



## PHONICS POLICY

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### **Why is phonics important?**

Phonics is the primary tool used to teach reading at Nunney First School. Reading is an essential life skill; it is also the vehicle through which children access many other areas of the curriculum. It is therefore extremely important that early in their school life, children learn the phonic skills they need to enable them to read effectively, and that use of these skills quickly becomes an automated process for them.

### **We want pupils at Nunney First School to:**

- benefit from a systematic approach to the teaching of phonics;
- enjoy the discrete teaching of phonics, utilising a synthetic approach;
- have regular access to high quality phonics teaching that secures the word recognition skills they need to enable them to read fluently, freeing them to concentrate on the meaning of the text;
- secure automatic decoding skills by the end of Key Stage 1, allowing them to progress from 'learning to read' to 'reading to learn';
- acquire the phonics skills required to meet or exceed the threshold for the statutory national Year 1 Phonics Screening Check, which all pupils complete towards the end of Year 1.

### **Principles of high-quality phonics teaching at Nunney First School**

The Rose Report (2006) makes it clear that phonics should be taught systematically as the main approach for teaching early reading.

When beginning to learn to read children will be taught:

- grapheme-phoneme correspondences in a clearly defined, incremental sequence;
- to apply the extremely important skill of blending phonemes in the order in which they occur in the word, in order to read it;
- to apply the skills of segmenting words into phonemes in order to spell;
- that blending and segmenting are reversible processes.

**Our teaching is based on the principles that high quality phonics work is most effective when:**

- it is part of a 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 visual, auditory and kinaesthetic activities to enliven core learning;
- it is taught daily in the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage One, so that the majority of children are confident readers by the end of Key Stage 1;

- it is systematic, in that it follows a carefully planned programme, reinforcing and building on previous learning to secure progress;
- it is taught daily as a discrete phonics lesson using an agreed phonics programme called 'Read, Write Inc. (RWI)';
- there are opportunities to reinforce and apply acquired phonic knowledge and skills across the curriculum and particularly in shared and guided reading;
- children's progress in developing and applying their phonic knowledge is carefully assessed and monitored by both the class teacher and the Reading Manager.

### **Read, Write Inc. Phonics**

RWI Phonics is a systematic synthetic phonics programme for 4 to 7 year-olds learning to read and write, and for 7 and 8 year-olds needing to catch up quickly.

In Reception all children:

- Read storybooks and non-fiction books closely matched to their developing phonic knowledge;
- Take home phonics storybooks to share;
- Read with fluency and expression;
- Learn to spell using known sounds;
- Write confidently by practising what they want to write out loud first;
- Work well with a partner.

The programme intends that by the end of Year 1 all children are accurate and speedy readers.

Whole school commitment to the teaching programme, rigorous assessment, tracking and tutoring means that the programme guarantees progress for every child. One-to-one tutoring ensures that no children are left behind. Children have positive early experiences of learning to read - they are successful and progress quickly.

### **Organisation of phonics teaching**

At Nunney First School phonics is taught in discrete, daily lessons throughout the Early Years Foundation Stage, Key Stage 1 and in Key Stage 2 where appropriate. Children are grouped by stage not age for lessons, which take place for thirty minutes each day. Teachers and TAs lead phonics/reading groups. Members of staff leading phonics/reading groups are called Reading Leaders. Reading Leaders, overseen by the Reading Manager, monitor children's progress each term (six times per year) and additional support in the form of one-to-one tutoring is provided for children making slower than expected progress.

One-to-one tutoring is delivered by teaching assistants who have been trained in its use. The progress of children accessing one-to-one tutoring is monitored and assessed by the Reading Manager.

### **Key Stage 2**

In Key Stage 2, teachers plan spelling lessons that follow the RWI spelling programme. Within sessions, children are supported to investigate spelling patterns and build their understanding of the spelling system. The RWI spelling programme was developed in response to the requirements of the 2014 National Curriculum.

## **Classroom Environment**

Across the school, each classroom contains phonic resources appropriate to the age of the children in the class. In the Early Years Foundation Stage, resources are gradually built up as children learn the phonemes and graphemes. Displays concentrate on both sounds and key words (called **red words** in the RWI phonics programme), which the children are expected to use to support their writing. The format of resources is consistent across the school, supporting continuity and progression in the learning and application of phonic and spelling skills. Speed sounds charts are also on display in the KS2 classroom to aid spelling.

## **Assessment and Monitoring**

Using assessment resources provided in the RWI phonics programme, Reading Leaders assess children's phonic skills each term (six times per year).

In June of Year 1, each child completes the national Year 1 Phonics Screening Check. Teachers at Nunney First School administer this check. All the activities within the screening check align with the RWI phonics programme. Following the check, if these are not in place already, intervention strategies and support plans are introduced for children found to be making slower than expected progress. Intervention programmes are designed to ensure that children make accelerated progress and catch up with their peers as quickly as possible.

## **Resources**

Staff utilise resources that take into account and support visual, auditory and kinaesthetic learning styles. As such, a variety of resources including: flashcards; speed sound charts; catchy phrases for each phoneme; magnetic grapheme tiles and a frog called 'Fred' will be evident in RWI phonics sessions. Multi-sensory activities will focus on intensifying the intended learning outcome.

## **School Improvement Plan**

This Phonics Policy has been completed in line with the School Improvement Plan and the on-going review of curriculum provision and policy.

Nunney First School has a 'phonics first and fast' approach throughout the school and in all areas of the curriculum, whereby children are encouraged and expected to apply their phonic knowledge as their main strategy for reading, writing and spelling in all subject areas.

Teaching and support staff understand the importance of a phonics first approach, with the need for consistency and continuity across the Key Stages when expecting children to blend, segment and spell. It is believed that this approach is fundamental in allowing children to develop the skills required to become competent and confident readers and writers.

Date adopted by the Governing Body: 9<sup>th</sup> October 2017

Signed: *Geoff Andrews* Chair of Governors

**Next review due: October 2019**