

**This guidance should be read alongside the English policy, and reading and EYFS guidance**

### **What is phonics?**

Phonics is a strategy for teaching children to read and write. It helps children to hear, identify and use different sounds to distinguish one word from another. English is an alphabetic language and therefore requires children to understand the alphabetic principle: to recognise that visual symbols represent sounds. Children learn which letters and combination of letters (graphemes) relate to which sounds (phonemes) in order to decode (use grapheme-phoneme correspondence to read) and encode (use grapheme-phoneme correspondence to write) words in a systematic programme of teaching.

### **Aims**

Children should:

- Learn phoneme-grapheme correspondences for the 44 phonemes in English
- Learn to segment words into individual phonemes, both visually and aurally
- Learn to blend phonemes into words, both visually and aurally
- Apply their growing phonic skills to writing
- Apply their growing phonic skills to reading
- Understand when and how far phonic skills can be applied to reading and writing
- Learn to use phonic skills in conjunction with other reading and spelling skills
- Learn the letters of the alphabet
- Learn to read some common exception words by sight

### **Organisation**

Teachers will:

- Assess phonic and common exception word skills at the end of every term
- Analyse assessments to determine areas of strength and weakness
- For blending concerns, assess further using testing from: *Sound Linkage: An Integrated Programme for Overcoming Reading Difficulties* by Hatcher, Duff and Hulme (2014)
- Group children based on results of assessments (this may be based on knowledge of graphemes-phoneme correspondence, or other aspects of phonology, such as phoneme awareness and blending)
- Children are taught in groups of approximately 12 with skilled adults
- Be clear on what they are asking children to attend to: do they need to look at a letter or hear a sound

### **Delivery**

Teachers will:

- Ensure their knowledge of grapheme-phoneme vocabulary and correspondence is secure

- Use technical vocabulary of grapheme, phoneme, blending and segmenting
- Use pure sounds when articulating phonemes
- Use Letters and Sounds for the sequence of grapheme-phoneme correspondence delivery, mediated by assessments
- Use games of songs to begin phonics sessions, focused on developing aural blending and segmenting
- Use manipulatives to instruct blending explicitly, such as magnetic letters and post-its
- Use manipulatives and phoneme frames to model explicitly segmenting skills
- Allow children to apply skills taught through reading and writing
- Generate word patterns when modelling with manipulatives to enable children to develop fluency
- Ensure there is independent application to reading and writing, including using decodable books in the phonics session

## Assessment

Teachers will:

- Assess children termly using either the Phonics Play Assessments or Phonics Screening Check Materials
- Use assessments to inform content of phonics lessons
- Use assessments to identify specific children that need further support
- Assess children that need a more in-depth analysis of blending difficulties using *Sound Linkage: An Integrated Programme for Overcoming Reading Difficulties* by Hatcher, Duff and Hulme (2014)
- Assess children more frequently than once termly if needed

## Useful Resources:

DfE. (2007) *Letters and Sounds*. Available at:

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/190599/Letters\\_and\\_Sounds\\_-\\_DFES-00281-2007.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/190599/Letters_and_Sounds_-_DFES-00281-2007.pdf)

DfE. (2019) *Phonics Screening Check Materials*. Available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/national-curriculum-assessments-practice-materials#phonics-screening-check-resources>

DfES (2004) *Playing with Sounds*. Available at:

<http://www.rainbow-nursery.info/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/playintro.pdf>

Hatcher, P., Duff, F., & Hulme, C. (2014). *Sound Linkage An Integrated Programme for Overcoming Reading Difficulties* (3rd ed.). Hoboken: Wiley.

Phonics Play Ltd. (2018) *Phonics Play Assessment*. Available at:

<https://www.phonicsplay.co.uk/Assessment.htm>

Sounds-Write. (2019) *SoundsWrite*. Available at:

<https://www.sounds-write.co.uk/>