



# Holy Trinity C of E Primary School

## Phonics Policy

Date policy last reviewed: 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2022

Date policy next reviewed: 20<sup>th</sup> July 2023

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## Intent:

**It is the vision that Holy Trinity C of E Primary School that our children will secure automatic decoding skills and progress from 'learning to read' to 'reading to learn' for both purpose and pleasure.**

To achieve our vision we must:

- Ensure phonics is taught daily.
- Ensure high quality, systematic phonic teaching.
- Ensure that all pupils make speedy progress in phonics and reading.
- Ensure that phonics is taught with consistency and continuity from Nursery to Year 2 or until the child is proficient.
- Differentiate phonics and spelling work according to the needs of pupils, so that all pupils are given sufficient challenge at a level at which they can experience success.
- Ensure children use and apply these phonic skills as a key strategy in their reading, with the expectation that they will become fluent readers by the end of Key Stage One.
- Promote the use of phonics as a key strategy in the teaching of early spelling and writing skills.

## 1. Rationale:

Competence in reading is the key to independent learning and at our school it is given the **highest priority**. Success in reading has a direct effect upon progress in all other areas of the curriculum and is crucial in developing children's self-confidence and motivation. The teaching of phonological skills plays a central role in the development of early reading skills. A consistent approach to teaching throughout EYFS and KS1 is fundamental to ensure continuity as pupils move through the school.

## 2. What is Phonics?

Phonics is a body of knowledge that is necessary for children to learn to read and spell. Because of the complex alphabetic code of English, children are taught explicitly the correspondences between letters and sounds (graphemes and phonemes), as well as the skill of blending the individual sounds together to read. The term 'synthetic' phonics refers to the verb 'synthesise', meaning 'to combine'. The skill of segmenting words into their individual sounds is needed for spelling. Word reading and spelling are 'reversible processes'. Reading involves blending sounds to say a whole word; spelling involves segmenting a whole word to identify the sounds in it.

### Phonemes

A phoneme is the smallest unit of sound that signals a contrast in meaning. For example:

- the difference between the words 'gap' and 'cap' is the difference between the phonemes /g/ and /k/ at the start of each word
- the difference between 'fine' and 'fight' is the difference between the phonemes /n/ and /t/ at the end
- the difference between 'stale' and 'stile' is the difference between the phonemes /ae/ and /igh/ in the middle of each word.

English has about 20 vowel phonemes and 24 consonant phonemes.

### Graphemes

A grapheme is a letter or group of letters that usually represents a single phoneme.

A grapheme can consist of:

- one letter, for example, 'b' – in big
- two letters (a digraph or a split digraph), for example, 'sh' in ship, 'a-e' in make
- three letters (a trigraph), for example, 'igh' in light
- four letters, for example, 'ough' in bough, 'eigh' in weight.

### Decoding (word reading)

To decode words, children are taught to look at graphemes in written words from left to right and to say each corresponding phoneme in turn. Then they blend the phonemes to say the whole word.

E.g. Children:

1. see the written word 'cat'
2. say the corresponding three phonemes /k/ /a/ /t/
3. blend the three phonemes to say the word 'cat'

### Encoding (spelling)

To encode words, children are taught to identify the phonemes in spoken words first. This is also referred to as 'segmenting' spoken words. Then they write the graphemes that represent the phonemes.

E.g. Children:

1. hear the spoken word 'dog'
2. segment the word 'dog' orally – /d/ /o/ /g/
3. write the three corresponding graphemes 'd', 'o', 'g' to spell the word 'dog'.

## 3. Teaching and Learning

High-quality phonic work will be most effective when:

- It is time limited, to promote confident readers by the end of Key Stage One.
- It is systematic, reinforcing and building upon previous learning to secure children's progress.
- It is taught discretely and daily at a brisk pace.

