

Cuckney C of E Primary School Phonics & Early Reading policy



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Phonics & Early Reading policy

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At Cuckney C of E Primary School, we love reading. We strive to ensure that all children become successful and fluent readers by the end of Key Stage 1. We believe this is achievable through a combination of strong, high quality, discrete phonics teaching combined with a literature-rich approach that promotes a 'reading for pleasure' culture. We aim for all of the children at Cuckney C of E to leave school at the end of Key Stage 2 with a genuine passion for reading and to have obtained all of the skills they need to tackle any book of their choosing.

1. Aims

This policy aims to ensure:

- To establish consistent practice, progression and continuity in the teaching and learning of phonics throughout the school with a focus on quality first teaching.
- To ensure that systematic synthetic phonics (following the Twinkl Phonics DfE Approved Scheme) is the first approach pupils use to help with their reading and spelling.
- To have robust assessment procedures to check progress and identify pupils in need of intervention.
- For pupils to apply their phonic knowledge in their reading across the whole curriculum.
- For pupils to develop a love of reading and enjoy reading for pleasure, confidently across a range of genres.

2. Our Objectives

- For our children to learn to read and write all 44 graphemes in the English language.
- To encourage the use of segmenting and blending so that decoding skills provide a solid foundation for reading and spelling.
- To ensure children have specific strategies to identify and read common exception words (tricky words).
- To ensure that the teaching of phonics is lively, interactive and investigative.
- To encourage children to apply their phonic skills in all curriculum areas.

3. Twinkl Phonics

Twinkl Phonics is a fully comprehensive, synthetic phonics teaching programme designed to be used with children from nursery to year 2. Delivered through the stories and adventures of Kit, Sam and the Twinkl Phonics family, the scheme builds and develops the skills and understanding children need to become effective, independent readers and writers.

In addition to engaging instruction, pupils have daily opportunities to practice working on phonemic skills and strategies and apply what was learned when reading phonetically regular texts. We aim to develop confident, independent, strategic readers that are prepared for KS1 and KS2 and beyond.

4. What is synthetic phonics?

Synthetic phonics is a method of teaching reading and writing in which words are broken up into their smallest units of sound or 'phonemes'. Children learn to associate a written letter or group of letters, known as 'graphemes', with each phoneme. Sounds are then built up or 'blended' together into

words for reading or, conversely, whole words are broken down or 'segmented' into their constituent sounds for writing.

Synthetic phonics has been the required method of teaching early reading and writing skills since the 2006 Rose Report, which examined the advantages of phonics through long-term data. The benefits of a phonetic approach has been well evidenced and, as a result, the UK government produced its own non-statutory synthetic phonics guidance document, Letters and Sounds. In March 2021, the DfE decided it should not continue with its involvement in this work. While many practitioners are moving away from using this document to directly inform their teaching, it still has had a huge impact on how we teach phonics today.

5. Phonics in the Early Years

In Reception, the children begin the Twinkl Phonics Level 2 lessons and have daily sessions. Children are assessed during the autumn term as a baseline and these assessments are revisited throughout the school year.

Phonics sessions are taught discretely for at least 20 minutes a day; supporting activities are placed in the environment to reinforce the skills learnt. Lessons are designed to be interesting and exciting for the children, with each session following a story with known characters Kit & Sam. Lessons involve interactive whiteboard activities, phonic games, table activities, reading key words and writing words on individual whiteboards. Children who require further support are also provided 1:1 or 1:1 reinforcement intervention sessions.

During the children's daily English lessons, phonics skills are recapped and consolidated through applying their skills in their shared and independent writing.

The majority of children will end this year with a good understanding of Level 2 and 3 phonics and a beginning knowledge of Level 4.

6. Year 1

In Year 1, children continue to learn synthetic phonics using Twinkl Phonics. At this stage, the children recap their previous learning from Level 3 and 4 phonics in their daily phonics sessions before moving onto Level 5. The children begin each phonics session with a chosen sound. They do this through shared reading a story which repeats the sound in real words. During these sessions there is frequent repetition of previous sounds learnt to consolidate their previous learning.

Phonics is differentiated so that all of the children can access the learning, no matter their ability level. Regular interventions take place, which allow further support and development of understanding. The children are assessed regularly throughout the year on their phonological understanding and comprehension skills; this allows teachers to adapt sessions to support the needs of their specific groups. The majority of children will end this year with a good understanding of Level 4 and 5 phonics and a beginning knowledge of Level 6.

