Reading and Phonics Policy
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Lead : Gareth Brown

Contents

1. Introduction

1.1. At Chadsgrove we believe we first "learn to read" and then "read to learn". We also acknowledge that, in the 21st Century, our pupils come with complex learning difficulties and that we always have to be open to new initiatives and ways of supporting our pupils.

1.2. At Chadsgrove, pupils require a flexible and personalised approach to the development of reading and we acknowledge that phonics, as an approach to learning to read, is only appropriate for a selection of our pupils. Therefore in addition to phonics, pupils are also encouraged to recognise words by sight. This may be done through the use of flashcards, word walls, reading books, matching games and labels around the school.

1.3. For pupils with severe or profound and mulltiple learning difficulties, literacy must also embrace the use of objects as a kind of text. In addition, behaviours such as learning to anticipate a favourite activity should be seen as a pupil learning to 'read' what is happening to or around them. Clearly, these pupils will not be at the stage of development to begin Phase 2 phonics and, as a result, the teaching of phonics is always at the discretion of the teacher.

1.4. Over the last decade, there's been a clear shift towards teaching children the basics of reading through phonics. Phonics is a method for teaching reading and writing of the English language by developing learners' phonemic awareness. Through phonics, children learn to read by identifying the sound of individual letters and combination of letters. Knowing the sounds of individual letters enables children to then decode new words.

1.5. The Rose Report (2006) emphasised high quality phonics as an important part of the word decoding skills required by children to develop higher level whole language and comprehension skills.

1.6. The Education Endowment Foundation Toolkit states that "Phonics approaches have been consistently found to be effective in supporting younger readers to master the basics of reading. Research suggests that phonics is particularly beneficial for younger learners (4-7 year olds) as they begin to read." However, this research does not take into account those pupils with additional SEND needs and "it should be emphasised that effective phonics techniques are usually embedded in a rich literacy environment for early readers and are only one part of a successful literacy strategy."

1.7. Good quality phonics teaching and other strategies allows our pupils to be secure in the skills of word recognition and decoding which allows children to read fluently. This will allow pupils and students to read for pleasure and will allow them to move onto developing higher order comprehension skills.

1.8. It is also important to focus on the teaching of reading comprehension in order to improve children's understanding of the books and other texts they are reading. Strong reading comprehension skills make reading fun, engaging and memorable, and are the source of children's wider learning. Children should be able to not just read the words on a page, but also be able to:
- Identify themes in a range of fiction and non-fiction
- Interpret the actions of characters
- Recognise the difference that context makes to a story
- Talk about the structure of the story and the way the writer has used language to convey different concepts or emotions

2. Purpose

2.1. The purpose of this policy is to describe our practice in the teaching of reading and phonics and the principles upon which this is based as well as to reinforce a consistent, high quality approach to the teaching of phonics across the school to all pupils for whom it is appropriate.

2.2. "As a child grows up, being able to read well not only enables them to discover new facts and to learn at school, but also opens them up to a world of new ideas, stories and opportunities."[1]

2.3. Reading:
- Develops early language skills including oracy and communication
- Improves vocabulary and spelling
- Benefits pupils in all subjects, across the curriculum
- Improves life chances and opportunities to work or live independently
- Develops imagination
- Builds friendships by facilitating shared experiences

3. Aim/Intent

3.1. Chadsgrove aims to
- Apply a very rigorous and sequential approach to developing speaking and listening and teaching reading, writing and spelling.
- Use high-quality and expert teaching that follows the carefully planned and tightly structured approach to teaching phonic knowledge and other essential reading skills.
- Ensure pupils are given a highly personalised individual programme to aid their learning and facilitate their understanding of phonics in order for them to become successful and fluent readers
- Provide a rich and stimulating environment in which children have access to a wide range of books presented in an attractive and inviting way
- Ensure pupils fully understand what they are learning, e.g. when reading out the individual letters to read a word pupils should use the phonetic sound
- Ensure the teaching of reading and phonics is lively, interactive and investigative