- Routines and activities within a phonics session are embedded so that there are no unnecessary explanations taking time away from teaching.
- There is consistency and continuity in the teaching of phonics from EYFS to Year 2.
- Teachers are engaging and motivating, as children will mirror their teacher's mood and attitude, pay attention and enjoy learning.
- Teaching spaces are well organised and allow children to focus on what they are learning.
- Teaching occurs in a quiet space. Children need to have the best chance to hear clearly and pay attention, because extraneous noise hinders their progress.
- It is part of a broad and rich curriculum that engages children in a range of activities and experiences to develop their speaking and listening skills and phonological awareness.
- There are opportunities to reinforce and apply phonic knowledge and skills across the curriculum and in such activities as independent, shared and guided reading and writing.

Teachers should:

- be clear about objectives for any session and make sure that the children understand them (e.g. 'By the end of this week you will all be able to read these sounds; today we are learning the first one.')
- expect all children to participate throughout phonics sessions, for example by using 'my turn, your turn'.
- make the most of the time for teaching and use activities that maximise the number of words children read and spell.
- make sure that children practise using the knowledge they have been taught in previous lessons until they can use it automatically, thus freeing up their capacity to learn new knowledge.
- support the children to connect the new knowledge with their previous learning.
- demonstrate new learning in bite-sized chunks.
- ensure children are given opportunities to apply what they have learnt.
- praise the children for working hard and paying attention, being specific about what they have done well.
- use assessment to determine next steps clearly, including identifying children who might need immediate extra support'.

Teachers should avoid:

- any activity that discourages whole class participation at all times, E.g. Asking one child to write on the board while others watch; asking children to take turns to read letters and words; taking feedback from individual children; playing games that involve turn-taking, e.g. 'Phonic Bingo' or 'What's in the box?'
- asking children to write independently, before they have the necessary skills: they do not know how to do it.
- correcting spelling without appreciating that a child has identified a sound correctly, but not the correct grapheme.
- Modelling phonically plausible but incorrect spellings: the danger is the children may remember the wrong spelling.
- Getting children to write on a mini-whiteboards on the carpet. This does not help children learn to hold a pencil and form letters correctly. To write, they should sit comfortably on a chair at a table. Using a whiteboard also means there is no paper record of the work, for the child, the teacher, or the parent.

## 4. Organisation

Holy Trinity C of E Primary School adopts the Systematic Synthetic Phonics programme (SSP) of **Bug Club Phonics**. Lessons are taught in line with the planning, resources and structure laid out in this scheme. See appendix 1 for the order in which grapheme/phoneme correspondences are taught. As a school we have a fidelity to this programme, which ensures that there is a consistency of practice across all classrooms.

### Nursery

- In Nursery children will have a phonics lesson every day that lasts around 20 minutes.
- These lessons will be planned using the resources available in the “Phase 1 – Pre-Reception Units” in Bug Club Phonics.
- These activities will be delivered in small home groups and be playful and interactive. Activities will concentrate on developing children’s speaking and listening skills and will lay the foundations for phonics work which will start in Phase 2 during their Reception year.
- The emphasis during phase 1 is to get children attuned to the sounds around them and ready to begin developing oral blending and segmenting skills.
- This phase is divided into 7 aspects: Environmental sounds, Instrumental sounds, Body percussion, Rhythm and Rhyme, Alliteration, Voice Sounds and Oral blending and segmenting
- It is intended that each of the first six aspects should be dipped into, rather than going through them in any order, with a balance of activities – which Bug Club Phonics supports. Aspect 7 will usually come later when children have had plenty of opportunity to develop their sounds discrimination skills

### Reception and Year 1

- In Reception and Year 1, children will have at least one phonics lesson every day that lasts approximately 30 minutes.
- If appropriate and in discussion with SLT, some cohorts may require two sessions a day for a fixed period of time to ensure there is sufficient time to learn and consolidate all required GPCs.
- Lessons will follow the Bug Club Phonics plans and teachers will ensure that children have the opportunity to revise GPCs, learn new GPCs, practice and apply in each session.
- The sequence and pace of learning set out by Bug Club Phonics will be followed to ensure most children meet ARE by the end of the year. (See appendix 1)
- Teachers will adapt planning and ensure that the revisit section of each session is tailored to the needs of their group/ class through the use of AFL.
- In Reception, children will use magnetic letters and boards on the carpet to segment within phonics lessons and when they are confident they will move to sitting at a table and recording in books.
- In Reception, Phonics will be taught whole class as much as possible but differentiation and smaller groups will be planned for depending on the cohorts specific needs. In year 1 children will be grouped appropriately in discussion with the English Lead.

