

GREAT CHESTERFORD C. OF E. PRIMARY ACADEMY



Two are better off than one, because together they can work more effectively.

Ecclesiastes 4:9

Phonics Policy

“Together We Are Great”

At Great Chesterford C. of E. Primary Academy, we aim to provide the best possible education for each child within the context of a caring Christian community. Our school values underpin all aspects of school life, including behaviour and relationships within our school. Our school values are: God’s Guidance, Respect One Another, Excellent Behaviour, Aiming High and Tremendous Teamwork.

Our Golden Rule is: “to treat others as you would like to be treated”.

Phonics is taught as part of a broad and balanced curriculum, which will enable each and every child to develop confidently to the very best of their ability. Our curriculum promotes the spiritual, cultural, intellectual, moral, mental physical, health and social well-being of each child. We strive to provide a high standard of education for all children, irrespective of gender, culture, ability or aptitude.

Aims and Objectives

This policy outlines how phonics is taught in Key Stage 1 and Reception (Early Years Foundation Stage). It should be read in conjunction with the school’s English policy. Through our teaching of phonics, we aim for every child to become a confident and enthusiastic reader and to use their phonic skills to make phonetically correct attempts at spellings in their writing. The ability to decode words through synthesis and segmentation is a key skill in reading and writing but it must also be combined with other strategies to develop fluency and understanding. We also teach children to read and spell sight vocabulary and common exception words.

Teaching Phonics

Our phonics programme is based on the following principles:-

- a systematic approach to teaching synthetic phonics
- daily short, fast paced, teaching sessions
- interleaved learning
- modelling by an adult
- active participation throughout each session
- application of learning

Organisation – Reception and Year 1

Phonics is taught twice a day and each session lasts between 12-15 minutes. The sessions are broken down in to:

- Synthesis (2 minutes)
- Segmentation (2 minutes)
- Phonics – reading (2 minutes)
- Sight vocabulary (2 minutes)
- Application (4-7 minutes)

Initially the sequence of “my turn/together/your turn” is used when children are learning a new phoneme. This three step approach allows for modelling, leading and then testing. As the children become more secure, these steps can be reduced to “my turn/your turn” and then just “your turn”.

Synthesis and segmentation

Synthesis is the phonological skill that is linked to reading. It enables the child to sound out the phonemes in a word and put them together to read the whole word. For example,

d...i...gdig

sh...i...pship

p....ow...er...power

Segmentation is the phonological skill that is linked to spelling. It enables the child to break down the word into phonemes to spell a word. For example,

pat ...p...a...t

trick...t...r...i...ck

fairground...f...air...g...r...ou...n...d

Phonics – reading

During this session, children use their knowledge of phonemes and graphemes to enable them to read words. Initially, the children will learn the 26 initial phonemes/graphemes and then progress to reading two and three sound phonically regular words, for example, at, sun. Once they are fluent, children progress to phonically regular words that contain digraphs and trigraphs. For example, track, train, light.

The children follow three steps when learning to read these words.

- 1 Say out loud each phoneme as the teacher points to it and then say the whole word.
- 2 Say each sound in their head as the teacher points to it and then say the word aloud.
- 3 The teacher runs their finger under the whole word and just the word is said aloud.

Sight words

Children initially learn to read one hundred common sight words and begin to practise spelling them. Many of these words are not phonically regular and it is important for the children's fluency when reading to be able to recognise the word on sight.

Application of learning

It is important that the children apply the skills that they are learning in every phonics session. This takes place in various ways, for example, through sharing a text, shared writing, "speedy spellings" or playing phonics games. The children have access to a wide range of high quality resources to support their learning.

Vocabulary sessions are also included where the children learn new words and their meaning. The children are then encouraged to include these words in their speaking and writing.

Application of learning occurs throughout the day during other lessons where children are expected to use their phonics skills in their reading and their writing.

Organisation – Year 2

The structure of the session outlined above continues until a child is secure at Phase 6.

Learning Beyond Phase 6

Once children are secure at Phase 6, the focus moves onto accurate spelling (including prefixes and suffixes) and learning and applying spelling rules. There will often be a short segmentation and synthesis session to revisit Phase 5 and 6 sounds too.

