



Phonics Policy

October 2018

Aims

At West Thurrock Academy, the prime approach in the teaching of early reading is through systematic and discrete, high-quality phonic work, to aid children to read fluently and become confident, independent writers. We use a mixture of the best programmes to provide our children with quality first phonics teaching.

We ensure that through continued professional development, all staff receive relevant, regular training so that they understand and are able to deliver high quality phonics teaching.

We aim to:

- ❖ Establish consistent high quality practice, progression and continuity in the teaching and learning of phonics and spelling through school.
- ❖ Differentiate phonics and spelling work according to the needs of the children, so that all children are given sufficient challenge at a level at which they can experience success.
- ❖ Give the children word work strategies that will enable them to become fluent readers and confident writers.

Guidelines

Beginner readers are taught:

- ❖ grapheme-phoneme correspondence in a clearly defined, incremental sequence.
- ❖ to apply the highly important skill of blending phonemes in the order in which they occur, all through a word to read it.
- ❖ to apply the skills of segmenting words into their constituent phonemes to spell.
- ❖ that blending and segmenting are reversible processes.

Nursery and Reception children will learn the Jolly Phonics actions for the phonemes and this will be continued throughout the school as needed.

High Quality Phonics

High quality phonics is most effective when:

- ❖ It is part of broad and rich curriculum that engages children in a range of activities and experiences to develop their speaking and listening skills and phonological awareness.
- ❖ It is multi-sensory, encompassing simultaneous visual, auditory and kinaesthetic activities to engage core learning.
- ❖ It is systematic and follows a carefully planned programme which reinforces and builds on previous learning to secure children's progress.
- ❖ Is taught discretely and daily at a brisk pace. There are opportunities to reinforce and apply acquired phonic knowledge and skills across the curriculum.
- ❖ Children's progress in developing and applying their phonic knowledge is carefully assessed and monitored.

Teaching and Learning

At West Thurrock Academy we will follow the Letters and Sounds principles and practice of high quality phonics. The six phases of the Letters and Sounds document provides a structure for the teachers to follow and plan children's progression. The teachers carefully adapt their planning to meet the needs of the children within their class. The teacher's individual assessment of individual children will inform the rate at which the children are able to progress through the phrases and adapt their pace accordingly.

Progression

Foundation Stage

Nursery will introduce Phase 1 phonics through small focused groups and activities. When appropriate, the practitioners will then introduce the initial sounds from phase 2.

Reception will introduce and complete Phase 2, Phase 3 and Phase 4 phonics. The phonic sessions will last 20 minutes and there are also enhanced phonic activities within the indoor and outdoor environment available for the children to explore independently throughout the day.

Key Stage 1

High quality phonics will be delivered to the whole class, each day for 20 minutes. The teacher will cater for the needs of every child and take account of the different learning styles and needs.

Year 1 will consolidate Reception work and teach Phase 5. Year 2 will consolidate Phase 5 and teach Phase 6 with a strong grammar link to the New Curriculum (2014).

It is important that the five phases are embedded and the children have a sound understanding of the key knowledge and skills before the final sixth phase is introduced in Year 2. Year 2 teachers will teach the key elements of phase 6 by the end of the academic year.

Key Stage 2

Year 3 will revisit gaps in learning for underachieving children (Wave 2) and consolidate spelling patterns from Phase 6, as well as spelling patterns from the Literacy Curriculum, within whole class teaching.

Years 4, 5 and 6 will revisit gaps in learning for underachieving children (Wave 2) and consolidate spelling and patterns and rules. This will be built into the handwriting and spelling sessions in early morning work.

There are individual year group folders on the shared drive which have all of the necessary display resources. Each year group should have the same resources and there will be a clear progression throughout the years.

Assessment

Reception children, or new arrivals to the school, will be individually assessed on their knowledge of letters and sounds. Reception children will also be screened using SpeechLink which identifies any concerns which could inhibit phonic development.

All teachers will ensure that they are aware of individual children's needs through formative assessments. Teachers will formally assess their children's progress in order to inform their planning. Teachers will have a Letters and Sounds phase booklet to track the whole class' progress term by term. Assessments will assess the children's:

- ❖ Understanding of grapheme to phoneme correspondence including diagraphs/trigraphs.
- ❖ Knowledge of reading and spelling tricky words and high frequency words.

This assessment will travel with them through their school life and be a working document for teachers. The Phonics leader will monitor these at the end of each term.

At the end of Year 1 the children will take the statutory National Phonics Screening Test. If children are still working towards the phonic test by the end of Year 1 then they will work in a small intervention groups to enable them to retake the test in Year 2.

Interventions

If we feel that a child is not making the required progress, he or she will be placed into an appropriate intervention.

Wave 2 – if the child is achieving slightly below the required progress, he or she will receive small group support in Key Stage 1 and Reception.

Wave 3 – at any point in their school career, if we feel the child is achieving significantly below the required progress then they will receive 1:1 support in the form of Reading Recovery (KS2) or an intervention based on the child's individual needs.

Booster clubs – Year 1 and 2 children who are not on track to pass the Phonics Screening Check will be placed in Booster clubs in the Autumn term to support with their learning and understanding of phonics.

Speechlink (Nursery and Reception) – if a child is not making the required progress due to minor speech difficulties (and they are not being seen by a dedicated speech therapist), then we will assess and support them using our 1:1 Speechlink programme.

Planning

Teachers in Foundation Stage and Year 1 use the weekly planning from the Phonics Play subscription and work collaboratively to ensure coverage is even across the phase.

Teachers in Years 2 will use Phonics Play to begin with and then use Spelling Play planning for Phase 6/grammar and Year 3 will plan phonics/grammar sessions in their Literacy weekly planning.

Resources (including ICT)

There are many resources available within the school, mostly in the Foundation Stage. We have a subscription to the Phonics Play website and we also have the 'Floppy's Phonics - Sounds and Letters' software. There are year group

differentiated resources on the Shared Drive which each year group should have displayed in class. Each teacher has a Jumpstart Literacy handbook (Pie Corbett), which has spelling games to consolidate learning.

Cross-curricular opportunities

Skills acquired in phonics lessons for learning to read and write are applied in all areas of learning throughout the school.

Evidence should be seen across the school of phonics being used for spelling key vocabulary, for example on science displays or working walls.

Inclusion

We aim to provide for all children so that they achieve as highly as they can in English according to their individual abilities. We will identify which pupils or groups of pupils are under-achieving and take steps to improve their attainment. Gifted children will be identified and suitable learning challenges provided.

SMSC

The ethos of our school underpins the Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural development of all learners. Within this, Phonic sessions are designed to be lively and fun in order to promote a sense of enjoyment and fascination in learning how to read and understand the world. Children learn about cultural influences that have shaped our language and are taught to understand, appreciate and tolerate the range of dialects found within our school and the wider community.

Whenever possible, SMSC opportunities are promoted within Phonic lessons to develop children's self-esteem, self-confidence and respect for their own and other cultures as well as the key skills of reading and writing.

Equal opportunities

All children are provided with equal access to the English curriculum. We aim to provide suitable learning opportunities regardless of gender, ethnicity or home background.