



Birches First School

Believe, Grow, Succeed ...

...to be the best 'me' I can be.

17th September 2021

Dear Parents

We are very excited to inform you that we have now purchased our new phonic scheme 'Little Wandle'.

We have thoroughly researched the different options available (approved and validated by the Department for Education) and as a school made an informed decision that Little Wandle is the scheme which we believe will engage and develop our children further with their acquisition of phonics.

There will be lots of information coming home as to how you will be able to support your child with their phonics. We have already uploaded the phonic mats to our website (accessed from the Home Learning Tab for your Year Group) so you can see how we are teaching the children to say the letter sounds and write the grapheme (a way of writing down a phoneme).

As a school our reading is a strength and we delighted that when the government published a research review about reading (July 2021) there were many recommendations as a school we had already successfully embedded. With our drive for improvement, there are further recommendations that we will be implementing. Previously, children have received a phonics book and a reading book. In line with our new phonic scheme and government guidance, it is strongly recommended that all children should be reading a phonic book to decode words to develop fluency before they move onto a book to concentrate on comprehension skills.

From today, your child will **ONLY** be issued with a phonics book that matches their phonic learning in class. The book has been carefully selected to help your child practise previously taught phonics and target any phonic gaps they may have which have been identified through careful phonic assessments in school. This book will be changed weekly. Please read the book as often as possible so your child can fully embed their phonic knowledge. Sounds are identified on the front of the book for you to see which sounds your child is focussing on that week.

We will also be activating our on line reading account with Little Wandle so you will be able to access phonics books online at home (more information to follow).

As your child becomes secure with phonics at phase 5 a reading book will also be issued. We fully encourage you to continue to read a range of books (non-fiction, comics, fiction, poetry) every day with your child at home and discuss what you have shared together. Please use the information at the back of your reading diary to help you discuss books with your child.

As previously mentioned, further information will be shared with you to help guide and support your child at home with their phonic learning. We will be hosting a phonic workshop for all parents to find out more about how we teach phonics at school and we strongly encourage all parents to attend this valuable session.

I fully appreciate that this is a big change and there is a lot of information to process. If you have any additional questions regarding how you can support your child further with their phonics please do get in touch.

Many thanks for your continued support.

Best wishes

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Headteacher