3.2. Specifically, with regard to the teaching of phonics, Chadsgrove also aims to :
- Provide consistent, high quality phonics teaching that ensures pupils have a strong foundation upon which to tackle the complex processes of reading and writing.
- Teach pupils aural discrimination, phonemic awareness and rhyme in order to aid reading, writing and spelling development
- Encourage the use of segmenting and blending so that decoding skills provide a sound foundation for reading, writing and spelling
- Enable pupils to use phonic awareness across the curriculum
- Ensure, where appropriate, that pupils know the 44 phonemes within the English language
- Teach pupils to recognise the graphemes within words and associate them with the appropriate phoneme when reading
- Provide pupils with strategies to identify and decode "tricky words"
- Differentiate the teaching of phonics sessions allowing pupils to apply their phonic knowledge to both reading and writing
- Recognise that the teaching of phonics does not work for all children and incorporate different reading and spelling strategies into daily teaching to help pupils to succeed to the best of their capabilities.

4. Wider school aims/ethos

4.1. This policy supports the following school aims:
- To allow an individual to develop to their full potential
- To offer a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum that meets the needs of all pupils, statutory requirements and allows for flexible approaches to learning.
- To prepare pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life
- To ensure equality of opportunity regardless of gender, race, culture, religion, social disadvantage or disability

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[1] 'The Power of reading: How the next government can unlock every child's potential through reading' (April 2015) – Written by Kayte Lawton & Hollie Warren for the 'Read on, Get on' campaign, and published by 'Save the Children'.

5. Consultation

5.1. This policy was written by Teresa Owen and Gareth Brown, (English leader) and drawn up in consultation with
- Georgia Treglown (Lower School Phonics Lead) and Sam Mole (Reading Co-ordinator)
- Teaching Staff at Chadsgrove School through staff meetings and informal discussions
- The Senior Leadership Team through consultation of the draft policy
- The Governing Body – through review of the policy

6. Sources and References

6.1. The following documents have been used to support the writing of this policy:
- National curriculum in England: English programmes of study.
- Early Years Foundation Stage Framework
- 'Letters and Sounds' phonics strategy
- Barrs Court Curriculum

7. Roles and Responsibilities

7.1. The Governors are responsible for
- Meeting once a year with the Reading/Phonics leader, in order to discuss subject strengths and areas for development, and for then reporting these to the full governing body

7.2. The Headteacher is responsible for
- Monitoring of Long and Medium Term Planning
- Lesson observations
- Monitoring the work of the Reading/Phonics leader, through the Performance Management Cycle

7.3. The Reading and Phonics leader is responsible for
- Organising phonics meetings and liaising with new staff
- Writing and reviewing this policy
- Long Term Planning
- The monitoring of Medium Term Planning
- Joint lesson observations during a focus year
- Ordering new resources in consultation with other staff and the storage of those resources
- Putting into place appropriate monitoring and support for pupils who are not making expected progress

7.4. Teachers are responsible for
- Ensuring that the teaching of reading appropriately matches the needs and abilities of each pupil in their class
- Delivering phonics to classes as appropriate
- Completing formative and summative assessments. Summative assessments are placed on SOLAR

8. Planning

8.1. Class teachers produce Medium Term Plans for English/Literacy lessons using the Long Term Plans for English. These are placed on the shared area of the school network. Long Term Plans outline the topics and suggest recommended literacy texts. Medium Term Plans outline the learning activities in more detail and specify the curriculum intent, implementation and projected learning outcomes/impact.

8.2. Teachers leading individual sessions determine how the Medium Term Plans will be delivered on a daily basis considering, in more detail, elements such as differentiation and personalisation for individual pupils.

8.3. All planning considers Individual Education Plan targets and EHC Plan outcomes (where appropriate) as these are an integral part of the learning experiences offered to pupils.

8.4. Planning for phonics is completed separately from Literacy but with the understanding that good phonics teaching should link to the literacy needs of the children within a literacy lesson and across the curriculum. Sessions are planned as a mixture of whole class, small group and individual activities which are fun and engaging.

8.5. Planning for phonics follows the 'Letters and Sounds' phonics strategy to ensure learning is taught in a correct developmental sequence. However, because of the nature of our pupils' needs it may take them longer to acquire skills and retain knowledge as compared to a typically developing child. Therefore, our pupils also require a cumulative approach, allowing frequent opportunities for overlearning, repetition and 'S.P.A.C.E.D.O.U.T.' learning strategies, to ensure that knowldege is secured in pupils' long term memory.

