



PHONICS POLICY

Name of school: Green Oaks Primary Academy

Persons responsible: Headteacher
Phonics Lead

Review Date: Summer 2024

Policy written by: Mrs G Lineham (October 2023)

Phonics Policy

Subject Intent

Our Phonics sequence of progression has been adopted from '*The Phonics Queen*' (Natasha Tuite) and ensures that teachers have high expectations for coverage enabling all pupils the opportunity to achieve age-related expectations. Quality first teaching means that the sequence is rigorous, challenging and embeds GPC (Grapheme Phoneme Correspondence) knowledge whilst teaching children how to apply this to independent reading and writing. Rehearsing the application of known GPC's is at the core of our teaching sessions ensuring that all children make progress in every session. A huge emphasis is placed on the application of known GPC's to reading and writing.

Subject Implementation

Phonics is taught daily to all children in Nursery, Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 by the Class Teacher, following the Phonics Progression Document. For pupils in the lowest 20% of the cohort, class teachers and the Phonics Lead ensure that targeted interventions and additional support is in place to best suit their needs, alongside discussions with the SENDCo if required. This is delivered through regular Keep-Up and Catch-Up sessions that are tailored to the needs of the pupils. This includes pupils in KS2 that still require support to develop reading fluency and writing, having not passed the statutory screening at the end of KS1.

Every phonics session includes; Recap and Rehearse, Learn, Apply to Reading, Apply to Writing, Challenge and CEW/HFW words, along with opportunities to read nonsense words in every lesson to allow children to develop confidence when attempting unknown words.

Alongside this sequence, all children;

- are actively encouraged to 'ask the BIG question,' to embed the knowledge of the various GPC's and to develop an understanding of spelling rules and patterns.
- are taught to form their letters using the handwriting rhymes/stories.

- are encouraged to use sound buttons for reading and blending where necessary, and when appropriate to use sound nods to encourage children to develop silent blending strategies.
- are encouraged to use 'sound fingers' to count the phonemes when first learning to write using new GPC's or when rehearsing writing.
- are encouraged to position their writing on the line, thinking about ascenders and descenders (whether on a whiteboard or in an exercise book).

Children take home books that are matched to their phonic ability. Books are arranged sequentially into phases and then sounds and common exception words within those phases that children have learned. This is to enable children to feel successful when reading which motivates them.

Subject Impact

At the end of KSI, pupils will:

- have successfully passed the Statutory Phonics Screening (held in June)
- have the phonetic awareness to develop their reading further and to apply their knowledge to writing

Phonics Progression

The Phonics Progression from Phase 1 to Phase 5 document is available to all staff and is published on the school website. This is guidance of how children should be progressing in each year group. Children are assessed regularly and adjustments are in place depending on the needs of each cohort. Staff that are responsible for the planning of phonic lessons use the progression map to assist them with planning so that the correct sequence of lessons is followed, and the necessary phases have been covered in time for the Statutory Phonic Screening in Year 1 and the resit at the end of Year 2.

Phonics Skills that are taught in lessons

- Listening and hearing phonemes only (Discriminating between noises or sounds such as 'n' and 'm' or 'ff' and 'v')
- Oral blending – NO GRAPHEMES TO SEE – Listening only e.g Ch- ee- se = cheese
- GPC's Grapheme / Phoneme correspondence - What sound does the grapheme represent?
- Blending GPC's
- Knowing what a word is (a group of letters blended together that has meaning or not if it's a nonsense word)
- Reading captions (e.g Roof on the shed- no verb)
- Reading simple sentences (A cat sat on a mat)
- The ability to blend in your head
- Reading adjacent consonants (st as in stamp, cl as in clap) N.B These are separate graphemes that are read closely together
- Reading polysyllabic words (lap top, fan tas tic - read in syllables)

The structure of whole class phonics lessons

Each day, we structure our lessons using the elements listed below, as it ensures a consistent approach across EYFS and KS1. It also enables children to adopt a routine and engage easily given that their cognitive load is reduced and they are prepared for the next step. They recall previous learning and use it apply to new learning; enabling them to learn and know more.

Revise and Rehearse

Pupils rehearse some previously learnt GPCs and most importantly apply these through reading, speaking and listening activities.

Learn

Pupils are introduced to a new GPC and make links with this. They are introduced to the corresponding phrase and action to help them to remember.

Apply to Reading

Pupils apply the new GPC to reading. They are given a selection of words and can apply sound buttons to help them to segment and blend.