For children in Year 1, they will take part in the Phonics Screening Check in June each year, where we assess their phonics knowledge through asking them to segment and blend to read 40 random words, some of which are made up 'alien names' which are designed to test the children's blending skills with words they will never have heard before. The results of these will be available to parents in our end of year reports.

7. Year 2

In year 2, the children continue with Twinkl Phonics. Upon entering year 2, most children have a strong understanding of most phonemes taught for Level 2-5, so the programme focuses on Level 6 and then alternative sounds as well as revision and application of the entire phonics scheme to enable our children to be independent and fluent readers. Lessons follow the same format as Year 1; alongside discrete teaching- the children are given opportunities to write words and sentences to

apply the taught sounds and to begin to make comparisons between phonemes that sound the same, but are spelt differently with alternative sounds, e.g. wail and whale.

As the children move onto Level 6, the lessons will include spelling sessions, focussing on word families, spelling patterns and understanding how to select the correct sounds.

8. Rhino Readers

Rhino Readers is an original collection of fully decodable books exactly aligned with the Twinkl Phonics Scheme. The collection covers all levels from Level 2 to Level 6. The scheme of books keep the focus on phonics, with clear progression and support for children's early decoding skills as they move through each level. This method ensures children only read the sounds and tricky words they've already learnt in order to consolidate their learning.

The scheme includes books that include fact and fiction, topic books and fun tales, to help make the journey from decoding to fluency fun.

9. Rhino Cards

Each class will have a set of Rhino Cards. These are tricky word cards that are provided to the children to practice at home with parents and carers and will be tested and assessed each week and reported back to parents. If the children get all the spellings on their Rhino Card correct, they will get the next card sent home to practice.

Rhino Cards are started in Reception during Level 2b as this is when the Twinkl Phonics Scheme introduces tricky words into the daily phonics sessions.

Each phonics level have associated Rhino spellings cards but it is down to the individual how quickly they move through them.

10. Classroom environment

In EYFS and KS1, classrooms will have Twinkl Phonics sounds mats available for all children to access to support themselves with their work at tables as well as on the carpet during our carpet time. Each class will have a set of phoneme flashcards and tricky word cards as appropriate for the year group and ability of the children.

In reception and year 1, phonics based activities will be placed in the continuous provision environment for the children to access during their 'free learning time'. Children will access these independently or with adult support dependent on the needs of the individuals.

8. Monitoring arrangements

This policy will be reviewed and approved by the Early Reading & Phonics Lead every 2 years.

At every review, the policy will be shared with the governing body.

Appendix 1:
Phonics Vocabulary
Phoneme

Definition

The smallest single identifiable sound
e.g. the letters 'sh' represent just one sound, but
'sp' represents two /s/ and /p/

Grapheme

A way of writing down a phoneme. It can be made
up from one, two, three or four letters.
e.g. g, sh, igh, ough

GPC

Grapheme Phoneme Correspondence means being
able to match a phoneme to a grapheme and vice
versa.

Consonant

A sound represented by any letter of the English
alphabet except a, e, i, o, u.

Vowel

A sound represented by a, e, i, o, u.

Digraph

A grapheme containing two letters that makes just
one sound (phoneme)
e.g. sh, ch, th, ph

Vowel Digraph

Two vowels which together makes one sound
e.g. ai, oi, oo

Split Digraph

Two letters split making one sound
e.g. a-e in make or i-e in site

Trigraph

A grapheme containing three letters that makes just
one sound (phoneme)
e.g. igh, air, ear

Consonant Blend

Sounds in syllable represented by two or more
letters that are blended together without losing
their own identities
e.g. bl, gr, br, tw

Oral Blending

This involves hearing phonemes and being able to
merge them together to make a word. Children
need to develop this skill before they will be able to
blend written words.

Blending

This involves looking at a written word, looking at
each grapheme and using knowledge of GPCs to
work out which phoneme each grapheme
represents and then merging these phonemes
together to make a word. This is the basis of reading
e.g. s-n-a-p blended together reads snap

Oral Segmenting

Hearing a whole word and then splitting it up into the phonemes that make it. Children need to develop this skill before they will be able to segment words to spell them.

Segmenting

Hearing a whole word and then splitting it up into the phonemes that make it. Using knowledge of GPCs to work out which graphemes represent those phonemes and then writing those graphemes down in the right order. This is the basis of spelling.
e.g. cat has three phonemes /c/ /a/ /t/

Code Chart

The chart with all the possible ways of making one sound.

Sound Lines

The line that goes under each sound.
e.g. c a t has three sound lines sh i p also has 3 sound lines.

Mnemonic

A device for memorising and recalling something.