

PHONICS POLICY

Rationale

Our Federation believes that the teaching of phonics is vital in order for children to become competent readers and writers. High quality phonic teaching secures the crucial skills of word recognition that once mastered enables children to read fluently and automatically. Once children are fluent readers, they are able to comprehend the meaning of the text.

What is phonics?

The National Curriculum (2014) states that 'phonic knowledge and skills' is the 'route to decode words'. Until children have learned to decode, other methods can interfere with its effectiveness and so therefore, phonics is the first tool used in early reading. Alongside this, children are still developing their comprehension and vocabulary by encountering a rich and varied diet of books.

Teaching of phonics helps pupils to build essential phonic knowledge and skills:

- Blending decodable words.
- Sight reading of high frequency and tricky words.
- Segmenting decodable words (including high frequency words)
- Spelling of tricky words

Aims

- To establish consistent practice, progression and continuity in the teaching and learning of phonics and spelling throughout the schools.
- To enable children to start learning phonics skills and knowledge, with the expectation that they will become fluent readers, having secured word building and recognition skills.
- To give children strategies that will enable them to become fluent readers and confident writers, including blending phonemes in order to read words and segmenting words in order to spell them.
- To ensure that children are taught high frequency words that do not conform to regular phonic patterns.
- To ensure that children have opportunities to read words and texts that are within their phonic capabilities as early as possible, the children apply their phonic skills to phonically decodable books from Reception.
- To encourage the children to attempt to spell words for themselves, within the range of their phonic knowledge, by building an individual repertoire and the confidence and strategies to attempt the unfamiliar.

These aims will be delivered by:

- Delivering quality daily discrete phonics sessions.
- Ensuring lessons are interactive and paced so that children remain engaged and focused.
- Providing children who start school with us at a lower than expected starting point are provided with extra support from the start.
- Providing opportunities for children to apply and reinforce their phonics knowledge across the curriculum.
- Identifying pupils falling behind as soon as possible so that we can intervene with extra support.

Foundation Stage and Key Stage One

Phonics is taught systematically in EYFS and Key Stage 1 classes; we follow the Letters and Sounds approach. We use a daily systematic synthetic phonics programme designed to teach children to read and write. Children learn the letter sounds of the English language through a multi-sensory approach. They are then taken through the phases of blending and segmenting words to develop reading and writing skills. The children have a daily discrete phonics session as well as exposure to phonics in many other areas. There is an expectation that all children will be fluent readers having secured word recognition skills by the end of Key Stage 1. We adopt a determined approach to teaching phonics and reading to ensure that all children have the fluency and automaticity required to access all reading material.

The children have phonically decodable books that link in with their current phonics phase. As soon as a set of sounds has been taught, children can have books with relevant sounds. By the end of EYFS children are expected to be confident with phase 4 phonics and to be reading yellow or blue book bands. By the end of Key Stage 1, children are expected to be confident with Phase 6 and will be reading white or lime books.

How a lesson looks

Each session follows a clear sequence:

Introduction - The teacher will explain to the children what they will be learning today and get them enthusiastic and motivated for the session.

Revisit and review - The children will play a quickfire game to practise something they have learned before and help build their confidence.

Teach - The children will be taught a new phoneme/grapheme or a new skill - this will be taught in a fun multisensory way and could involve: songs, actions, pictures, puppets, writing giant letters in the air.

Practise - The children play fast, fun games to practise the new thing they have just learnt.

Apply - The children will have a quick go at reading or writing sentences that involve the new thing they have just learned.

Phonics is taught through a multi-sensory approach. We use rhymes, actions, songs, concrete and visual aids to introduce and consolidate phonics knowledge.

Key Stage Two

Any children who are not secure with their phonic knowledge when they reach Key Stage Two receive phonic intervention sessions so that they are able to catch up with their peers. This intervention is aimed specifically at the phase that they're not secure in.

Key Stage 2 children follow the Shakespeare and more spelling scheme. They have a discrete weekly spelling lesson with revisiting during the week, and complete a spelling test every week.

Spelling rules are taught in class, the children complete a range of activities which allow them to explore, investigate and practise the spelling rule. It is expected that the children practise their spellings every night at home for around ten minutes.

Assessment

- The outcomes of the baseline assessment inform the teacher's planning and teaching.
- At the end of each phase in Letters and Sounds pupils will be assessed on their progress.
- Phonics assessments are passed on during transition to a new class in order to ensure continuity of progress.
- In Year 1 children will take the phonics screening check. This assessment will confirm whether individual pupils have learnt phonic decoding to an appropriate standard. If a child does not reach the appropriate standard, then additional support will be put in place in order for the child to make accelerated progress. These children will re-sit the screening test in Year 2.

Policy:	Phonics Policy
Signed Chair of Governors:	RBain
Date Signed:	January 2021
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