

Phonics

Teaching of Reading-please refer to the website for the uploaded copy of Letters and Sounds.

We follow a revise – teach – practise – apply model, using the Letters and Sounds Guidance (2008). This is a systematic programme that builds on reading and spelling skills.

Phonics teaching focuses on two areas – phonic **knowledge** and phonic **skills**. Phonic knowledge is about children knowing which letters and combination of letters (graphemes) make which sounds (phonemes). Phonics skills are about teaching the children how to use their knowledge for reading and for writing. The scheme we use for phonics is an adaptation of letters and sounds. The reading scheme we use follows the Oxford Reading Tree.

In Reception, we teach the main way of making the first 44 sounds. At first, children are taught sound discrimination and are taught 3-4 sounds per week. They blend and segment these sounds. For example, they learn that c-a-t, sh-ee-p can be blended to make the word cat and sheep. We stretch out the word so the children can hear the sounds. These skills of blending and segmenting are essential for reading and writing. We teach these skills through fun games and activities.

In Year 1, we continue with the different phases and teach the blends of the different consonants, for example tr as in train and fr as in frog, building on the work in Reception. We also teach the alternative sounds, such as the different ways to make the long a sound – ai as in rain; a_e as in bake.

In Year 2, we continue to introduce the less common alternatives, such as the j sound in hedge/cage (-dge/ge). Year 2 work also involves learning different word endings

Some useful vocabulary about phonics

Phoneme - the smallest unit of sound in a word

Grapheme – how a sound is written down

Digraph – two letters making one sound, e.g. thin, boat

Trigraph - three letters making one sound, e.g. high, chair

Blending – putting sounds together to make words, e.g. c-a-t to make cat

Segmenting – identifying individual sounds in words, tap is made of t-a-p

We are highly committed to developing all children as readers as we recognise it to be a key skill for lifelong learning and enjoyment. Children learn to read using a range of skills – phonic decoding, language comprehension and word recognition. They are taught these skills through whole class, guided reading and individual reading sessions, as well as through literacy and phonic lessons. We place great emphasis on enjoyment of reading and use books throughout our curriculum to engage the children.