

FERNDALE PRIMARY AND NURSERY SCHOOL



Phonics Policy

Ratified by Governing Body:
Reviewed Date: September 2023
Next Review Date: September 2024

Rationale

At Ferndale we strive to ensure that all children become successful, fluent readers by the end of key stage one and believe this is achievable through a combination of strong, high quality, discrete phonics teaching combined with a whole language approach that promotes a 'Reading for Pleasure' culture. This policy is aimed at reinforcing a consistent, high quality approach to the teaching of phonics across foundation stage, key stage one and on into key stage two for children who still need this further support.

Objectives

- To ensure that teaching phonics is the prime approach to decoding print.
- To provide consistent, high quality phonics teaching that ensures all children have a strong foundation upon which to tackle the complex processes of reading and writing.
- To ensure that the teaching of synthetic phonics is systematic and progressive throughout the foundation stage, key stage one and key stage two for those children needing interventions to support phonetic knowledge and understanding.
- To ensure that children have sound phonetic knowledge, understanding and skills so that they can decode words confidently and engage with higher order reading and writing skills.

Aims

- To teach children aural discrimination and phonemic awareness to aid reading, writing and spelling development.
- To encourage the use of segmenting and blending so that decoding skills provide a sound foundation for reading, writing and spelling.
- To ensure the teaching of phonics is lively, interactive and investigative.
- To ensure children use phonic awareness across the curriculum.
- To ensure that children know the 44 phonemes within the English language.
- To ensure that children recognise the graphemes within words and associate them with the appropriate phoneme when reading.
- To ensure children are taught strategies to identify and decode 'tricky words' within the English language.

Curriculum, teaching and learning guidance:

At Ferndale Primary school, our phonics scheme will follow the programme structure outlined in 'Bug Club' phonics and phonics will be taught daily across foundation and key stage 1.

All staff will take a consistent approach to teaching phonics using bug club resources as the basis to their teaching framework. This includes phonic level books for individual and guided read, handwriting and teaching presentations. Other books and resources can be used alongside 'bug club' as long as they are at the appropriate phonics level for the pupils being taught. Each phonics lesson should follow a multi-sensory approach and be adapted to meet the needs of the pupils taught. For each new phoneme introduced, the bug club action will also be taught. Handwriting will be taught each lesson with pupils being taught how to print in year FS and year 1. Additional cursive handwriting sessions will be taught in year 2 when the pupils are ready to begin to learn cursive handwriting.

Expectations:

At Ferndale primary school phonics will be the primary approach to decoding print and will be modelled and taught by all teachers across the school where appropriate. Discrete phonics lessons will take place daily across Reception and Key Stage 1. These lessons will follow the structure of 'Review, Teach, Practise, Apply' to ensure that pupils are consolidating phonic knowledge and skills over time and that they are able to apply them in context. In FS, Year 1 and Year 2, teachers will use 'bug club' planning as a basis for their lessons and adapt or write own plans in advance to suit the needs of their class. In year 2, when pupils have completed the 'Bug Club' programme, teachers will use 'Spelling Shed' to teach spelling patterns for year 2 and reinforce the phonics taught in KS1. Planning for phonics will be done separately from literacy **but** all staff understand that phonics is the primary approach to reading and writing. Planning will clearly state who, what, where and when phonics will be taught.

These lessons will proceed at pace and incorporate relevant practical and interactive activities to engage the pupils. These activities will be carefully chosen to ensure that pupils develop their skills in aural discrimination, phonemic and rhyme awareness, blending and segmenting as well as grapheme-phoneme correspondence.

Pupils in nursery will be taught phase one though a differentiated approach within the setting on a daily basis. As pupils become confident in phase 1, phase 2 sounds will be introduced in play-based activities.

Pupils in reception will be taught a discrete phonics session daily for twenty minutes as a whole class. (Phonics must not just be taught through continuous provision.) Phonics skills will also be embedded in writing and reading tasks in literacy sessions. The driving ethos should be for all pupils to completed phase three by the end of reception and have a sound understanding in order to start phase four upon entry to year one. Pupils in year one will have access to high quality daily phonics sessions for twenty to thirty minutes. The underlying aim of year one should be to ensure all pupils have completed phase four and five and be ready to begin phase six upon entry into year two. Pupils should be able to read and write the year 1 common exception words before they enter year 2.

Pupils in year two will have access to high quality daily phonics lessons for twenty to twenty-five minutes. The underlying aim in year two is to ensure that all pupils have successfully completed phase six while revisiting earlier phases to reinforce previous learning. Pupils will learn to read and write the year 2 common exception words before they enter year 3.

Pupils in key stage 1 who have not reached the appropriate level for their year group will receive intervention teaching in small groups and staff will use 'Bug club' planning and intervention programmes to meet the needs of these pupils.

Pupils in key stage 2 who have not reached a sufficiently skilled level of phonetic awareness will receive intervention teaching in small groups and staff will use 'Spelling Shed' planning and intervention programmes to meet the needs of these pupils. Pupils will be taught whole class phonics appropriate for their year group. Those who have gaps in their knowledge will be identified through assessment and this will be addressed through intervention work. Each lesson will be planned in advance and adapted to suit the learning needs of the pupils. Teachers will follow the teaching sequence as outlined in 'Bug Club' (see Appendix 1).

