



Phonics Policy

Approved by Governors

September 2023

To be reviewed

September 2025 (or in light of any new legislation)



Whitefield Infant School and Nursery

Phonics



1. Subject Intent:

At Whitefield School we embed phonics learning by teaching high quality, stimulating and active sessions in a systematic way, so all children develop a secure understanding of letters and sounds, enabling them to read with fluency and apply knowledge and skills to spell accurately within their writing across the curriculum.

2. Aims of phonics at Whitefield:

Our aims in teaching phonics include the following:

- To teach children to blend to read and segment to spell.
- To teach children to read and write all 44 graphemes in the English language.
- To provide children with the skills to become fluent readers.
- To ensure that the teaching of phonics is energetic, interactive and engaging.
- To teach children strategies to help remember common exception words and key words, so that spelling and reading of these words becomes automatic.
- To encourage pupils to apply their phonic skills in all curriculum areas.
- To ensure all staff have an excellent subject knowledge through CPD training.

3. Teaching and Learning; Development of Skills and Knowledge:

At Whitefield Infant School, a high quality, systematic, synthetic phonics session is taught for at least 20 minutes each day. We follow the 'Red Rose Letters and Sounds' programme with fidelity paired with our 'Whitefield actions' to aid memory and retrieval of the phonemes/graphemes taught. We strive to ensure phonics is delivered with a multi-sensory approach, encompassing simultaneous visual, auditory and kinaesthetic activities that are fun and engaging for all children. Children's attainment is continually assessed to ensure progression and targeted interventions are put in place to support each child's individual needs. Additionally we ensure phonics is embedded as part of a broad and rich curriculum that provides children with opportunities to reinforce and apply their phonic knowledge and skills.

Reading

Phonics skills are continually modelled, reinforced and embedded when children are engaging in shared reading, 1:1 reading or during guided reading sessions. All home and guided reading books are carefully selected to match the children's developing phonic knowledge, so that every child can experience success in their reading by using the skills they have so far been taught. Children are taught to sound out graphemes and blend them together from left to right. Once children are confident with taught phonemes they are encouraged to read words with those sounds with increasing fluency, rather than overt sounding out.

Common Exception Words

Children are taught high frequency words that do not conform completely to grapheme-phoneme correspondence rules; we call these 'tricky' words. Children are specifically taught the 'tricky' part of

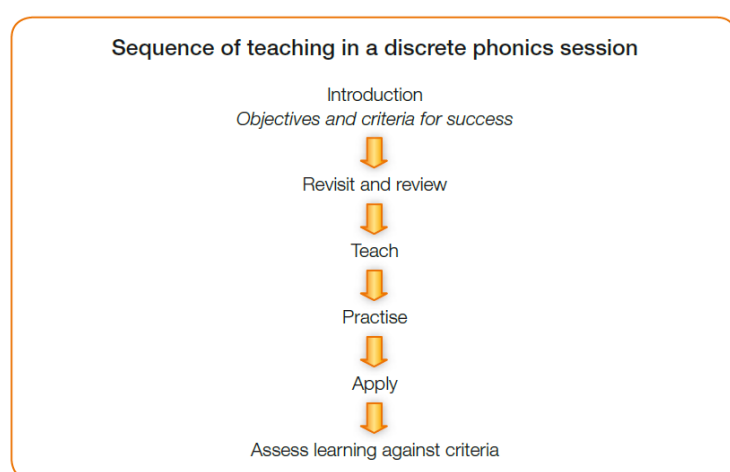
the word and strategies to remember this. They are taught to apply their knowledge of these words in reading and writing. The words are taken from phases 2 to 5 of the 'Red Rose Letters and Sounds' programme.

Writing

When writing children are taught to segment phonemes and use their knowledge of graphemes to spell phonetically plausible words with independence. It is an expectation that common exception/ key words within that child's ability are spelt correctly from memory, incorrect spellings of these words are corrected and discussed during marking and feedback.

4. Implementation; How phonics is structured through our school:

At Whitefield we follow the 'Red Rose Letters and Sounds' programme to ensure a consistent system is followed, and that learning can be tracked and monitored within the systematic framework. All discrete phonics sessions are taught following the teaching sequence outlined below.



Revisit/Review	Review previous phonemes/graphemes taught, tricky words and any sounds that need to be recapped to secure learning.
Teach	- Explicitly teach a new phoneme and associated grapheme through the sequence 'hear it- say it, hear it- see it, see it - write it' - Teach blending and/or segmentation with the newly taught phoneme/grapheme. - Teach one tricky word highlighting the 'tricky part' of the word and strategies to remember this.
Practise	Engage the children in active learning giving them the opportunity to practise the phoneme/ grapheme taught.
Apply	Allow the children to apply their phonics learning by listening to, reading or writing sentences where the new phoneme/grapheme is put into a real life context.
Assess	Record significant observations so that they effectively inform next steps in teaching and learning.

