

# Kirk Smeaton Phonics Policy



## Curriculum Intent

At Kirk Smeaton CE Primary School, we are committed to the delivery of excellence in the teaching of Phonics. We aim to develop each child so that they are able to read with fluency as well as develop a love of reading that will stay with our children all their lives. Being able to read is the most important skill children will learn during their early schooling and has far reaching implications for lifelong confidence and well-being. The independent review of early reading conducted by Jim Rose confirmed that 'high quality phonic work' should be the prime means for teaching children how to read and spell words. The review also highlighted the importance of developing from the earliest stages children's speaking and listening skills, ensuring that beginner readers are ready to get off to a good start in phonic work by the age of five. Such work should be set within a broad and rich language curriculum. The use of phonics is one of the many skills needed to be able to be a reader and writer. We aim to teach high quality phonics to ensure the children have the best start possible in reading and writing. The learning of phonics is the beginning of children's body of knowledge, skills and understanding that are an essential part of learning to read. In order to read and understand texts children must learn to recognise/decode the words on the page. Good quality phonics teaching allows the child to be secure in the skills of word recognition and decoding which allows children to read fluently. This will result in children being able to read for pleasure and will allow them to move onto developing higher order reading for meaning skills. These phonic skills need to be taught systematically and involve a variety of resources e.g multi-sensory resources, for all learners.

The school follows the systematic approach laid out in 'Floppy's Phonics Sounds and Letters programme', which we have adopted to meet the requirements of the National Curriculum.

## Children's Charter

Our children are entitled to a Phonics curriculum which enables them to:

- gain a progressively deeper understanding of the phonetic structure of the English language.
- apply their phonic knowledge and skills to decode unfamiliar words fluently and accurately.
- read rapidly to apply what they have learned across the whole curriculum.
- create fluent readers, confident speakers and willing writers.
- develop a life-long love of reading.

## Curriculum Implementation

In line with the school's policy and commitment to excellence in Phonics, each class in Reception and KS1 will teach phonics as a discrete lesson every day and will include phonics as part of teaching and learning throughout other curriculum lessons on a daily basis. The structure of each lesson at Kirk Smeaton and the journey of Phonics across the week enables all aspects of the blending and segmenting of phonemes/graphemes; lessons are uniquely planned and tailored to meet the needs of all our learners. The teacher should provide stimulating experiences and opportunities to motivate the child, using a range of resources to engage individuals and groups of children.

## Approaches to Phonics

At Kirk Smeaton School, we believe that phonics teaching should be:

- Systematic
- Discrete
- Interactive
- Practical
- Engaging
- Multi-sensory
- Differentiated

## Teaching and Learning

Our children are provided with a variety of opportunities to develop and extend their phonics skills in and across Nursery, Reception and Key Stage 1. It will also be continued into Key Stage 2, where necessary to support those children who do not yet have the phonic knowledge and skills they need. To facilitate this, all staff across the whole school have been trained in 'Floppy's Phonics'.

Discrete phonics lessons take place daily across Reception and Key Stage 1. They follow the cycle of 'Review and Revisit, Teach, Practise, Apply, consolidate' to ensure that children are consolidating phonic knowledge and skills over time and that they are able to apply them in context. Consequently, wherever possible, links between phonics knowledge and understanding are made to learning in both Reading and Writing. These lessons proceed at pace and incorporate a wide range of practical and interactive learning opportunities to engage the children. These learning opportunities are carefully chosen to ensure that children develop their skills in aural discrimination and phonemic and rhyme awareness, blending and segmenting as well as grapheme-phoneme correspondence. All teachers have a range of resources to use which are appropriate for the level at which the children are working. They include practical resources such as the alphabetic code poster, sounds frieze, grapheme tiles, magnetic letters and phonic strips etc, which should be used in every lesson to create a point of reference. These resources can be added to so that children are continually engaged with their learning. There should also be appropriate phonic displays in each classroom in Reception and Key Stage 1.

Lessons follow the structure outlined below through the teaching of skills and sub-skills of:

- **REVISIT & REVIEW:** Revise previously taught sounds and graphemes using flashcards, frieze and Say the Sounds Posters
- **TEACH:** Introduce new sound and grapheme using flashcards, frieze and the Interactive Resources.
- **PRACTISE:** Pupils practise new and revised sounds and graphemes with Sounds & Letters Books and Activity Sheets
- **APPLY:** Pupils extend their core skills with words and sentences using Cumulative Texts and Grapheme Tiles
- **CONSOLIDATE:** Pupils use the Interactive Resource activities and the end pages of the Sounds & Letters Books to consolidate code knowledge and their skills
- **PRACTISE READING:** Pupils read Floppy's Phonics fiction and non-fiction books as independently as possible

Feedback will be given throughout the lesson to individuals to move learning forwards and drive progress.

