



The teaching of Reading & Phonics at Doubletrees

The teaching of both reading and phonics are a priority for our school and are skills which are inextricably linked. These skills are fundamental for our learners, allowing them to engage and interact with the world and others with increasing purpose, understanding and independence. Below is an outline of the three learning pathways within our school and how the acquisition of these skills is undertaken and progressed.



Learning to Learn—pre-formal pathway

Prerequisites to Phonics, Sensory Phonics

Why?

We intend to teach all learners on the EYFS and Learning to Learn pathway pre-reading skills (prerequisites to phonics) in terms of **auditory** and **visual perception** and **attention**, **speech awareness** and development, **awareness of meaning** and **book** and **screen skills**. This includes access to sensory phonics through our 'Early Listening and attention scheme of work'

How?

Communication takes place all the time and is never separated from other key areas of learning. It underpins all areas of learning. Therefore we implement the teaching approach most suited to the needs of our youngest EYFS learners and those who are working within Learning to learn pathways, which must be interactive, child centred and adapted to take account of their impairments.

Three basic principles:

Interactive – Our L2L and youngest pupils learn through interaction with other people and through active experimentation with objects. This learning style does not benefit from attempts to direct it towards specific goals. A young child or adolescent with multiple learning needs cannot take instruction from others until he is aware of what he, himself, is capable of doing. Interaction, of course, implies that we must respond to whatever the child offers us, just as much as we expect him to respond to us.

Child centred – We believe that in order to help children to make sense of the often confusing world around them, we must first attempt to enter their world and to see things from their point of view. In other words we must try to "make sense of their world". This immediately shifts the burden of responsibility on to the adult and we stress the importance of the adult role in observing, reflecting and responding to the activities of the child '**in the moment**'.

Adapted – pupils with any impairment will have different ways of understanding their surroundings from a typical developing child. Our adaptations and our methods reflect this. The adaptations include ensuring that the whole environment – the physical surroundings, the people in that environment and the language they use – are always as accessible as possible from the children's point of view. We consider the significance of the multi-sensory experiences available to each child.

What will you see?

An environment where **communication and language form the platform upon which literacy is built**. Here **Total communication** is at its earliest stage of development and literacy is displayed

Bridging to Learn—Semi-formal learning pathway.

Early phonics and introduction to reading and the written word

Why?

Pupils who follow the Bridging to Learn pathway have both immersive and discrete access to phonics. This pathway builds upon the skills acquired from the pre-formal pathway experienced in their Early Years experience. The focus here will be sound discrimination, understanding pattern, oral motor skills and continuing to develop a pupil's readiness to learn and attend. As the learners progress through the school an additional focus of social sight and functional vocabulary is introduced to enable learners to develop their life long independence skills.

How?

We will continue to implement this using an interactive, child centred and adapted approach, used by the EYFS/L2L pathway, whilst introducing more discrete phonics sessions that introduce learners to the idea that writing has meaning, links to sounds and encourage them to develop their understanding and awareness of this.

Communication remains a central part of this and the use of the environment is key in supporting .

Learners on this pathway will access Letters and sounds phase 1 and early phase 2 in discrete phonics sessions, alongside a continuation of an immersive, total communication approach.

Attention to different signs/symbols with developing understanding of meaning is an early focus of reading Learners on this pathway will follow the pre-reading stages, as outlined below:

- ↓ Matching object to object
- ↓ Matching object to picture
- ↓ Matching picture to picture (with written word underneath)
- ↓ Matching picture to symbol (with written word underneath)
- ↓ Matching symbol to symbol (with written word underneath)
- ↓ Matching symbol to written word
- ↓ Matching written word to written word.

As learners progress on their journey though our school, and enter the secondary phase of learning, the focus shift from discrete phonics linked to letter sounds and towards social sight and functional vocabulary, encouraging future independent life skills.

A personalised learning approach is fundamental to the ethos of our school, and adaptations continue to be made to support individuals with sensory

Ready to Learn—Formal learning pathway.

The structured teaching of reading, phonics and writing skills.

Why?

Our intent is for pupils who are able to access the national curriculum to follow the Ready to learn pathway and therefore undertake more structured teaching, enabling them to become as independent readers and writers as they are able. The focus here will be the development of a range of decoding strategies, which includes phonics, an understanding of the written word, a breadth of experiences of different types of text and their purposes and structure The purpose is to prepare our learners to access the written word in the wider world to foster their independence skills.

How?

Both phonics and reading will be formally taught as part of an hour long daily English lesson. As long as learners continue to make progress within the structured teaching of phonics they will continue to access discrete teaching of this throughout their school life, to enable them to access the written word to support lifelong independence. For learners who have not progressed beyond the early elements of stage 2 of Letters and Sounds by the end of Key stage 2, they will progress towards learning more functional and social sight vocabulary, rather than continue with discrete phonic learning. All learners on phase 2 will move to this pathway at the end of Key stage 3, in line with the Post 14 offer.

What will you see?

Teaching the skill of reading, using phonics as a strategy.

(Links to strand of reading offer – Managing and using information, functional application of skills)

The teaching of phonics will be based on an assessment, which determines which phase of phonics each learner is on. Embedding and rehearsing the phonics skills and sounds will be supported by opportunities for the learner to apply these skills in a reading book matched their phonics level. We are predominantly using the Big Cat Collins scheme. This is facilitated by our reading scheme which is phonic based. This may be supplemented by other approaches to reading, such a whole word recognition, comprehension and use of contextual information and will be guided by an adapted approach, based on learners' individual needs. These two elements should be linked together as part of a discrete session within English lessons and can be individual or small group in

through reflexive, reactive and proactive levels of communication. **We do not formally teach phonics** - every part of the school day involves communication, both, receptive and expressive. Learning focuses on shared experiences to encourage understanding of language (both verbal and non-verbal) embedded in meaningful experiences throughout daily activities. **In the moment teaching** enables us to look at the pupil in front of us, and allow them to lead us towards their **next steps**.