Progression of skills		
Nursery	Phase 1	<i>Pupils will be taught to:</i> • Develop speaking and listening skills. • Developing language and vocabulary. • Explore environmental sounds, instrumental sound, body percussion, rhythm and rhyme, alliteration, voice sounds, oral blending and segmenting. • Develop curiosity about letters and sounds through classroom phonics areas. • Develop their phonological awareness, so that they can: - spot and suggest rhymes - count or clap syllables in words - recognise words with the same initial sound, such as 'money and mother'
Reception	Phase 2, 3 and 4	<i>Pupils will be taught:</i> Phase 2: • 19 letters including their sound and name. • To segment and blend letters including VC and CVC words. • To read some tricky words (words which are not phonetically decodable). • To read two syllable words and simple captions. Phase 3: • Another 25 graphemes. • To use their blending and segmenting knowledge when reading and spelling. • To read additional tricky words and they will begin to learn how to spell these. Phase 4: • Pupils will be given the opportunity to consolidate their knowledge of graphemes, segmenting and blending. • They will be focused on reading and spelling words with adjacent consonants and polysyllabic words. <i>Handwriting and letter formation will be taught daily and pupils will be provided with writing opportunities while accessing Continuous Provision.</i>
Year One	Revisit Phase 4 and teach Phase 5	<i>Pupils will be taught:</i> Phase 4: • Pupils will be given the opportunity to consolidate their knowledge of graphemes, segmenting and blending. They will be focused on reading and spelling words with adjacent consonants and polysyllabic words. Phase 5: • New graphemes and alternative pronunciations for the graphemes they already know. • To select the correct grapheme to represent phonemes when spelling
Year 2	Revisit Phase 5 and teach phase 6 following	<i>Pupils will be taught:</i> Revisit Phase 5: • New graphemes and alternative pronunciations for the graphemes they already know. • To select the correct grapheme to represent phonemes when spelling.

	the no nonsense spelling programme	Phase 6 Spelling rules and conventions, including past tense, adding suffixes, strategies for spelling longer words and words with irregularities.
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Planning

Teachers use the 'Red Rose Letters and Sounds' document as a basis for planning throughout phases 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5. All teachers follow the Red Rose Letters and Sounds phonics teaching sequence outlined above. Lessons are adapted by the teachers to meet the individual needs of their children. Once a child is secure in phase 5 phonics learning they will be taught phase 6 through the 'Red Rose Year 2 Spelling programme' which builds upon the 'Red Rose Letters and Sounds' document.

Grouping and Differentiation

We strive to make phonics accessible for all groups of learners through careful planning which accommodates different learning styles including, multi-sensory, visual, auditory and kinaesthetic. We aim for all children to reach their full potential and differentiate groups accordingly to ensure children can access phonics at their individual level. Grouping for phonics is decided in response to the needs of the children. Those children exceeding age related expectations are recognised through enrichment and those children below the expected standard are supported through intervention.

The interventions in place are as follows:

EYFS	- Children that are achieving below the national expectation engage in an extra phonics session daily. - The lowest 20% of all readers are targeted for daily reading interventions.
Year 1	- Children that are achieving below the national expectation attend the 'fast track phonics' intervention that is additional to their daily phonics session. - The lowest 20% of all readers are targeted for daily reading interventions.
Year 2	- Children that did not pass their year 1 phonics screening attend the 'fast track phonics' intervention that is additional to their daily phonics session. - The lowest 20% of all readers are targeted for daily reading interventions.

5. Equal Opportunities:

At Whitefield we believe that all children regardless of their gender, age ethnicity, academic or physical ability are given equal opportunities to reach their full potential successfully and confidently. Therefore, we aim to provide equal access to phonics for all children. We achieve this by ensuring the resources we use reflect our diverse society and that support and enhancement is put in place accordingly to structure or stretch those who need it. Additionally phonics groups are differentiated and are flexible to cater to the needs of all children. Teaching strategies are adapted to make lessons and the learning environment more conducive for children with specific learning differences and all staff are aware of SEND pupils and any specific targets that need to be addressed.

6. Staffing:

The teachers and teaching assistants in each class are responsible for delivering phonics sessions. We are fully committed to ensuring that all our staff have access to high quality, up to date training to ensure that teaching and learning is of a high quality. All staff are monitored termly.

7. Assessment and Recording:

Assessment for learning will take place continually throughout phonics lessons and planning and teaching is adapted accordingly. Formal assessments will take place every term checking the children's understanding of grapheme to phoneme correspondence, the ability to blend real and pseudo words, the reading and spelling of tricky word and any evidence of the application of these skills in the child's reading or writing. This information is collated and children's progress is monitored using a phonics tracker. The phonics lead (Rebecca Kearsley) will assess this data termly and identify any pupils requiring additional intervention and support. These tracking sheets are to be passed onto the new class teacher at the end of each academic year. Learning and reporting meetings are held with parents every term and report children's progression in phonics.

National Phonic Screening

All pupils in Year 1 will participate in the national phonics screening assessment during the summer term. This is used to assess children's attainment in phonics and to aid future teaching and learning. Children are expected to sound out and blend graphemes to read simple words (both real and pseudo). Children's phonics screening scores are then reported to parents at the end of the academic year. Children who have not reached the threshold level of the year 1 phonics reading check will receive targeted interventions through the 'fast track phonics programme' to support their progress with the aim of them passing the phonic reading check when they are re-tested in year 2.

8. Impact:

The impact our curriculum is measured in many ways;

- Subject leader monitoring
- Termly Governors reports, reporting termly subject impact
- Pupils workbooks
- Pupil voice
- Parental voice through questionnaires and workshops
- Learning walks
- Teaching and Learning Days
- Displays and learning environments around school

9. Cross-Curricular Links:

Phonics is embedded across all areas of the curriculum. Phonics knowledge and skills are continually reinforced and referred to in all subject areas when teaching and learning. Resources and displays in each classroom support the children in applying phonics to reading and writing.

10. The role of the subject leader:

- To take the lead in the policy development and the production of schemes of work to ensure progression and continuity in teaching.
- To support colleagues in the development of their planning and assessment.
- To monitor, evaluate and review the phonics curriculum throughout the school and advise the senior management team of action needed.
- To take responsibility for the purchase and organisation on central resources for phonics.
- To keep up-to-date with developments in phonics and share information with colleagues.
- To be responsible for the school portfolio with evidence of phonics.

11. Resources:

Red Rose Letters and Sounds planning document

12. Health and Safety:

Risk assessments are carried when children take part in activities outside of school.