## The Alphabetic Code

All readers should be taught four skills:

- grapheme–phoneme correspondences (that is, the alphabetic code) in a clearly defined, incremental sequence
- to synthesise (blend) phonemes (sounds) in order all through a word to read it
- to segment words into their constituent phonemes for spelling
- that blending and segmenting are reversible processes.

English represents the sounds of the language and uses an alphabet to do this. It is generally accepted that English has 44 sounds (although this number varies slightly, depending on regional accents). The way the 26 letters of the alphabet are used in English (singly or in combination) to represent the 44 sounds is referred to as the alphabetic code.

In the alphabetic code in English:

- a single phoneme can be represented (spelt) in different ways, using one, two, three or four letters.

For example, the sound /aw/ can be represented as 'or', 'saw', 'haul', 'lore', 'fraught' and 'sought'

- one grapheme (that is, a letter or combination of letters) can represent different sounds.

For example, the digraph (two letters) 'ow' sounds different in 'crowd' and in 'low'; the four letters combined in 'ough' are pronounced differently in 'through', 'rough' and 'bough'; the letter 'c' represents a /s/ sound at the beginning of 'circus' and a /k/ sound in the middle.

A very common sequence begins by teaching children how to represent each of the following six sounds by a letter (as below):

Sound	Letter
/s/	s
/a/	a
/t/	t
/i/	i
/p/	p
/n/	n

If these sounds are learnt securely and the children are also taught the skill of blending sounds together to read whole words, they can then read (and spell, by segmenting) simple vowel-consonant (VC) words such as 'it', 'in', 'is' and 'at' and consonant-vowel-consonant (CVC) words such as 'sat', 'pin', 'nip', 'net', 'tip'.

### The skills of blending and segmenting

Blending and segmenting are, 'reversible processes': that is, if you can blend the sounds together to read a word, you should also be able to identify and break down (segment) the individual sounds in a word you hear to spell it. To spell the word, you need to represent each sound you hear by a letter - or more than one letter. The skill of blending sounds together needs to be taught directly. Children may be able to say the sound a letter 'makes' when shown the letter (for instance, on a flashcard), but this does not necessarily mean that they can blend individual sounds together to make a whole word. (Letters do not actually 'make' sounds: they are just a way of representing that sound in writing.) In segmenting to spell a word, the teacher or the child is listening to a whole word, identifying the individual sounds (not letters) that make up the word choosing a letter or more than one letter to represent each individual sound.

## **Common Exception Words**

Children will be taught to read words that are not completely phonically regular. Kirk Smeaton School adapts the Floppy's Phonics Language and we refer to them as 'tricky words'. Children need to be taught to read these words on sight, so that they do not have to spend time puzzling them out. Teachers help children to practise their speedy recall of tricky words. In terms of spelling, children need to remember the tricky parts of a word, that is, the letters that do not match the usual grapheme-phoneme correspondences they have learnt. For example, the word 'said' is not phonically regular in that the sound /e/ in the middle of the word is normally written 'e' as in 'bed' (or sometimes 'ea' as in 'bread', 'dread' or 'read' - past tense) and not 'ai' as in 'paid'. However, the sounds at the beginning and end of 'said' are represented with 's' and 'd', just as one might expect; it is only the middle of the word that is tricky.

## **Multi-sensory approaches**

Multi-sensory learning opportunities featured strongly in high quality phonic work and often encompassed, variously, simultaneous visual, auditory and kinaesthetic activities involving, for example, physical movement to copy letters shapes and sound, and manipulate magnetic or other solid letters to build words. Sometimes, mnemonics, such as a picture of a sun or an apple in the shapes of 's' and 'a', were used to help children memorise letters.

## **Intervention**

Children who still need extra support to develop their phonic knowledge across the EYFS, Key Stage 1 and 2 are identified and targeted for intervention. There are a range of intervention strategies which the school uses and the most appropriate one is selected once a child's needs have been assessed.

## **Assessment**

Assessment is regarded as an integral part of teaching and learning and is a continuous process. We strive to make our assessment purposeful, allowing us to match the correct level of work to the needs of the pupils, thus benefiting the pupils and ensuring progress. It is the class teacher's responsibility to keep track of the progress made by all children in their class, regardless of their phonic ability. Each individual child has their own phonics tracker, which is updated termly and continues to be updated as the child moves through school.

