



# Phonics, Spelling and Reading

At The Westminster School, we recognize that pupils have had a rich experience of Phonics and Reading throughout their time in Sandwell Education. We aim to support and develop this learning during their time with us by building pupils confidence and basic skills in a supportive and differentiated way.

We know that Communication skills are vital to developing Literacy Skills and these are at the core of all aspects of our curriculum. Phonics, Spelling and Reading are taught when pupils are ready and able to access this method of learning, this includes both cognitive and pastoral readiness.

## Phonics

We baseline all pupils on entry to the school and follow the Letters and Sound programme. There are six incremental phases of Letters and Sounds. Phase One concentrates on activities to promote speaking and listening skills, phonological awareness and oral blending and segmenting. Phase Two to Six focus on high quality phonic work to ensure that children develop fluent word reading skills and have good foundations in spelling.

At The Westminster School we recognize that some of our pupils may find learning through phonics challenging and many have gaps in their learning which could delay progress. Part of the reading support package for learners is to identify these gaps and overcome them. Where suitable we also use a range of sight words to embed learning and enable success in Literacy.

## Spelling

Spelling, where appropriate, is taught in class groups and is linked to the curriculum coverage. In addition to our phonics teaching we are developing a programme of writing across the curriculum for our non-core subjects.

Spellings are sent home on a weekly basis for those pupils who are at the relevant point in their learning. These spellings are linked to sound patterns and tricky words and are personalized to meet the needs of your child. Practicing spelling at home helps to reinforce and consolidate learning.

The use of phonics and spellings are supported through a range of writing opportunities across the curriculum; marking pupil's work to assess progress and identifying targets for further improvement and teaching and practicing handwriting.

## Reading

At The Westminster School, reading is a skill taught, practiced and promoted throughout the school, across the whole curriculum and through a range of strategies:

- Reading for pleasure
- Reading homework
- Phonics lessons
- Guided Reading
- Reading comprehension
- The study of a range of genres of text
- Class Texts
- Reading for the wider curriculum, related to topics
- Access to the school library

Guided reading materials have been compiled from a range of different schemes including Collins Big Cat, Dandelion Readers, Sky Racer and Oxford Reading Project X. Other texts, not linked to a scheme, by well-known authors, are also studied to ensure children experience a wealth of literature. The children also have access to a range of books to read individually and take home for reading homework.