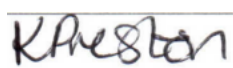


Policy/Procedure Name:	PHONICS POLICY		
Last Update:	July 2025	Next Update Due:	July 2028

Author	Alex Smythe
Signature of Authorised Individual	
Signature of the Director	

Vision and Ethos

At Willow Park School, we are committed to providing a **nurturing, inclusive, and communication-rich environment** where every learner is celebrated, supported, and empowered. Our teaching and learning approach is rooted in **play, relationships, and sensory engagement**, ensuring that all pupils—regardless of need—can thrive.

Please see our Teaching & learning Handbook on the school website at <https://www.willowparkschool.warwickshire.sch.uk/curriculum>

Phonics Lead: Joel Baldwin – Teaching and Learning

Vision

At Willow Park School, we believe that every child deserves the opportunity to develop early reading and communication skills in a way that is meaningful, accessible, and engaging. As a specialist setting for children with **autism and communication & interaction needs**, our phonics teaching is **highly personalised, multisensory**, and rooted in **real-life contexts**.

Our Approach

We use the **Monster Phonics** programme—a **Systematic Synthetic Phonics (SSP)** scheme enhanced by a **child-centred, multisensory approach**. This programme supports memory and engagement through:

- **Colour-coded graphemes**
- **Monster characters** linked to specific sounds
- **Visual, auditory, and kinaesthetic cues**
- **Fully decodable reading books**

This aligns perfectly with our curriculum pathways (Curious, Engaged, and Flourishing), and supports our learners in developing **phonological awareness**, **sound discrimination**, and **early reading confidence**.

✿ Implementation at Willow Park

- **Phase 1 phonics** is embedded across all pathways, especially within the **Curious (Pre-Formal)** curriculum
 - Children ready for the **Engaged (Informal)** curriculum consolidate Phase 1 and move on to Pre-Phase 2.
 - Pupils who are developmentally ready progress to **Phase 2 and beyond**, typically within the **Flourishing (Semi-Formal)** pathway.
 - Phonics is taught through **daily multisensory sessions**, including:
 - Environmental sound exploration
 - Action songs and rhythm games
 - Sensory mark-making
 - Repetitive, predictable routines
 - **Book Exploration** is used to foster a love of reading through sensory-rich, adult-led interactions.
-

📋 Assessment & Progress

- Progress is tracked using:
 - **The Willow Park Curious Roadmap**
 - **Monster Phonics assessment tools**
 - **The Engagement Model**
 - **Observational records on Tapestry**
 - We celebrate all forms of progress—from recognising a sound to initiating a book interaction.
 - Assessment is **ongoing, individualised**, and shared regularly with families.
 - 12 weekly assessment checkpoints enable the teacher and senior leaders to analyse progress.
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👨👩👧👦 Family Engagement

- Parents receive regular updates via **Tapestry**, including phonics observations and home reading suggestions.
 - We send home **developmentally appropriate books**, including nursery rhyme-based and sensory-themed texts.
 - Families are encouraged to engage in shared reading using familiar songs, visuals, and routines.
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Staff Training & Leadership

- Joel Baldwin, as Teaching and Learning Lead, oversees phonics implementation and quality assurance.
- All staff receive **ongoing CPD** through Monster Phonics' training hub and internal coaching.
- Phonics is embedded across the curriculum and supported by **AAC**, **visual timetables**, and **communication boards**.

Equality Statement

At Willow Park School, we actively seek to encourage equity and equality through our teaching and our employment practices. As such, we seek to advance the equality of opportunity between people who share any of the following characteristics:

- age
- disability
- gender reassignment
- being married or in a civil partnership
- being pregnant or on maternity leave
- race including colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin
- religion or belief
- sex
- sexual orientation

The use of stereotypes under any of the above headings will always be challenged.

Inclusion

Our school is an inclusive school. We aim to make all pupils feel included in all our activities. We try to make all our teaching fully inclusive. We recognise the entitlement of all pupils to a balanced, broadly-based curriculum. We have systems in place for early identification of barriers to their learning and participation so that they can engage in school activities with all other pupils. We acknowledge the need for high expectations for and of all children