## **Assessment for Learning**

We continually assess our pupils and record their progress. Information for assessment is gathered in various ways: by talking to children, asking questions, observing their work, setting specific tasks. Teachers use this assessment information to plan further work and set new targets.

The attainment and progress of children in phonics is assessed regularly across the year, both discretely at the end of each phase and through Reading and Writing assessments. At the end of Year 1, children participate in the phonics screening check which assesses their knowledge of grapheme-phoneme correspondence and their skills in blending. This information is submitted to the LA. Those children who do not succeed in the phonics screening check are highlighted for further intervention and targeted support before completing the screening check again at the end of Year 2. For children who do not succeed a second time, provision is made for them to receive intervention and targeted support in Key Stage 2. Children need to be taught the alphabetic code - the relationship between sounds and letters in English - and the screening check is designed to assess how much of it they know. The non-words in the check are useful for identifying children who may know the alphabetic code (or at least parts of it) but are struggling with the skills of blending sounds together to make whole words. There may also be children who are finding it difficult to learn to read whose problems are not related to blending or knowing the alphabetic code. The screening check still acts as an important diagnostic tool in the first instance. The check is intended as a test of phonic decoding - not as a wider test of reading - to assess whether children have learnt key knowledge and skills by the end of Year 1. Comprehension is a separate dimension and is tested at the end of Key Stages 1 and 2.

## **Feedback**

Children are provided with constructive and timely feedback in lessons. Teachers provide parents with feedback on their child's progress and achievement at parent's evening and through the end of year report. Assessment information is also passed onto the next teacher as part of transition between year groups and phases.

## **Curriculum Impact**

Our curriculum design will lead to outstanding progress for all pupils, regardless of their starting points, over time. Planned learning will progressively build on prior knowledge and understanding and support children in producing outcomes of the highest quality. Teaching and learning is adapted to cater for the needs of all pupils; providing support for children with special educational needs and enrichment and challenge for more able children.

### **End of EYFS**

By the end of EYFS children should be able to:

- read and understand simple sentences.
- use phonic knowledge to decode common words and read them aloud accurately.
- confidently read by sight the Stage 2 and 3 common exception words
- use phonic knowledge to write words in a way which matches how the sounds are said.
- write some irregular common words.

### **End of Year 1**

By the end of Year 1 children should be able to:

- apply phonic knowledge and skill as the prime approach to reading unfamiliar words that are not completely decodable;
- read many frequently encountered words automatically;
- read phonically decodable three-syllable words;
- read a range of age-appropriate texts fluently;
- demonstrate understanding of age-appropriate texts.
- read decodable words that end -s, -es, -ing, -ed, -er, -est
- Say the correct sound to grapheme for all the 40+ phonemes up to Stage 5.

### **End of Year 2**

By the end of Year 2 children should be able to:

- Read accurately most words of two or more syllables.
- Read most words containing common suffixes.
- Read and spell most common exception words for year 2.
- Read words accurately and fluently without overt sounding and blending.
- Sound out most unfamiliar words accurately, without hesitation.
- Segment spoken words into phonemes and represent these by graphemes.

## **Inclusion**

All children have equal access to the curriculum as expressed in our Equal Opportunities Policy. We will ensure that phonics is accessible to pupils by:

- Setting suitable learning objectives and differentiated success criteria.
- Responding to the variety of learning styles
- Overcoming potential barriers of individuals and groups This is monitored by analysing pupil performance throughout the school to ensure that there is no disparity between groups. In phonics, staff will ensure pupils with SEND receive appropriate support and higher attaining pupils are challenged appropriately.

## **Review**

This policy will be reviewed annually by staff and governors.

Review Date: 1<sup>st</sup> September 2023

[www.oxfordowl.co.uk](http://www.oxfordowl.co.uk)

[www.phonicsplay.co.uk](http://www.phonicsplay.co.uk)

[www.phonicsbloom.com](http://www.phonicsbloom.com)

[www.ictgames.com](http://www.ictgames.com)

[www.topmarks.co.uk](http://www.topmarks.co.uk)

[www.bbc.co.uk/cbeebies](http://www.bbc.co.uk/cbeebies)

[Sounds of the English Phonic Code - You tube Video](#)









## Independent Home Reading Books

Reading books which are read both at school and at home are phonically decodable and closely linked to the children's current learning. The reading books are carefully selected by the teacher to ensure children are reading at the appropriate level.

These are not meant to be over challenging and are, instead, to consolidate and practice the key sounds being taught.

Each book should be read several times with your child. You can discuss the story, characters and events and ask your child to practice the sounds learned.

Books will be changed in school **once** a week. Your child **may** have more than one book to practice at home.







