

Phonics

We teach reading with a 'phonics first' approach and follow the First Class Phonics scheme of work. This scheme was chosen as it is successfully matched to the Year One Phonics Screening Check. The scheme organises phonic knowledge into Letter Sets which are ordered sequentially to ensure good progression through EYFS and Year One.

Progression

All children within EYFS and Key Stage 1 are taught phonics in daily, targeted sessions. This begins in Nursery, where children are working on phase 1. They begin by focussing on general sound discrimination; learning to distinguish environmental sounds, exploring instrumental sounds and body percussion. They also explore rhythm and rhyme, alliteration and voice sounds. Once children are able to successfully say phonemes using the correct speech sounds, they move onto oral blending and segmenting. There is a clear focus on pace and progression and once children are able to orally blend and segment, they move into phase 2.

In Reception, we continue to build on the children's development in phonics and, once they are ready, phase 2 is introduced. All phonics teaching is multi-sensory and is designed to engage and meet the needs of all learners. During phase 2, children use the common consonants and vowels for segmenting and blending CVC words and they become more familiar with grapheme phoneme correspondence. Phase 4 is later introduced (CCVC, CVCC, VCC, CVC) using the graphemes taught in phase 2. Letter names are introduced alongside letter sounds as we begin to introduce digraphs. Children are also taught the alphabet song and are introduced to both lower and upper case letters simultaneously. By the end of the Reception Year, most children are working within phase 3 and have gained a good understanding of GPCs for many of the 43 phonemes.

Guided group reading is introduced during the Reception year and children are involved in reading a range of phonically decodable texts linked to their stage of development. The core scheme we use in EYFS is 'Phonics Bug' as this successfully reinforces the children's phonics learning. Home reading books are also provided so that children can reinforce their phonics learning at home. Our home reading scheme is Rising Stars Reading Planet. There are regular, well planned opportunities for shared and guided reading and writing and this allows for the application of children's phonic knowledge.

In Key Stage 1, phonics teaching is continued in daily, focussed sessions and children continue to learn new grapheme phoneme correspondences and practise and apply these each day. During the Summer Term of Year 1, children's phonic knowledge is assessed using the National Phonics Screening Assessment. During this assessment, children work individually alongside a member of staff with whom they are familiar. They are required to segment and blend a range of 'real' and 'alien' words. Results of this screening check are shared with parents in the child's Summer report and additional support will continue to be in place for those children who have struggled to meet the requirements of the check. For those children, who are not yet secure in their phonic knowledge, a re-check is administered in the Summer term of Year 2.

During Year 2, daily phonics teaching continues and children continue to learn, re-visit, practise and apply grapheme-phoneme correspondences in reading and writing. Alongside this, children also begin to explore further spelling patterns and rules, for example rules for adding suffixes to root words where changes to the root are required. Throughout Key Stage 2, some children may still require additional support in developing their phonic knowledge and this often takes the form of additional, small group interventions alongside quality first teaching.

Tracking

Teachers track the progress of each child in their class through day to day assessment for learning and through half termly summative assessment points. The First Class Phonics tracking grids support accurate tracking towards the Phonics Screening Check. The tracking grids are used to also track Year Two children so they continue to make progress in phonics, ensuring they develop their word reading skills and make more accurate spelling choices. The First Class Teaching Records support accurate communication between teachers and TAs so that the teaching of phonics is reinforced in Guided Reading and Writing lessons.