### Year Two

- Pupils in Year Two will receive daily “SPAG” lessons (Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar) and teaching staff will initially use the Phase 6 units on Bug Club Phonics to support this teaching.
- Pupils in Year Two who do not pass the Year 1 Phonics screening will continue to receive daily phonics lessons.
- Staff are required to stick to the pace set out by SLT for the delivery of each phase of phonics, this will ensure that national expectations are met.

## Key Stage Two

- In Key Stage Two, provision will be made for those pupils who continue to need specific phonics support. The 'Fast Track Phonics' intervention will be delivered until those identified children have secure decoding skills.
- Children who enrol in our school during KS2 and are not working at an expected level in reading will be screened using the Fast Track Phonics assessment to see if they would benefit from Phonic intervention.

## **5. Assessment and Record Keeping**

All teachers should ensure that they are aware of individual children's needs through on-going formative assessment. Teachers should formally assess their children's progress at the end of each half term in order to inform the next stage of planning.

Assessment takes the form of a phonics check where the teacher will be able to assess the children's understanding of:

- Grapheme to phoneme correspondence
- The ability to segment words
- The ability to blend real and pseudo words
- Application of these skills in spelling

Assessment information will be recorded in the Phonics Tracking Grid (Appendix 2), which will be completed by the class teacher each half term. It is essential that analysis of the data is completed by the class teacher in order to have a clear picture of those pupils 'on track' to meet the expected level.

Following the completion of this half-termly assessment, phonics groups will be re-organised accordingly to efficiently maximize progress. Pupils falling behind will be identified as well as the lowest 20% of children in each year group. These pupils will receive extra phonics provision. These interventions will be closely monitored to ensure they are having sufficient impact.

At the end of Year 1 there is a statutory assessment - **Year 1 Phonics Screening Check** (*Standards and Testing Agency 2012*) which takes place in June of each year.

In Year 2, children who did not reach the required standard for the **Year 1 Phonics Screening Check** will need to be re-assessed. These children will then be required to retake the test in Y2 during the following June testing period. Pupils who did not take the test in Y1 will be expected to take it in Y2.

## **6. Reading and Reading Books**

Children will be encouraged to read aloud accurately books that are consistent with their developing phonic knowledge and that do not require them to use other strategies to work out words. As a school, we have invested in 'decodable' books that match the Bug Club Phonics scheme exactly. Children have the opportunity to read both hardcopy books and e-books with their online account, both in school and at home.

Pupils who are still at the early stages of learning to read are given ample practice in reading books that are closely matched to their developing phonic knowledge and knowledge of common exception words.

As soon as the decoding of most regular words and common exception words is embedded fully, the range of books that pupils can read independently will expand rapidly. Pupils will then have opportunities to exercise choice in selecting books and be taught how to do so.

## **7. Leadership and Management**

The subject leader, with the support of the Senior Leadership Team is responsible for raising standards and developing literacy across the school, monitoring the quality and impact of teaching and learning and the effective use of resources.

The subject leader will:

- Provide a strong vision and role model for staff
- Help identify training needs and address training needs as a result of audits, monitoring and evaluation programmes, induction and appraisal systems.
- Lead, arrange and support school based training for all staff and seek out any available external SSP training with accredited training providers
- Disseminate relevant advice and information from courses
- Provide advice and support, or refer to other colleagues with specialisms
- Liaise with key staff within the school to facilitate the teaching of reading.

## **8. Monitoring and Review**

It is the responsibility of our governing body to agree and then monitor the school Phonics Policy.

This policy will be reviewed and updated every two years by the subject leader in consultation with teaching staff.

Date compiled: 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2022

Date to be reviewed: 20<sup>th</sup> July 2023



## APPENDIX 1

### Programme structure

#### Unit structure

The following tables show what is covered in each of the units of *Bug Club Phonics*. (See also the section 'Bug Club Phonics and the phases of progression' on page 9.)

For reference purposes, Table 1 (covering Units 1–12) shows what will have already been taught in Reception (Primary 1).

