers as well as readers in preparation for Key Stage 2.

Phonics and words are alive at Al-Islamia. We enrich children's vocabulary with direct teaching linked to sounds being taught; introduction to High Frequency Words and exploration of phase-aligned tricky words. We also read constantly to our children and are currently developing Year 1's basic vocabulary by linking learning to familiar stories. In addition, we collect words and discuss how they apply and why we like/dislike them. Children are also rewarded for using Tricky Words (Year 1) and High Frequency Words (Year 2) within their writing, to support children's understanding and implementation of language use from the very beginning.

Implementation

We have selected the *Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised* scheme to deliver our phonics strategy. The government validation of this scheme; our link with Little Sutton English Hub (a co-producer of the programme); and the high-quality resources, online support and CPD made this programme the obvious choice for us.

Phonics and is delivered daily, during 30-minute sessions. Year 1, following a 4-week review of Phase 3 and 4 letters and sounds, will move rapidly through Phase 5 and be prepared to review and consolidate their knowledge by the summer term in preparation for their Phonics Screening. The regular delivery of the No Nonsense Spelling Scheme in Year 2 will support the delivery and incorporation of Phase 5 (c) and (d) throughout this academic year. During the summer term, some children in Year 2 will also receive some instruction in relation to alien words and the screening procedure in preparation for retaking the Phonics Screening test.

Phonics lessons will be delivered with the following structure:

- Review of previously taught letters and sounds:
 - o Identification of sounds
 - o Application in related words
- Review of previously taught tricky word/s
- Teaching of new letter/sound:
 - o Oral pronunciation
 - o Recognition of grapheme
 - o Oral blending of words with new sound
 - o Reading practice with new sound
- Teaching of new tricky word:
 - o Identification of 'tricky' part
- Practice writing new graphemes/tricky word:
 - o Segmenting new word
 - o Teacher models writing of new word
 - o Children write new word
 - o Checking spelling
 - o Repeat with tricky word
- Every Friday, the content from Monday to Thursday is reviewed to consolidate all the learning.

We promote **IKHLAS**:

Inspiration – Knowledge – Healthy Living – Leadership – Aspiration – Spirituality

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In addition, the environment is supportive of children's progress in reading fluency and accuracy as follows:

- Displays and words around the classroom include decodable words as much as possible, and 'sight'/key words
- Use and displaying of phonics-related vocabulary
- Table mats with tricky words for reference
- A wall frieze with letters and sounds from Phase 2 and 3
- A 'Grow the Code' space for children to refer to for alternative graphemes and phonemes – this is a progressive Learning Wall that reflects what children have been taught.

CPD: Teachers across the school will be given training in phonics, via the *Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised* platform. New staff members will be directed to the CPD modules, for which a report will be generated to identify gaps in knowledge. For returning members of staff, staff will engage with the webinars to reactivate/review learning.

In addition, KS1 staff, and staff reading with children in KS1, will have regular meetings to review practical phonics knowledge and application, such as, but not limited to, reviewing sounds; practising pronunciations; awareness of phase content; discussion regarding aspects of teaching plans and supporting reading fluency. These meetings will take place at least once per half term, following the phonics assessment week, to ensure that information can be shared efficiently. Meetings will be scheduled more frequently as needed, such as to discuss anomalous data or to review the progress of focus children.

Children in Year 1 who have not received any phonics teaching of Phase 1 to 4 will participate in the daily phonics sessions. They will then learn new sounds (2-3 per day), per the teaching strategies outlined above, within a 1:1 or small group session. At the end of subsequent maths and writing lessons, for up to 5 minutes, the TA will review prior and new sounds to consolidate and secure learning and recall. Cards with new sounds and words will be sent home for regular practice. This will continue until children 'catch-up' with their cohort.

Keep-up is ensured with daily intervention (Phonics Keep-Up) sessions. These are delivered to children who need additional support, by a trained adult. The Keep-Up sessions are paced, focus on consolidation of recognising and applying new sounds in short bursts.

Children in KS2 who are able to communicate in English but are struggling with reading or writing due to gaps in English speaking and reading skills (e.g., EAL) will be assessed to identify gaps, and then work with a Teaching Assistant to complete a rapid Phonics Intervention programme, which is focused on addressing specific reading/writing gaps, and follows the *Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Rapid Catch-Up* programme. It is delivered at pace, with 10-minutes session five times a week.

Impact

Children will develop secure reading fluency skills as they participate and engage with phonics lessons. This will be evident through engagement during phonics activities and via reading sessions.

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

Formative Assessment 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.

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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 and Year 2 will sit Phonics Screening tests in July each year. Any child who does not pass this test will receive intervention as outlined above, and resit in Year 2.

Ongoing Assessment for Keep-Up:

Children in Year 2s to 6 are assessed through their teacher's ongoing formative assessment as well as through the half-termly *Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised* summative assessments.

The rapid delivery and constant review of phonics concepts, and the discrete teaching of reading and writing skills at sentence and word level should be reflected in the ever-increasing confidence and stamina with which the children compose and engage with texts.

The feedback from observations, meetings, conversations, monitoring and evaluation will inform the content of Phonics and Reading meetings over the course of the year.

Teachers will become more adept and confident with using the language associated with phonics, between themselves and when directing students. We expect terms such as 'graphemes', 'digraphs' and 'phonemes' to be used with children during reading and spelling activities to link current learning to prior skills more intrinsically.