



Our Approach to Phonics – 2022

At Fishbourne CE Primary School, we believe that children get the best possible start in their journey of reading and writing by having firm foundations in their knowledge of phonics. Being able to recall phonemes rapidly and the ability to blend and segment words, children become confident learners. Having a good understanding of phonics enables children to gain independence in reading and writing and make good progress.

Phonics is taught discretely in Early Years, Year One and Year Two every day for 20-30 minutes. We use a systematic, synthetic phonics approach using the 'Song of Sounds' as our pedagogy, which includes a rhyme and action for each sound. The sequencing of sounds taught then aligns with our reading schemes.

Sequence of Learning

Four, whole class sessions are taught with focused phonemes, with a fifth, longer session being filled with opportunities to use and apply all of the phonemes that have been taught that week following the 'Song of Sounds' program. Each session will begin by revising taught sounds using the song and flashcards, move on to a targeted phoneme (new or revised) and common exception words.

The format for each session is:

- A revision of the taught sounds using the songs or flashcards.
- A targeted phoneme which may be new or revised.
- Target 'green' words with target sound in.
- Formation of graphemes.
- Common exception word teaching and/or practice.

The activities will include a breath of experiences for all children that are fun and interactive! This includes; reading (shared/guided), writing (word and sentence level), activities and games to practise taught sounds. These sessions are pacy and busy, keeping children active in their learning. There is lots of opportunity for spaced repetition, not only at the beginning of every session but also in those 'spare 5 minutes' moments throughout the school day. This is a key opportunity to develop letter formation and handwriting. During the school day there are lots of further opportunities through our sequence of writing where we have significant focus on modelled writing through which the application of phonics and tricky words will be a focus. All adults in the classroom actively encourage children to apply their phonetic knowledge to their reading and writing.

Assessment

Children are assessed regularly throughout the term, in line with the 'Song of Sounds' schedule. A grid is then to be collated of which children are in each phase and this is shared with the Phonics Lead. Due to regular assessment, those who are not making expected progress can be flagged up quickly. Continuous formative assessments to ensure that all children's needs are being met and that they are making progress. These assessments will inform the 'keep up' group (those who need a little extra support to keep up with their peers) and the 'catch up' group (those who need interventions to catch up with their peers). These children need to be highlighted in Closing the Gap discussions, with next steps actioned.

Where there are specific gaps in the children's knowledge of phonemes, flashcards are to be sent home for practice each day. It is important to allow lots of opportunity for these children who have not yet mastered taught sounds to have lots of spaced repetition (before reading with an adult, with volunteers or using Curtis Time).

In Year 1, the Phonics Screening takes place in June. A 'baseline' in the form of a past paper will be administered with children at the beginning of Spring 2 with results and next steps discussed with Phonics Lead.

Reading

Our reading scheme are aligned with the sound progression for the Song of Sounds. This enables us to match the child's phonics phase with their reading book band. Books are given to children in Reception when they have mastered the first two sets of phonemes and are beginning to blend. Special consideration is given to the 'rapid-graspers', particularly in Early Years, to ensure that they have books that are suitable for their comprehension level as well as supporting the children in moving forward with their knowledge of phonemes. Through regular assessment, children read books that are in line with their phonetic knowledge. It is vital that home reading is actively encouraged and chased up when not happening. Those children who are not reading at age related expectations will become our 'daily readers', who are heard during additional times during the school day.

Home School Partnership

It is vital to have phonics as part of the children's home learning. New phonemes and opportunities to practice using them are to be sent home weekly. In each class, a home learning sheet is sent home with phonemes taught alongside phonetically decodable words using these sounds as well as a set of flash cards. Common exception words are sent home once taught on a keyring. These keyrings are added to throughout the year. We engage with parents and educate them in understanding how best to support their children to revisit and recap learning at home.