8.6. Phonological awareness is taught in the correct developmental sequence: word awareness, rhyme awareness, syllable awareness, onset and rime, segmenting first and last sounds, blending sounds, segmenting words, and manipulating sounds. Again, the teaching should ensure cumulative as well as sequential learning.

8.7. There are regular meetings between staff to discuss groupings and difficulties or successes.

9. Organisation and Implementation
The Early Years Curriculum
9.1. Reading is developed in a cross–curricular way through the implementation of a Cycle of themes which are explained in more detail in the Early Years Policy (Policy Number 27)

9.2. Reading and phonics is promoted through explorative play which provides opportunities for learners to encounter the world around them. Within their play learners reach, hold, explore and encounter sensory items and stimuli which facilitates opportunities both for communication and cognitive development.

9.3. Children's understanding of words is also be developed through stories, songs and games. All of these skills are the foundation for future, more formal, learning experiences.

The Pre-formal Curriculum for pupils with Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulties
9.4. Pupils with Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulties are unlikley to learn to read and write in the conventional sense. As such, what is important for these pupils is the development of 'Inclusive Literacy' which may not include the use of text at all.

9.5. Inclusive literacy involves activities such as:
- Objects of Reference – these are often seen as the first real step into learning about symbols, which in conventional literacy, might lead to more abstract symbols and eventually into letters, words and text
- Tactile Signing (TaSSeLS)
- Personal storytelling
- Sensory stories which provide a great opportunity for pupils to develop early reading skills such as tracking, listening and attention; whilst also offering rich possibilities for stimulating the imagination, extending experiences, and providing opportunities for interaction with peers and staff members
- Multimedia stories and talking books
- Cause and effect software
- Photo albums
- Picture books
- Reading icons and symbols
- Drama and role play

9.6.   In classes for pupils with Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulties, pupils develop their reading skills as a part of an holistic approach to learning and delivered through the activities stated above. Many of these activities occur throughout the day, for example, pupils may use objects of reference or TaSSeLS to support the transition from one activitiy to another. In addition, all pupils with Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulties access at least six Early Communication Skills lessons each week where there may be a particular focus on activities such as sensory stories.

The Semi-formal / Formal Curriculum for pupils with Severe or Moderate learning Difficulties

9.7.   Chadsgrove follows the 'Letters and Sounds' programme to support the teaching of phonics/reading to pupils with moderate or severe learning difficulties. 'Letters and Sounds' is a high quality, systematic synthetic phonics teaching programme designed to provide teachers with the resources needed to help ensure that pupils develop their phonological awareness, oral blending and segmenting skills and work towards developing fluent word reading skills.

9.8.   Teaching staff do, however, adapt this programme to meet the needs of our pupils as not all are ready to read at the same time due to their Special Educational Needs. We acknowledge that many of our pupils may have significant barriers to learning to read, such as visual perception and discrimination difficulties, auditory perception and discrimination problems, memory disorders, processing delays, or speed of retrieval difficulties. In such cases, work will need to be done to overcome these barriers through work on 'pre-reading' skills, and to develop areas of deficit, such as developing their attention and listening skills, their 'play' skills, their motor control, etc., before the pupil is ready for a synthetic phonics approach. In some cases, an alternative approach to learning to read will be necessary.

9.9.   Where possible a multi-sensory approach is used to cater for all visual, auditory and kinaesthetic learners. Sessions include opportunities for active involvement and creative activities. The intention of teaching staff is to modify and adapt programmes of learning in order to make them specific to need, provide a breadth of experiences and offer a progression in learning.

9.10.   Where appropriate, pupils have access to high quality regular phonics lessons for twenty minutes per session. Classes work collaboratively in order to allow for more effective differentiation as well as clear progression across the school. Pupils are organised into sets according to ability and work in small groups which enables staff to meet their diverse needs. Teachers ensure that groups and pupils are regularly assessed to make certain that they are reaching their full potential. Teachers meet to discuss progress and groupings on a regular basis.