**Table 1** Units 1–12 of *Bug Club Phonics Reception (Primary 1)*

Phase	Unit	Focus	Not fully decodable words (irregular words)
2	1	s, a, t, p	
	2	i, n, m, d	
	3	g, o, c, k	to
	4	ck, e, u, r	the, no, go
	5	h, b, f, ff, ll, ss	l, into, her
3	6	j, v, w, x	me, be
	7	y, z, zz, qu	he, my, by, she
	8	ch, sh, th, ng	they
	9	ai, ee, igh, oa oo (long), oo (short)	we, are
	10	ar, or, ur, ow, oi	you
	11	ear, air, ure, er	all, was, give, live
4	12	Adjacent consonants (cvcc, ccvc, ccvcc, cccvc, cccvcc)	said, have, like, so, do, some, come, were, there, little, one, when, out, what

The following table (Table 2) shows what is covered in each of Units 13–30, the Key Stage 1 (Primary 2 & 3) part of the programme.

**Table 2** Units 13–30 of *Bug Club Phonics Key Stage 1 (Primary 2 & 3)*

Phase	Unit	Focus	Irregular/high-frequency words
5	13	wh, ph,	oh, their, people
	14	ay, a-e, eigh/ey/ei (long a)	Mr, Mrs, Ms
	15	ea, e-e, ie/ey/y (long e)	looked, called, asked
	16	ie, i-e, y, i (long i)	water, where
	17	ow, o-e, o/oe (long o)	who, again
	18	ew, ue, u-e (long o), u/oul, (short oo)	thought, through
	19	aw, au, al	work, laughed, because
	20	ir, er, ear	Thursday, Saturday, thirteen, thirty
	21	ou, oy	different, any, many
	22	ere/eer, are/ear	eyes, friends
23	c, k, ck, ch	two, once	
24	c(e)/c(i)/c(y), sc/ st(l) se	great, clothes	
25	g(e)/g(i)/g(y), dge	it's, I'm, I'll, I've	
26	le, mb, kn/gn, wr	don't, can't, didn't	
27	tch, sh, ea, zh, (w)a, o	first, second, third	
6	28	suffix morphemes ing, ed	clearing, gleaming, rained, mailed
	29	plural morphemes s, es	men, mice, feet, teeth, sheep
	30	prefix morphemes re, un prefix+root+suffix	vowel, consonant, prefix, suffix, syllable

APPENDIX 2

# HOLY TRINITY CE PRIMARY SCHOOL PHONICS TRACKING SHEET

Class: \_\_\_\_\_ Academic Year: 2021 - 2022

Baseline Autumn 2** Spring 1 Spring 2** Summer 1 Summer 2**	Nursery		RECEPTION ON TRACK									YEAR 1 ON TRACK		
	P2: Oral Blending 1 - 10	P2 Single Phonemes 1 - 10	P2 Single Phonemes 11 - 23	P2: Word Blending 0 - 8	P2: Word Blending 9- 16	P2: Word Blending 17 - 24	P3: Word Blending 0 - 14	P3: Word Blending 15- 29	P3: Word Blending 30 - 42	P4: Word Blending 0 - 8	P4: Word Blending 9 - 16	P5: Word Blending 0 - 12	P5: Word Blending 13 - 24	P5: Word Blending 25 - 36
Name														

TARGET FOR THIS ACADEMIC YEAR: **80%**

BASELINE	Aut 1		Aut 2		Spr1		Spr2		Sum1		Sum2	
% of pupils on track or above	% of pupils on track or above		% of pupils on track or above		% of pupils on track or above		% of pupils on track or above		% of pupils on track or above		% of pupils on track or above	
% of pupils 1 term below	% of pupils 1 or 2 sub levels below on track		% of pupils 1 or 2 sub levels below on track		% of pupils 1 or 2 sub levels below on track		% of pupils 1 or 2 sub levels below on track		% of pupils 1 or 2 sub levels below on track		% of pupils 1 or 2 sub levels below on track	
% of pupils more than 1 term below	% of pupils sig below		% of pupils sig below		% of pupils sig below		% of pupils sig below		% of pupils sig below		% of pupils sig below	