Some examples you will see are:

- Intensive interaction
- Shared attention
- Visual Tracking
- Story buckets
- Calls and Response
- Themed rhymes and music
- Use of AAC
- Sensory stories
- Auditory cues
- Sound play

L2L reading

For L2L learners reading is the opportunity to gain meaning from the world around them. This can be through sharing experiences together, developing personal narratives through the exploration of a variety of stimuli or engaging in interactions with others. Learners in the L2L pathway will require regular repetition and opportunities to consolidate and generalise their reading skills across different contexts, places, topics and with a variety of people.

L2L reading focuses on 4 areas -

- Input: taking in information using our senses
- Integration: understanding/processing what we have experienced
- Memory: retaining the information we have gathered
- Output: using or sharing what we have discovered

Love of stories:

A story is anything that provokes meaning through memory and/or experience. Sharing stories is a tradition that makes our lives richer and brings us together as a community. L2L learners share stories in a way that is meaningful to them and that offers a multitude of new and exciting experiences. There is a focus on engagement with language through, but not limited to, interactive, sensory and/or massage stories. These stories contain high levels of repetition, rhythm and rhyme. They use personalised, high energy and multi-sensory approaches to provide opportunities for moments of awe and wonder, taking influence from a wide range of practitioners including Keith Park, Nicola Grove and Joanna Grace.

What will the impact of this be?

The learners will demonstrate enjoyment and engagement through the exploration of language and objects, relating to stories. There will be independent and guided opportunities to develop the 5 areas of engagement, as described in the Engagement Model (exploration, anticipation, realisation, persistence and initiation.) This will be tracked through their IEP and EHCP targets.

impairments or those with no or limited verbal communication.

What will you see?

A total communication environment where visuals support understanding and give meaning. An increasing focus on interaction with the environment around them. Learners are encouraged to develop their use and awareness of sounds, linked to graphic shapes that are discrete and identifiable. They are encouraged to interact with each other and adults, verbally or through the use of signs and symbols with increased breadth and understanding. You will see the beginning of structured learning opportunities in discrete phonics sessions of 15 minutes. You will see introductions to reading in the form of experiences with books to develop engagement, attention and focus.

Some examples you will see:

- Matching activities
- Listening and responding opportunities
- Use of signs and symbols
- Sound play and use of games
- Sound hunts in the environment
- Interactive screen games
- Letter and object/picture matching
- Early reading scheme books
- Shared stories
- Attention autism/bucket time
- Music and songs
- Letters and sounds resources and games
- Functional social sight vocabulary matching activities.

Love of stories and books:

B2L learners share stories in a way that is meaningful to them but begins to explore the role of ‘the book’ within stories. There is a focus on engagement with language through, picture books, storytelling and personal narratives. These experiences contain high levels of repetition and clear story narratives. They use personalised, high energy and oral storytelling approaches to provide opportunities for enjoying stories alongside promoting the development of imagination, empathy and the recognition of ourselves within our world.

Post 16:

Our post 16 provision aims to embed the functional sight vocabulary that will allow our learners to communicate and navigate their way through the world after leaving Doubletrees, having acquired whatever relevant qualifications or accreditations they are able to achieve.

What will the impact of this be?

The learners will develop their understanding that signs, symbols and text convey meaning and begin to use these themselves to express preferences and understand expectations and instructions. They will begin to anticipate, enjoy and participate in phonics games, such as rhymes, call and response, as their awareness of sounds and patterns develop. They will develop their attention to and engagement with shared, adult lead stories.

Progress will be measured by the tracking of the phonics phase they are on, their IEP and EHCP targets and the progression steps of B-squared, or the adult steps of B-squared.

delivery.

Teaching an understanding of text.

(Links to strand of reading offer – knowing about books, conventions of books and comprehension)

This is delivered through the long term planning that is part of the reading offer, incorporating a mixture of both non-fiction and fiction texts. The aim is to teach an understanding of text structure, layouts and characteristics of different genres. This should be heavily linked to writing for different purposes, using different conventions and form the main body of an English lesson. Learners’ may experience and explore texts that are above their individual reading abilities. The purpose is to develop the learner’s ability to navigate their way around books, helping them to follow sequences of fiction stories or access non-fiction texts to find information or follow instructions.

Reading and enjoying books and stories:

(Links to strand of reading offer – enjoying the story, reading for pleasure or interest)

The aim of this is to develop a love of stories, whether learners are reading independently, or simply looking at books or listening to stories. Learners should develop the ability to express preferences about the things that they enjoy; stories, rhymes, non-fiction books about a preferred topic.

This should also be developed as a discrete session, separate to the English lesson. There should be a daily sharing of a book, to encourage and develop these skills, plus the time to chose and explore books independently.

Post 16:

Our post 16 provision aims to embed and apply the skills acquired to real life situations to prepare them as fully as possible for life outside of school. Understanding environmental signs and symbols, being able to read timetables, leaflets and find out information becomes a focus for this phase of their education. Relevant qualifications and accreditations will be sought at the end of Key stages 4 and 5, according to our accreditation pathways.

What will the impact of this be?

Learner will demonstrate increasing independence in their decoding of texts, understanding and comprehension of the written word and engagement with books in a range of genres. Progress will be measured using single word and comprehension based reading tests, plus the tracking of the phonics phase they are accessing to monitor their progress and inform next steps.

It will also be tracked using the progression steps framework of B-squared, adult B-squared and any relevant IEP targets linked to their EHCP.