

PHONICS AT WINDMILL PRIMARY SCHOOL

Intent

We value reading as a key life skill, and are dedicated to enabling our children to become lifelong readers and have a love of literature.

We recognise that mastery in phonics is fundamental to children being able to access a broad range of fiction and non-fiction texts, across the curriculum. We aim to achieve this by teaching phonics systematically with a relentless drive to address the needs of all learners.

Given our school context of significant socio-economic deprivation, ensuring children have the cultural capital and experiences to become engrossed and immersed in reading is vital.

Implementation

We use synthetic phonics and follow the 'Read Write Inc' programme; this is a method of learning letter sounds (phonemes) and blending them together to read and write words. Phase One, 'Letters and Sounds' materials are used in our Nursery setting. In addition to this, children are taught sight words linked to the National Curriculum.

Children in Reception and Year 1 have daily phonics sessions in small groups where they participate in speaking, listening and reading activities, which are matched to their starting points and developing needs. The teachers draw upon observations and continuous assessment to ensure children are stretched and challenged and to identify children who may need additional support. Children work through the different 'Read Write Inc' sets, learning and developing their phonics sounds and knowledge.

Children in Nursery begin with Phase One, 'Letters and Sounds', which provides a range of listening activities through play, to develop their listening skills and to develop their awareness of environmental sounds, rhyme and story.

As children move into Reception, they continue to build upon the listening activities and are introduced to 'Read Write Inc' set 1, which marks the start of systematic phonic work. Grapheme-phoneme correspondence is introduced. The process of segmenting whole words and selecting letters to represent those phonemes is taught, writing the letters to encode words. Set 1 completes the teaching of one letter, one sound and the more commonly used digraphs in grapheme-phoneme correspondence. It also moves on to cover sounds represented by more than one letter. At the initial stage of set one sounds, just one grapheme (symbol - letter) is given for each phoneme. When children in Year 1 have a solid foundation of Set 1 sounds, they quickly progress into Set 2, where they start to read and spell words containing two letters one sound. A small number of children, who may still need to consolidate Set 1 sounds, may not be explicitly taught set 2 sounds in Reception, but they will come across many of the graphemes through adult modelling of reading and writing for example. All children in Reception participate in daily Read Write Inc sessions and will link their writing to the Read Write Inc sounds and books. On entry into Reception, parents/carers are welcomed into school and supported through parent teacher workshop on phonics and early reading.

On entry into Year 1, children will consolidate Read Write Inc Set 2 sounds. Once Set 2 sounds are secure, children in Year 1 will progress onto Set 3 sounds, where they learn split digraphs. It is expected that by the end of Year 1, all children will be able to read and write Set 1, 2 and 3 sounds. Children who exceed this expectation in Year 1 start to learn alternative pronunciations and spellings for graphemes they already know. All children in Year 1 participate in daily Read Write Inc sessions.

It is expected that children entering Year 2 will begin to develop a variety of spelling strategies including homophones (word specific spellings) e.g. see/ sea, spelling of words with prefixes and suffixes, doubling and dropping letters where necessary. Also, the accurate spelling of words containing unusual grapheme-phoneme correspondences e.g. laughs, two. Children who have not passed the Year 1 phonics check will continue to participate in small group interventions using the 'Read Write Inc' phonics programme, throughout the remaining time in Year 1 and in future years - until they pass the check.

Many activities take place which promote pre-reading skills. Children become aware of print in their environment and match pictures and words. Language comprehension is developed by talking and reading to the children. Initially, as children learn to read, they are given a picture book with no words with the intention that they will share the book and take part in a conversation generated by the pictures. Gradually, as the children's knowledge of letters and sounds develop, they begin to phonetically decode words.

The first books given are books which are fully phonetically decodable and linked to the phonics set the child is on so their learning is practised and reinforced at home. Children are able to, if they wish, take an additional book home, which exposes them to phonics beyond their phase to share and read for pleasure. Our reading books are organised into sets.

The school spelling program complements the phonics learning from Reception through to the end of KS2. KS2 children are taught the spelling patterns in line with the national curriculum for their year group. Children who did not pass the phonics screening check are identified and, if there are still gaps in learning, they participate in 'Read Write Inc' phonics interventions.

Phonics teaching progression EYFS and KS1

KS/ Year Group	EYFS – Nursery			EYFS - Reception			KS1 – Year 1			KS2 – Year 2
Term	Autumn	Spring	Summer	Autumn	Spring	Summer	Autumn	Spring	Summer	
Phonics phase	Letters and sounds	Letters and sounds	Letters and sounds	Read Write Inc Set 1	Read Write Inc Set 1/2	Read Write Inc All Set 2	Read Write Inc Set 2	Read Write Inc Set 2/3	Read Write Inc Set 2/3	Homophones Prefixes and suffixes Unusual grapheme-phoneme correspondence Children who did not pass the phonics screening check receive Read Write Inc interventions.

NB: This progression document is a guide to when children should be taught the different Read Write Inc sets from nursery to Year 2. All staff are reminded that children DO NOT learn at the same rate and therefore progression will NOT be the same for every child. Additional intervention will ensure no child is left behind.

Impact

Ongoing formative assessment takes place within each phonics lesson. This includes: teacher observations, questioning and discussions. Phonics Tracker is used by EYFS and KS1 staff as an assessment tool to track progress and children's ability to read individual sounds and blend sounds into words. Year 1 staff also use the phonics screening tool on Phonics Tracker to track progress towards the phonics screening test at the end of Year 1. These outcomes are fed forward into timely teacher intervention and subsequent planning to ensure gaps in phonological knowledge are closed and progress is not limited. Pupil progress will also identify precise actions and objectives for targeted focus children, including the lowest 20% who are not likely to meet the required standard of the Phonics Screening Check.

Children's progress is continually reviewed to allow for movement between ability groups, and children move phonics groups when it is felt necessary to meet their needs. Children are regularly moved onto the next set of reading books when their fluency and understanding show that they are ready.

The national Phonics Screening Check is implemented in June of Year 1. The purpose of the screening check is to confirm that all children have learned phonic decoding to an age-appropriate standard. The children who did not meet the required standard for the check in Year 1 attempt it again in Year 2 with additional support. As children enter KS2, provision is made for those children still requiring daily phonics. This means that children who have phonics knowledge gaps are given support that means they can access the whole curriculum.

We recognise that quality first teaching in phonics is the essential first step in improving outcomes for all children. With this in mind, we ensure that teachers and teaching assistants are kept up to date on the latest initiatives. This is through continuous professional development by outside providers and within school. In response to monitoring, evaluation and review outcomes, weaker areas in staff subject knowledge and pedagogy are developed through the school's coaching/mentoring programme. We ensure that the most confident staff members in delivering the 'Read Write Inc' scheme are placed with the children who most need that specialist teaching and we frequently evaluate the teaching of phonics in all areas of the school.