

Phonics at St. Andrew's Primary School

At St. Andrew's Primary school we teach Phonics using the Read Write Inc strategy. This programme is used throughout the school from Reception onwards.

Phonic Ready

We begin by ensuring that our children are "Phonic Ready." This means that, before children can be successful at learning sounds, they need to be able to hear sounds. We do this by exposing children to rhyming words and sounds, helping them understand what beginning, middle and end means and fostering an interest in the printed letter and word. Until we are sure that the children have had these experiences, we will not introduce phonics to them.

Starting Phonics

The children begin to learn **Set 1** of the Read Write Inc sounds. They are:

**m, a, s, d, t, i, n, p, g, o, c, k, u, b, f, e,
l, h, sh, r, j, v, y, w, th, z, ch, qu, x, ng,
nk**

The sounds are taught in this order at a rate of about 2-4 a week. Children will learn to recognise the sounds on sight, say and hear the sounds. Depending on the child's fine motor skills ability, some may begin to form the letters using a range of writing tools.

The children then move onto segmenting and blending sounds to make words. Eg c-a-t = cat. They will hear and identify the beginning, middle and end sounds of words.

Moving on

Once the children are confident with set 1 sounds they will move onto **Set 2**. They are:

ay, ee, igh, ow, oo, oo, ar, or, air, ir, ou, oy

These sounds are known as long vowel sounds or digraphs and the children learn that two letters can make one sound.

Again children will learn to read and spell words which contain these sounds at speed. They then move onto **Set 3**. They are:

ea, oi, a-e, i-e, o-e, u-e, aw, are, ur, er, ow, ai, oa, ew, ire, ear, ure, tion, cious, tious

These sounds are digraphs and trigraphs (three letters, one sound) here the children learn that there are sometimes more than one way to spell a sound eg oi and oy

Sounds from set 2 and 3 have a simple rhyme and illustration to help children remember.

Set 2

ay: may I play ee: what can you see

igh: fly high ow: blow the snow

oo: poo at the zoo oo: look at a book

ar: start the car or: shut the door

air: that's not fair ir: whirl and twirl

ou: shout it out oy: toy for a boy

Set 3

ea: cup of tea oi: spoil the boy

a-e: make a cake i-e: nice smile

o-e: phone home u-e: huge brute

aw: yawn at dawn are: share and care

ur: purse for a nurse er: a better letter

ow: brown cow ai: snail in the rain

oa: goat in a boat ew: chew the stew

ire: fire fire! ear: hear with your ear

ure: sure it's pure? tion: (celebration)

tious / cious: (scrumptious / delicious

e: he me we she be

Words

Words which contain sounds that the children can "build" or segment are called "**green words**." Children will learn to read these words during daily "word times" and eventually read them without sounding out the sounds.

Words which cannot be sounded out are known as "**tricky or red words**." Children will be taught to read these words on sight by learning the shape of the word and understanding the tricky parts of each word. Children will see the tricky part of the word in red. For example:

the = e makes the sound uh

was = a makes the sound o and s makes the sound z

The Year 1 Phonics Screening Test

The phonics screening check will be taken individually by all children in Year 1, in England, from June 2012. It is designed to give teachers and parents, information on how each child is progressing in phonics.

What is the phonic screening check?

There will be two sections in this 40-word check and it will assess phonics skills and knowledge learnt through Reception and Year 1.

What will it check?

It will check that each child can:

- Sound out and blend sounds in order to read simple words.
- Read phonically decodable one-syllable and two-syllable words,
- e.g. cat, sand, windmill.
- Read a selection of nonsense words which are referred to as pseudo words.

What are nonsense or pseudo words and why are they included?

These are words that are phonically decodable but are not actual words with an associated meaning e.g. briip, snorb. Pseudo words are included in the check specifically to assess whether your son/daughter can decode a word using phonics skills and not their memory. The pseudo words will be shown to the child with a picture of a monster and they will be asked to tell their teacher what sort of monster it is by reading the word. This not only makes the check a bit more fun, but provides the children with a context for the nonsense word which is independent from any existing vocabulary they may have. Crucially, it does not provide any clues, so the child just has to be able to decode it.

Is there a pass mark?

The check is not about passing or failing but checking appropriate progress is being made. Children progress at different speeds so not reaching the threshold score does not necessarily mean there is a serious problem. Children may will re-sit the check the following summer term.

What happens to the results?

The school will report each child's results to their parents by the end of the summer term as well as to the local authority. If you have any concerns, please talk to your child's teacher about this in a parents' meeting or after school.

Further Information

If you need clarification or would like to know more about our phonics teaching, please make an appointment to speak to your son's/daughter's class teacher.

Thank you for your continued support.