Order of Learning Letter Sounds

Phonemes are introduced in a phased order, based on the DfE document Letters and Sounds. Children are deemed secure at a phase once they are able to synthesise and segment the majority of words in the phase and read phonically correct words within that range.

Interleaved Learning

Interleaved learning allows children to develop one new skill or concept at a time and revisit and practise prior learning.

Equality and Inclusion

All children in school are entitled to have access to high quality phonics teaching. Teaching is differentiated appropriately to take into account specific needs. Where appropriate, a child's One Plan will outline appropriate strategies for delivering phonics teaching which may include additional support from a Teaching Assistant or Learning Support Assistant. Individual short phonics sessions may also be used to provide extra support in the learning of letter sounds and sight words. Individual and small group phonics teaching will take place for children in Key Stage 2 who have not reached Phase 6 and, if appropriate, other interventions will be introduced to support reading skills.

Role of Teaching Assistants

Teaching staff incorporate into their planning the role of the teaching assistant during the phonics session. This may range from leading a phonics session with a group of children or supporting the whole class session. Teaching assistants liaise closely with the teacher, give feedback on the children's progress and may also undertake phonics and sight word assessment.

Teaching assistants may also deliver interventions such as individual phonics sessions or precision monitoring where appropriate.

Role of Parents

Reception Class parents are invited to attend a reading workshop that explains how phonics is taught in our school. Parents/carers are asked to listen to their child read regularly and to comment on their progress. Additionally, children in Reception Class, and Year 1 if appropriate, are given letter sounds and/or sight words to practise each evening.

Classroom Displays

Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 have a phonics and sight word display which is used regularly to support the children's learning.

Use of ICT

ICT is used during the phonics sessions in a range of ways, for example, displaying words for reading on the interactive whiteboard, sharing a book using the visualiser and playing phonic games on the ipad.

Reading Books

Once children are secure with the letter sounds of the alphabet, they will be given a reading book to read at home. Reading books are banded by levels of difficulty, in terms of phonics knowledge, sight word recognition and vocabulary. Children move through the bands based on the ongoing assessment of phonics and sight words knowledge and the professional judgment of teachers and teaching assistants. Staff will help select a book that is appropriate to the child's reading ability. In addition, children will have access to our school library.

Role of Subject Co-ordinator

The English co-ordinator, in liaison with the Key Stage 1 Leader, oversees the implementation and delivery of phonics teaching. They offer their expertise and guidance to other staff members and, where appropriate, lead staff training. The subject co-ordinator is also responsible for ordering any resources required.

Assessment and Record Keeping

Assessment takes place through informal methods, for example, monitoring a child's participation during a phonics session and their ability to put their learning in to practise in their reading or writing. Children are tested on their knowledge of letter sounds (including digraphs and trigraphs) and names and their ability to read phonetically correct words and sight words. A termly tracking grid is completed and is passed on to the next teacher. Formal testing takes place at regular intervals throughout the year in line with the school's assessment policy. Separate spelling tests and reading age tests may also be used.

Additionally, the Department for Education requires Year 1 children to undertake a phonics screening check during the Summer term. The screening test, carried out by a teacher, requires children to decode real and made up words. Children who do not meet the standard set by the Department for Education will undertake a further check at the end of Year 2. Parents are informed of their child's results with their school report.

Monitoring

The implementation of this policy will be monitored by the Head teacher, Co-ordinator and Governing body.

Evaluation, Review and Revision

This policy was written in October 2019. It was drawn up in consultation with, and reflects the consensus of, the Headteacher, members of the teaching staff, members of the Governing Body and the children. It will be reviewed in three years' time or before, if it is felt appropriate.

Signed:	Date: October 2019
Headteacher	
Signed:	Date: October 2019
On behalf of the Governing Body	
Next Review Date:	October 2022

References:

Year 1 Phonics Screening – FAQ – Department for Education (accessed online 2/10/12)

<http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/teachingandlearning/pedagogy/phonics/a00198207/faqs-year-1-phonics-screening-check#faq2>