9.11.   Each Phonics lesson includes the following sections:
  - Revise - overlearn the previous graphemes and words
  - Teach - introduce a new grapheme/words
  - Practise - develop GPCs (grapheme phoneme correspondences)/read and spell new words
  - Apply - use the new graphemes/words in games and activities to secure knowledge
  - Assess - monitor progress within each phase to inform planning
  Teachers continually revisit and practise sounds being learned to ensure consolidation.

9.12.   Pupils join 'phonics' groups when they are ready to do so and the group that they join is appropriate to their ability.

9.13.   It is acknowledged that one model does not fit all children and teachers are advised to use teaching methods, resources and sound orders from other schemes if they feel this benefits a particular child. Such activities/schemes may include:
  - A 'whole word' approach where pupils taught to recognise words as whole units without breaking them down into sounds. This is particularly useful for common words, for example, McNally 1st 100 words, which are mostly irregular.
  - Multi-Sensory approaches which use warm-up activities such as 'Dough Disco' or ordering 3D letters into alphabetical order in order to prepare children for learning.

- 'The Language Experience' approach which uses learner's own familiar words to help them read (personalised version of 'whole word' approach).
- Read, Write, Inc which integrates phonics with comprehension, writing, grammar, spelling and handwriting using engaging partner work and drama.
- The 'Books Beyond Words' Project which provides books and training to support people who find pictures easier to understand than words.

9.14. Pupils who can are encouraged to read to an adult regularly using the Oxford Reading Tree scheme of books which are levelled to ensure appropriate progression. Each pupil has a 'reading record' for staff to record when they have read and to record next steps.

9.15. The books we use in 'guided reading' sessions match up to the sounds being taught. We have 'Phonics based' ORT (Songbirds) books to be used in 'guided reading' sessions by Lower School teachers. These books were chosen because they are lively and engaging, offer a clear phonics development with gradual progression and plenty of practice to help children gain confidence. They also use rhythm, rhyme and exciting language – they are written by Julia Donaldson – and have vibrant and humorous illustrations to engage children and stimulate discussion.

9.16. Pupils have access to a wide range of AAC (Augmentative and Alternative Communication) devices and strategies to support their reading, such as Aided Language Displays, communication aids, switches, etc.

9.17. Teachers are encouraged to teach reading across all areas of the curriculum, especially the teaching of subject specific core vocabulary.

9.18. The 'Lexia Core 5' reading programme is used to augment the teaching of reading and phonics. This is an on-line resource which supports the differentiation of literacy by providing tailored activities for individual pupils and tracking their progress.

9.19. It is important to encourage a variety of reading role-models to boost self-esteem alongside skills. Therefore, at Chadsgrove we operate a 'Reading Buddies' programme whereby older pupils will read to younger pupils or listen to the younger pupils read.

9.20. Teachers are encouraged to have shared reading times with their class groups, choosing high quality fiction and non-fiction texts. Giving children an appreciation of a wide range of literature underpins and supports their development of understanding in reading by providing meaningful experience of rhythm, sequence and narrative, tone and intonation, pauses, rhyme, and alliteration. Stories and poems help children understand sequence and narrative, as well as developing their reading comprehension skills.

10. Reading for Pleasure

10.1. It is important, that pupils develop a love of reading and are encouraged to read for pleasure. This is achieved through activities such as:
- Themed reading activities e.g. National and local celebration days, reading around the world and sports events
- Encouraging book choice by creating fun displays or posters such as "If you like reading that you might enjoy reading this…"
- Making reading a fun part of the timetable and adopting concepts such as 'Drop Everything And Read ('D.E.A.R')
- Providing daily routines such as story times every day in comfortable environments, alongside flexibility (e.g. indoors and outside)
- Making reading a part of school life through activities such as assemblies
- Involving parentcarers
- Involving all staff, for example through displays showing pictures of staff reading their favourite book
- Creating 'Reading Spaces' in classrooms

- Listening to audiobooks
- Displaying pupil's work about books such as drawings of their favourite book and photos of them reading
- Providing opportunities to use established skills e.g. book handling, illustrating stories
- Developing multi-sensory activities with visuals, puppets, props and lots of active participation to make book reading both fun and memorable.