At Ferndale, pupils are introduced to defined groups of GPCs' to enable them to read and spell many words early on. Teachers use the 'Bug Club' scheme which provides words and text for reading practice and teaching activities for writing practice. Actions will be taught with each phoneme. A range of resources, such as flash cards, word cards, sound mats and grapheme posters, is also used to consolidate learning. As skills are cumulatively acquired, pupils move from simple to learning more complex grapheme/phoneme correspondences. Both formative and summative assessments will be used to ensure that pupils are taught at the appropriate phonics level and are used to monitor progress.

At Ferndale, pupils will be taught to read printed words by identifying and blending individual phonemes from left to right. This will be taught on a daily basis in KS1 both in phonics sessions and across the day. Planned activities will be multi-sensory, practical and relevant. Resources to support learning are available in the KS1 phonics intervention area.

Approach

The pupils will be taught to segment spoken words into phonemes for spelling. Visual and tactile support will be provided including stretching the word (say the words hands together and then move them apart each time a sound is said in order). 'Robot talk' will be used to blend phonemes when reading (each phoneme in the word is read in order and then hands are pushed towards each other as they pushed the phonemes together to say the words). 'Bug club' presentations also visually model pushing phonemes together when reading and segmenting when spelling. Sound buttons may be also be used to represent sounds in segmented words. Fingers or phoneme frames may be used to count phonemes in words.

Spelling

During whole class phonic teaching, pupils will be encouraged to spell and write words or sentences to apply their phonic knowledge. Each 'Bug club' lesson contains a spelling element for the pupils to complete.

Weekly spellings will be set based on phonics and tricky words taught.

Common Exception Words

Pupils are taught to decode and spell common exception words (tricky words) appropriate to the phase that they are on. Teachers should introduce these as outlined in the 'Bug Club' scheme. These will be taught through a multi-sensory approach using bug club presentations, tricky word songs and other practical resources.

Regular assessment will be completed and interventions put in place to ensure that pupils can read and spell the appropriate CEW for their phase.

Handwriting

Handwriting is part of the daily phonics lesson and pupils in FS and year 1 will be taught to print. As each phoneme is introduced, pupils will be taught to write single graphemes in both capital letters and lower case with clear start and finish points (see 'bug club' presentations). In year 2, teachers will assess when pupils are ready to begin to learn cursive writing. When writing words or sentences, pupils should apply their phonic knowledge.

In FS and year 1, all writing that the pupils are exposed to in their learning environment should be in print. This includes modelled writing, resources on display and worksheets given.

Multi-sensory approach

Teachers use a multi-sensory approach to teaching phonics. Pupils learn through three main approaches: visual, auditory and kinaesthetic approach. Although pupils often have a preferred way of learning, a range of strategies is implemented as no two pupils learn the same and each day is different for each child. 'Bug Club' IWB acts as an electronic magnetic letter board for teacher demonstrations and to consolidate pupils' segmenting and blending. Teaching the formations of letters at the same time as sounds helps to consolidate the letters in memory. Teachers will use the 'Bug Club' actions to link actions to phonemes.

Resources

'Bug Club' phonics provides appropriate phonetically decodable reading resources and activities which can be used at home and in school. Other available reading resources included big cat phonic books, jolly phonics books, dandelion books and book life readers. 'Spelling Shed' also provides a range of decodable resources and activities.

Teachers will ensure that activities encourage pupils to practise and apply core phonics. Teachers will use the fully decodable resources such as those found in the phonic intervention room, on 'Bug Club' and books provided in each classroom. Phonics activities will **not** be over elaborate, difficult to manage or make the pupils focus on something other than reading or writing. For example, it should not include finding letters in the sand, because pupils are likely to focus more on playing with sand than on learning about letters.

Assessment

Teachers will conduct frequent and ongoing assessment to track and record pupils' progress and to identify those pupils at, below or above expected levels, so that appropriate support can be provided. 'Ferndale Phonics' summative assessments will be completed in September, January and May or sooner if required. This summative assessment should inform the rate at which pupils progress through the phases and secure a sound understanding of phonics. Pupils will be taught phonics in their class but will if required, receive phonics interventions at their assessed phonics level.

All year one pupils will take the 'Phonics Screening Check' - a statutory assessment required by legislation. Through rigorous planning, teaching and assessments, our expectation is that most pupils will pass the phonic screening check. However, those who do not meet the pass mark will be given support and intervention programmes to provide them with sufficient knowledge and understanding to re-take the 'Phonics Screening Check' in year 2. Those pupils who do not obtain the required level set by the 'Phonics Screening Check' in year 2, will receive a phonics and/or spelling intervention programme in KS2 using 'Spelling Shed' as outlined in 'Ferndale Phonics'.

Training

All staff will be trained to teach phonics, by experienced phonic co-ordinators, and will have a handbook that outlines expectations and provides supporting resources. All staff will receive regular training updates as appropriate and new staff will be given phonics training as part of their induction process. 'Ferndale Phonics' takes a responsive approach and can be adapted to take into account changes outlined in government guidance documents.

POLICY REVIEW DATE:

September 2024