



# TUNBURY PRIMARY SCHOOL

## **Phonics Policy**

### **Rationale**

"If children get the fundamental skills of reading using phonics early on, it will give them a flying start and allow them to move quickly to reading books for themselves and achieving even more in the future." (DFE 2012)

The teaching of phonics underpins and is intricately linked to early reading and writing in the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1. We aim to provide high quality and systematic phonics teaching, to equip children with the skills needed to become fluent readers and confident writers. Synthetic phonics, as defined by Washtell (2010), is an approach to the teaching of phonics which works by isolating the phonemes in a word. The phonemes are then blended together in sequence to decode the word (known as segmenting and blending), teaching children the relationship between phonemes (sounds) and graphemes (written).

Phonics provides children with the tools needed to decode and segment unfamiliar words so that they are able to read, write and spell with understanding, fluency, confidence and accuracy, allowing them to become independent passionate readers.

### **Aims**

- To consistently structure and sequence phonics so that sounds are learnt, revised frequently, understanding consolidated and knowledge progressed.
- To teach phonics every day through fast paced, fun lessons. (Lesson duration: 20 minutes per lesson)
- To provide opportunities for children to apply their phonic knowledge in their reading and writing.
- To differentiate the phonics taught within class to suit the needs of the children. Teaching to the top and using resources and support staff effectively to aid accessibility to all.
- To use regular and accurate assessment to gain an understanding of the areas of strength, to track progression and to identify areas of weakness. When areas of weakness identified, intervention groups to be scheduled asap.
- To ensure that those teaching phonics have a secure knowledge and understanding of phonics.

### **Teaching and Progression**

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Pupils will be taught according to the required sequence of phonemes stated in the Letters and sounds documentation. Pupils will be encouraged to discover and explore phoneme patterns and will develop a range of skills including:

- Phonological awareness (Hearing sounds that make up our words; initial sounds, end sounds and rhyming words)
- Phonemic awareness (Recognising and working with individual sounds/phonemes)
- Blending and segmenting
- Decoding
- Letter formation

The activities set should consist of a variety of activities and should enable children to consolidate their understanding of previously taught phonemes and introduce and teach new phonemes. Therefore phonics sessions should consist of 4 parts:

- Review previous phonemes
- Teaching of new phonemes
- Practise new phonemes (orally and written)
- Apply new phonemes in a context.

Teachers will create weekly phonics plans which indicate the sounds that should be taught and revisited. Children will also be introduced to high frequency words or 'common exception words' alongside phonics teaching,

Phonics teaching should be multi-sensory and kinaesthetic and should be supported by a wide range of stimulating, interactive resources. The majority of the talking should be done by the children!

### **Resources**

- ICT resources (interactive whiteboard, PhonicsPlay, Education City)
- Flashcards, magnetic letters, whiteboards, phoneme frames
- Playdough, sand, paint
- All foundation and Key Stage 1 classrooms should include displays that illustrate phonemes alongside graphemes and displays showing phonetically irregular words in order to support learning. The daily/weekly sounds that children are learning should be evident in the classroom environment.

### **Expectations and Assessment**

Expectations of coverage in each year group:

Reception – To teach phonics daily for 20 minutes from the child's start date. To differentiate the groups within class to ensure each child is reaching their full potential and support is given where needed. All children to have completed phase 2 and 3 by the end of the year and ready to start phase 4 in Year 1.

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Year 1 – To teach phonics daily for 30 minutes. Differentiate within class to ensure each child received the correct support and challenge. All children to have completed phase 6 by the end of the year and to regularly revisit the sounds and tricky words learnt throughout their phonics learning.

Year 2 - To teach phonics daily for 30 minutes. Differentiate within class to ensure each child received the correct support and challenge. All children to have completed phase 4 and 5 by the end of the year and ready to start phase 6 in Year 2.

Assessments:

- Ongoing formative assessment will be used by the teacher and teaching assistant to determine how successful the children have been in their ability to recognise and write graphemes, orally blend and segment words and their ability to read and spell phonetically regular words. This is mainly achieved through questioning and observations made during the phonics lessons and the work produced by the children.
- Children in Year 1 will undertake a Phonics Screening Check towards the end of the academic year. We aim for the vast majority of our children to reach the expected standard and to therefore pass this.
- For children who fail to reach the expected standard, additional support will be provided and progress more closely monitored to ensure the Phonics Screening Check is passed during the Year 2 retake.
- If children fail to achieve the expected standard in the retake in Year 2, they will receive intervention in Year 3 to address the gaps in their learning.

### **Overview of the phonics screening check**

The phonics screening check is designed to confirm whether pupils have learnt phonic decoding to an appropriate standard. It will identify pupils who need extra help to improve their decoding skills.

The check consists of 20 real words and 20 pseudo-words that a pupil reads aloud to the teacher.

The check will take place in June when your child will read 40 words out loud to a teacher. You'll find out how your child did, and their teacher will assess whether he or she needs extra help with reading. If your child doesn't do well enough in the check they'll have to do it again in Year 2.

### **Parental Support**

Parents can gain an understanding of our phonics policy through Phonics training events, designed to help the parents understand and support the teaching of phonics at home. These will take place at the beginning of each academic year and each new phase.

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Parents should also be made aware of the phonics being taught at school through spellings being sent home and phonics grids. Teachers should be willing to provide parents with advice and resources to support their children's learning of phonics at home, if required to do so.

### **Roles and Responsibilities of the Phonics Co-ordinator**

- To ensure all members of staff responsible for the teaching of phonics are sufficiently trained to enable the quality and consistency of teaching required to ensure all children become fluent and confident readers and writers.
- To monitor progress throughout Key Stage 1, through looking at planning, work, observations and on-going discussions with the class teachers.
- To analyse results obtained from the Phonics Screening Checks, identifying groups of children who are making the expected standard and those who are failing to do so.
- To ensure classes are equipped with quality phonics resources.
- To ensure all classes have interactive and current phonics displays.
- To review and edit this policy.

As an end note: Rose's view that "*Phonic work should be set within a broad and rich curriculum*" (*Jim Rose, Independent review of the teaching of early reading p70, 2006*) The key to this is to see phonics as a piece of the literacy jigsaw not the jigsaw itself.