10.2.   The benefits of reading for pleasure are multiple; it creates positive personal, external and social outcomes. Reading brings the pleasures of escapism, discovery, involvement, reflection and self-empowerement.
- Reading and Mental Health: Reading enhances young people's awareness of mental health, offers emotional support, eases stress and boosts self-esteem and happiness.[2]
- Reading and Empathy: Reading nurtures young people's open-mindedness, emotional intelligence and empathy.[3]
- Reading and Social Engagement: Reading brings people together and can encourage young people's interest in the community.[4]
- Reading and Social Mobility: Reading breaks down social barriers, helps all children do better at school and improves job prospects.[5]

11. Training/ CPD

11.1.   Pedagogical expertise is a key component of successful teaching of early reading, and so staff at Chadsgrove are trained and empowered to deliver high quality phonics sessions.

11.2.   Training needs are identified through the monitoring process and performance management cycles. If there has been any significant statutory changes then subsequent training needs will be addressed as necessary. If teachers have requested any training needs then this will be considered by the Senior Leadership Team in line with the priorities of the school as a whole.

11.3.   Staff training takes place during INSET days, staff meetings and informal meetings. External training also takes place as appropriate.

11.4.   It is important to support all staff supporting reading and phonics in school, including teaching assistants, in the completion of reading records in order to ensure that all comments are specific and target related.

12. Equal Opportunities

12.1.   An equal opportunities policy is in place at Chadsgrove School (Policy Number 38). There is no discrimination as a result of race, gender, disability or home circumstances.

12.2.   All children within Chadsgrove School have equal access to the curriculum and are given the same opportunity to develop and reach their full potential.

12.3.   Pupils have EHCP plans stating the provisions that need to be in place for them and this is adhered to be school staff.

13. Health and Safety

13.1.   A Health and Safety policy (Policy Number 44) is in place at Chadsgrove School. All staff must adhere to this school policy at all times.

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[2] Reading and Mental Health - Lakey et al., 2017. Culture, sport and wellbeing: Findings from the Understanding Society youth survey.

[3] Reading and Empathy - Guarisco et al., 2017. Reading Books and Reading Minds: Differential Effects of Wonder and The Crossover on Empathy and Theory of Mind.

[4] Reading and Social Engagement – Hays, 2017. From Fiction to Fact to Potential Action: Generating Prosocial Attitudes and Behaviours Using Young Adult Literature.

[5] Reading and Social Mobility – Sammons et al., 2015. Subject to Background: What promotes better achievement for bright but disadvantaged students?

14. Including Parent Carers

14.1. Staff at Chadsgrove believe that it is important to work in partnership with parent carers and value the knowledge that they have of their child. The partnership with carers is based on shared responsibility, understanding, mutual respect and dialogue.

14.2. Parent carers are encouraged to become actively involved in helping to develop their child's educational programme, for example by contributing to it or carrying on work at home. Homework is set for pupils, where appropriate, and parent carers are requested to support their child in the completion of this.

14.3. Parent carers are invited to two parents carers' evenings each year and to the annual review of the EHCP.

14.4. Parent carers are sent a termly curriculum newsletter and also receive an annual report of their child's progress in Reading and Phonics.

14.5. Pupil reading record books are used, as appropriate, and these help to inform parent carers about the progress that their child is making.

14.6. The subject leader promotes BookTrust projects such as Bookbuzz, Time to Read, and 'Treasure Packs' which are all designed to encourage parents/carers to engage in reading with their child at home which will have a longer term impact in the future by creating pupils who are more engaged with reading.

15. Resources

15.1. Each classroom or room where phonics is taught will have a basic stock of everyday equipment suitable to support delivery of the subject. This will vary according to the age and developmental level of the pupils.

15.2. Pupils in Early Years and Key Stage One and Two have an enabling environment which includes role play and props, games, books and a variety of reading and writing materials.

15.3. There is a large shared English store which include resources and games to support the delivery of reading and phonics.

15.4. The subject leader orders and labels the resources and all staff contribute to keeping the resources tidy.

16. Assessment and Moderation
Formative assessment

16.1. Formative assessment occurs when teachers assess all pupils' responses to the tasks set in planned activities through questioning and feedback. In Early Years and in other classes, where appropriate children are observed as they interact in their play, everyday activities and planned tasks. Formative assessments are ongoing and are updated half termly if appropriate.

