

Blanford Mere Nursery & Primary School



Phonics Policy

Date adopted by governors
February 2021
To be reviewed
February 2024

PHONICS POLICY

AIMS

The aims of this policy are to provide teachers, teaching assistants, Governors and parents with an outline of how we teach phonics at Blanford Mere Primary School.

OUR PHILOSOPHY

- At Blanford Mere, we believe that the teaching of high quality systematic phonic work is the prime approach to decoding print at an early age.
- We enable children to start learning phonic knowledge and skills systematically from when they arrive in Reception with the expectation that they will be fluent readers having secured word recognition skills by the end of Key Stage 1
- To fully prepare the children for the KS1 screening test that takes place in June of each year during Year One.
- We will teach discrete daily sessions progressing from simple to more complex phonic knowledge and skills covering the major grapheme-phoneme correspondences.
- We will enable the children's progress to be assessed.
- We will use a multi-sensory approach so that children learn variously from activities which are designed to secure essential phonic knowledge and skills.
- We will demonstrate that phonemes should be blended in order from left to right.
- We will teach children to apply their phonic knowledge and skills as their first approach to reading and spelling, even if a word is not completely phonically regular.
- Children will be taught High Frequency Words, including common exception words as outlined in the 2014 National Curriculum.
- We will ensure that children have the opportunity to read texts and spell words that are within their reach of phonic knowledge and skills, even though every single word in the text may not be entirely decodable by the children unaided.
- We will ensure that children will hear, share and discuss a wide range of high-quality books to develop a love of reading and broaden their vocabulary.

REMOTE LEARNING

Remote learning for handwriting will be shared with families when they are absent due to Covid related reasons.

Remote learning will not be available to those who are ill with a non-Covid related illness and would not normally attend school, or to those children whose parents choose to keep them at home when they have not been advised to do so. This is because children need to be in school and, in line with Government guidance, the school will strongly promote face-to-face contact through school attendance.

Work will NOT be set on the first day of isolation to allow staff time to prepare. Work will be sent from the second day onwards. Staff will prepare work the day before it is set and will ensure that it is published the following morning.

- A child who has a member of their household, who has tested positive for Covid-19 and are not permitted to attend school because they have been in close contact and have been advised to self-isolate;
- A child's whole bubble or identified pupils who is not permitted to attend school because they, or another member of their bubble, have tested positive for Covid-19.
- A child unable to attend school due to a local or national lockdown

NATIONAL CURRICULUM EXPECTATIONS

The main aim of the English National Curriculum is as follows:

‘The overarching aim for English in the national curriculum is to promote high standards of language and literacy by equipping pupils with a strong command of the spoken and written language, and to develop their love of literature through widespread reading for enjoyment’

National Curriculum 2014

On the teaching of reading:

‘Skilled word reading involves both the speedy working out of the pronunciation of unfamiliar printed words (decoding) and the speedy recognition of familiar printed words. Underpinning both is the understanding that the letters on the page represent the sounds in spoken words. This is why phonics should be emphasized in the early teaching of reading to beginners (i.e. unskilled readers) when they start school.’

National Curriculum for English 2014

HOW DO WE TEACH PHONICS AT BLANFORD MERE?

We teach phonics using the guidance from the ‘Jolly Phonics’ scheme. We use our own planning format, created as a staff team, with both quality of planning and workload implications in mind. Staff complete weekly planning for phonics which ensures progression and effective, high quality teaching.

Fantastic Foundations – EYFS: In both Nursery and Reception, teaching is underpinned by the principles of ‘Fantastic Foundations’. Following EEF research, this programme aims to boost the spoken and written vocabulary of children in the EYFS. Through devices and games such as Picture Power, Together Talk, Word Collector and Together Writing, children are encouraged to develop their spoken and written vocabulary. The three principles that underpin Fantastic Foundations are;

1. Understanding of the uniqueness of each child
2. Nurturing deep talk and developing listening
3. Providing a rich repertoire of real and imagined experiences to ignite writing

Lessons: Discrete phonics lessons take place daily across Reception and Key Stage 1. They follow the structure of ‘Review, teach, practise, apply’ to ensure that children are consolidating phonic knowledge and skills over time; and they are able to apply them in context. Consequently, wherever possible, links between phonic knowledge and understanding are made to learning in both reading and writing. These lessons proceed at a pace appropriate to the developmental needs of the children, and include daily teaching of high frequency words. Where possible, lessons should be practical and use a range of interactive resources. Activities are carefully chosen to ensure that children develop skills in aural discrimination, phonemic and rhyme awareness, blending and segmenting as well as grapheme correspondence.

Phonics in Reception and Key Stage 1 is taught in a whole class format, to ensure appropriate coverage of sounds. Any children who are developing misconceptions or gaps in their learning will be swiftly targeted by a short intervention session.

In KS2, Phonics intervention is provided for those children who have not passed the phonics retake in Year 2 and for children not secure within phase 6 moving into Year 3.

Resources: All phonic teachers have a range of resources to use which are appropriate for the level at which the children are working.

We expect there to be phase appropriate displays in Reception, Key Stage 1 classrooms and intervention areas to support the teaching and application of phonics in reading and writing. High Frequency Words and vocabulary, as cited in the National Curriculum 2014, also need to be on display in every classroom.

Phonics Intervention: Children who still need extra support to develop their phonic knowledge across KS1 and KS2 are identified and targeted for intervention. Interventions should be run daily for children in KS1 in order to facilitate accelerated progress. Interventions will be delivered by a combination of the class teacher and teaching assistant to allow for equal progression and assessment opportunities.

Assessment: Assessment is regarded as an integral part of teaching and learning and is a continuous process. It is the class teacher's responsibility to monitor the progress made by all children in their class. Phonic assessments are undertaken each term against the appropriate phase. In June each year, Year One children have to undertake a phonic screening test where Pseudo (Alien) and real words have to be read with a teacher on a one-to-one basis. The pass mark for this test over the past 6 years has been to read 32/40 words, but this is subject to change. At the time of writing, the National Average of children passing the phonics check is 81%. Children who do not pass the Year One Screening Check are identified at the end of year for additional support. This is continued throughout Year Two, where they must re-take the test in June. If a child does not pass the phonics screening in either year (Y1 or Y2), they will be targeted for further high-quality intervention in Year Three and given specific targets to work towards.

The phonics leader is responsible for phonics throughout the school. This includes:

- Ensuring continuity and progression from year group to year group
- Providing all members of staff with guidelines and a scheme of work.
- Advising on in-service training for staff. This will be in line with the School Development Plan, within the confines of the school budget.
- Advising and supporting colleagues in the implementation and assessment of phonics throughout the school.
- Resourcing of this area of the curriculum across school.
- Monitoring the quality of teaching and learning in phonics across school.

The class teacher is responsible for:

- Ensuring progression in the acquisition of phonic knowledge
- Developing and updating skills, knowledge and understanding of phonics.
- Identifying needs in phonics and taking advantage of training opportunities.
- Keep appropriate on going assessment records.
- Plan effectively for phonics.
- Informing pupils and parents of the children's progress, achievement and attainment.

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