

Ingleby Mill Primary School



Phonics Policy

June 2021



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Rationale

What is Phonics?

Phonics is a way of teaching children to read quickly and skilfully. They are taught how to:

- recognise the sounds that each individual letter makes;
 - identify the sounds that different combinations of letters make - such as 'sh' or 'oo'; and
 - blend these sounds together from left to right to make a word. Children can then use this knowledge to 'de-code' new words that they hear or see. This is the first important step in learning to read.
- DfE 2013

Why Phonics?

Research shows that when phonics is taught in a structured way – starting with the easiest sounds and progressing through to the most complex – it is the most effective way of teaching young children to read. It is particularly helpful for children aged 5 to 7. Almost all children who receive good teaching of phonics will learn the skills they need to tackle new words. They can then go on to read any kind of text fluently and confidently, and to read for enjoyment. Children who have been taught phonics also tend to read more accurately than those taught using other methods, such as 'look and say'. This includes children who find learning to read difficult, for example those who have dyslexia.

DfE 2013

Aims

- To ensure that high-quality phonics work is priority particularly in EYFS and Year 1 and is seen and agreed by all staff as the most effective way of teaching young children to read.
- To teach grapheme-phoneme correspondences (GPCs) in a clearly defined sequence.
- To encourage children to apply the skill of blending phonemes to read a word.
- To teach children to apply the skills of segmenting words into phonemes to spell.
- For children to be aware that blending and segmenting are reversible processes.

The Curriculum, Teaching and Learning Expectation

At Ingleby Mill Primary School, the children are encouraged and expected to apply their phonic knowledge as their primary strategy for reading, writing and spelling across all curriculum areas. Teaching staff are aware of the importance of a 'phonics first' approach and the need for consistency and continuity across the key stages. This approach is crucial in helping children to reach their potential in becoming competent and confident readers.

Our school follows a bespoke Systematic, Synthetic Phonics programme that uses the Letters and Sounds document as a base for delivering high quality phonics teaching alongside a variety of high-quality resources such as Floppy's Phonics, Phonics Play, Twinkl Phonics and Bug Club Phonics for teaching phonemes.

Phonics is timetabled for discrete, daily sessions in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 for 20 – 30 minutes. In Nursery, children will access differentiated phase teaching through continuous provision, through the learning environment provision and through short guided groups as appropriate. All key persons to segment and blend words regularly and to have a secure knowledge of the Letters and Sounds programme through CPD.

In KS2, phonics is used as an intervention for those who have not reached the expected standard at the end of year 2. These sessions will work alongside discrete SPAG lessons and guided reading. Staff will plan for and utilise, resources that considers all learning styles, including visual, auditory and kinaesthetic learners. All phonics activities will be firmly focused on achieving the intended learning outcome. Children are encouraged to use their phonic skills across all curriculum subjects. All teachers and teaching assistants model the correct articulation of phonemes and children are given opportunities to articulate individual phonemes. A strong emphasis is placed on the application of phonic knowledge at the point of learning. An emphasis placed on correct letter formation by all staff (see Letters and Sounds document).

Planning

Phonics planning includes revisit/review/teach/apply assessment sections as recommended by the Letters and Sounds document. Where classes in Reception and KS1 are taught within differentiated groups, each teacher plans for their own group and any TA who leads phonic groups will have plans provided for them by the class teacher after consultation and discussion with the TA. Some more experienced TA's will plan for their own groups, after discussions with the class teacher. Phonics planning must allow pupils to gain a progressively deeper understanding of the phonetic structure of the English language. The ultimate aim being for all children to become fluent readers. Careful thought will be given to the provision of appropriately structured work for children with SEN, often through intervention groups. The most able children are identified so their individual needs are acknowledged. Planning ensures that the level of challenge is appropriate to their specific needs. In EYFS, we relate the Literacy development of the children to the objectives set out in the Birth to 5 Matters document and the Early Learning Goals. The children's learning includes developing letter and sound recognition, word building and word recognition as part of their phonic, spelling and handwriting development as well as the Letters and Sounds programme. Daily challenges reflecting previous phonics teaching are planned for. Pencil grip will be a focus linking then to correct letter formation. In EYFS, planning includes phonics within the continuous provision as this is where the consolidation and application of previous teaching will have most impact. Opportunities for all children to read and write every day will be evident in the practise or apply section of the planning format.

The Learning Environment

In EYFS the importance of phonics within the learning environment is paramount and is evident within all areas of learning. In EYFS and KS1, teachers ensure the classroom environments have an age appropriate display of all grapheme-phoneme correspondences. Tricky words will also be displayed and referred to. In KS2, displays will be in place as needed for that particular group of children. Correct letter formation information is displayed within the classroom environment

Assessment and Monitoring

In EYFS, phonic assessments are carried out on an individual basis every half term and also through continual informal observations. In KS1, phonics assessments are carried out half termly on a 1-1 basis. The assessments are conducted on 'Phonics Tracker' and the data collected is used to inform planning and intervention groups and for teachers to identify particular areas of need. The data is passed to the Phonics Lead for monitoring and analysis, and also to the next class teacher for the following academic year. Children not meeting age related expectations are targeted for small group work or precision teaching. This information is shared with parents during parent meetings.

The Year 1 Phonics Screening Check (June)

The Phonics Screening Check checks a child's phonic knowledge. It includes a mix of real words and "non-words" and assesses children's decoding skills. Children who have not met the standard in year 1 will retake in year 2. The check ensures that teachers understand which children need extra help with phonic decoding. Opportunities for continuous assessment will be identified in planning. At the end of each phase in Letters and Sounds, children will be assessed on their progress and regrouped accordingly, this is vital to ensure all children's needs are being met and that progress takes place.

The Role of the Phonics Lead

- To organise high quality phonics resources.
- To assist with the diagnosis and remedy of learning difficulties and provide support as needed.
- To encourage and lead training for teachers, TA's and parents.
- To keep informed about current developments by attending relevant training.
- To provide a strategic lead and direction for the subject.
- To monitor the standards of children's phonics and the quality of teaching by:
 - observing teaching within the discrete daily sessions
 - scrutinising planning
 - pupil interviews: Do children use the environment to support their phonics? Is the environment impacting on the children's learning?
 - carrying out learning walks. Do walks reflect learning? Are key words displayed?
- To monitor tracking grids and screening results (alongside KS1 lead).
- Is progress taking place for all children and all groups of children?
- What are the gaps in learning?

The Role of Parents and Carers

At parent meetings teachers emphasise the importance of phonics as the foundation of reading. Parents are expected to support the children's learning in school through suggested activities to be carried out at home. Weekly phonic activities will be sent home for parents to play with their child. Parents to support their child's reading at home by daily/weekly reading with their child then writing comments in the Reading Record Book. Correct letter formation information given to parents so this can be supported at home.

Resources (Non-exhaustive)

- Letters and Sounds
- Phonics-based Reading Scheme (Oxford Reading Tree)
- Floppy's Phonics
- Songbirds
- Project X
- Big Cat Phonics
- Bug Club Phonics
- Twinkl Phonics
- Smart Kids Letters and Sounds books and resources
- Phonics Play
- Nesy Reading and Spelling

Resources have been bought in to support the teaching of all phases and shared out amongst all classes. Additional resources will be supplied where necessary.

Review

The monitoring of this policy will be the responsibility of Danielle Elwell. This policy will be subject to a formal review if significant changes occur.

Sequence of teaching in a discrete phonics session

Introduction

Objectives and criteria for success



Revisit and review



Teach



Practise



Apply



Assess learning against criteria