16.2. Pupils with PMLD are assessed using individual targets that are set to link closely to their band on Routes for Learning. Progress is recorded using MAPP (Mapping and Assessment of Pupil Progress) and uploaded on to SOLAR.

16.3. All data from SOLAR is entered termly on to a school spreadsheet. From there it can be seen how much progress pupils are making and interventions can be put into place if necessary.

16.4. Phase 1 of Letters and Sounds is initially assessed as appropriate; this includes environmental sounds etc. At Phase 2 each child's personal progress is recorded in the Pink Chadsgrove Records Folder which is passed onto the next class teacher. This folder contains

information/assessment sheets relating to each of the dfferent phases and the child's progress within them. Such assessments are vital as the effectiveness of the teaching of phonics is dependent upon it being closely matched to children's current level of skill in terms of their phonemic awareness and their knowledge of letter sounds and patterns (graphemes).

Summative Assessment

16.5.   Children are assessed at the end of Year R against the Early Learning Goals and these are reported to the Local Authority.

16.6.   Phonics assessments, where appropriate, take place at the end of Year 1 and Year 2, as necessary or appropriate.

16.7.   Statutory reading assessment data is forwarded to the local authority at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2.

16.8.   At the end of each year a final assessment is also carried out which will be passed onto the next teacher.

17.   Monitoring of Evaluation / Impact

17.1.   The progress of pupils within phonics is monitored through:
- Staff observation and discussion
- The moderation of pupils' work – this may include the analysis of teacher observations and video evidence. Moderation meetings are held annually by subject leaders.
- The tracking of termly pupil targets.
- Analysis of Medium Term Plans by the subject lead and Headteacher.

17.2.   All teachers are observed at least once a year by the head teacher and some of these observations are in Reading/Phonics. In the English focus year the subject lead will also observe lessons.

17.3.   The Governor with responsibility for English is primarily responsible for monitoring the implementation of this policy.

18.   Linked policies

18.1.   The phonics policy should be read in conjunction with the following:
- English (Policy Number 1)
- Governors Curriculum Policy Statement (Policy Number 22)
- Examinations (Policy Number 36)
- Equal opportunities (Policy Number 38)
- Assisted and Augmented Communication (Policy Number 39)
- Marking and Homework (Policy Number 34)
- Early Years (Policy Number 27)
- PMLD (Policy Number 26)

Appendices

1 – Glossary

2 – Example of Pink Folder (Phonics Assessment Documents)

Phoneme

The smallest unit of sound. There are approximately 44 phonemes in English. Phonemes can be put together to make words.

Grapheme

A way of writing down a phoneme. Graphemes can be made up from 1 letter e.g. p, 2 letters e.g. sh, 3 letters e.g. tch or 4 letters e.g. ough.

GPC

This is short for Grapheme Phoneme Correspondence. Knowing GPC means being able to match phoneme to a grapheme and vice versa.

Digraph

A grapheme containing two letters that make one sound (phoneme).

Trigraph

A grapheme containing three letters that make one sound (phoneme).

Oral Blending

This involves hearing phonemes and being able to merge them together to make a word. Children need to develop this skill before they will be able to blend written words.

Blending

This involves looking at a written word, looking at each grapheme and using knowledge of GPCs to work out which phoneme each grapheme represents and then merging these phonemes together to make a word. This is the basis of reading.

Oral Segmenting

This is the act of hearing a whole word and then splitting it up into the phonemes that make it. Children need to develop this skill before they will be able to segment words to spell them.

Segmenting

This involves hearing a word, splitting it up into phonemes that make it, using knowledge of GPCs to work out which graphemes represent those phonemes and then writing those graphemes down in the right order. This is the basis of spelling.

Phase 2 order

S a t p i n m d g o c k ck e u r h b f ff l ll ss

Phase 3 order

J v w x y z zz qu ch sh th ng ai ee igh oa oo o oar or ur ow oi ear air ure er

Phase 5 order

Ay ou ie ea oy ir ue aw wh p hew oe au a-e e-e i-e o-e u-e

Appendix 2 - Pink Folder

01.10.19

fox	shop	van	ring
tail	moon	road	light
park	coin	goat	loaf

01.10.19

d	ck	r	ff
l	ss		

01.10.19

	✓		