Apply to Writing

Pupils apply the new GPC to writing (to words). The teacher uses phoneme fingers to help them to do this and pupils can refer to sound mats to help them make their choice. They are also encouraged to ask the BIG question at this point if they are unsure of which grapheme to write for another sound they hear.

Challenge

Pupils apply the new GPC in a sentence through writing or reading. This sentence is differentiated to suit the learning needs of the class. For some pupils, the sentence can be short to allow all to achieve, but for the others the sentence can be extended to challenge pupils.

Common Exception Words (Sight Words)- CEW

Pupils are taught new CEWs and where possible these are taught in groups so that links to spellings and spelling rules can be made.

Overall, phonics lessons are made simple with few resources needed to keep cognitive load manageable. Resources used are consistent across classes as not to cause confusion and to ensure consistency. Lessons are timely, ensuring that the pace allows enough time to teach and apply each element. Teachers are encouraged to model a passion for what they are teaching to excite and keep the interest of pupils.

Phonic Teaching Strategies

We aim to ensure that all classes that teach phonics follow a consistent approach. Teachers and support staff apply a number of strategies in lessons such as;

- Learning capital letters alongside lower case
- Learning the name and phoneme alongside one another
- Using nonsense words
- Giving the opportunity to apply sound buttons
- Linking phonemes and graphemes to the pictures on the sound mats
- Asking the BIG question to determine which grapheme to use when writing
- Using actions to go with phonemes and graphemes
- Using correct pronunciation- pure sounds without 'uh' added
- Using phoneme fingers for spelling a word

- Modelling writing expectations
- Using the correct terminology; trigraph, digraph, split-digraph, phoneme, grapheme
- Clap hands to identify the syllables; useful for spelling and reading longer words
- Hands together for saying a sentence
- Nodding head for silent blending

Assessment

Assessment in Nursery

In Nursery, pupils are assessed in line with Phase 1 objectives/outcomes. This is very much a personalised individual approach and observations and assessments from their independent play, involvement in group work and phonic lessons are used.

Assessing in Reception & KS1

In Reception, Year 1 and Year 2, pupils are assessed on their knowledge of GPCs and tricky/common exception words each half-term, to establish their phonic level. Blending and segmenting assessments are also carried out to ensure that they have the skills securely in place for reading and spelling.

Inclusion/ Intervention

Keep-up and Catch-up Sessions

In addition to daily whole class phonics, pupils are exposed to 'Keep-up sessions' that are taught the same day, but at a later time. These lessons reinforce the learning earlier in the day and also give pupils the opportunity to have another go if they are struggling or to have consolidation (especially for Year 2 pupils that have passed the phonics screening and have spelling lessons as opposed to daily phonics). These lessons are a shorter version of the main lesson taught earlier in the day and allow pupils to have a quick recap of the GPC, apply to reading and writing, target any specific gaps that might be emerging, and to celebrate successes.

Catch-up sessions are used to teach pupils that are significantly behind and to help them to close the gaps in their learning. The elements of the session are the same as Keep-up, but the learning is tailored to suit individual or small groups of pupils.

Interventions are used further up the school in KS2 to support pupils' particular needs. This is mostly carried out using precision teaching. Pupils in KS2 also have access to the phonics decodable books

that we use in school. As pupils in Year 3 are still able to use their phonic knowledge from Year 2 learning, those that did not pass the screening in Year 2 are assessed. They either have interventions in small groups or join Year 2 phonics lessons for consolidation.

Supporting the Lowest 20% Achievers

All teachers are aware of the lowest 20% achievers in reading. In Reception And KS1 they are identified by considering the gaps in phonics and their ultimate goal is to pass the Statutory Phonics Screening by the end of Year 2. In KS2 they are identified following the outcome of reading assessments that determine their reading age. In addition to the normal time given to reading in class, pupils considered to be the lowest 20% achievers are given further opportunities per week to read to an adult. Later in the year, they are invited to attend Phonics after school clubs to boost their chances of passing the screening.

Year 1 Phonics Screening Check

In the summer term, all pupils in Year 1 undertake the Statutory Phonics Screening Check. This is an assessment carried out in school during which the pupils are assessed on their ability to segment and blend a range of 40 real and 'alien' words. Alien words are a selection of phonetically decodable nonsense words. The words in this assessment gauge their understanding of the phonemes learnt and provide school with the knowledge of where the gaps are. If the pupils are not secure in recognising, segmenting and blending these words and therefore do not pass the assessment, they will be offered further support as they enter Year 2 and will be able to repeat the assessment in the summer term of Year 2. This assessment also allows us to put in specific and personal support for those pupils who require additional assistance. If a pupil does not meet the expected standard in Year 2, then phonics teaching and learning will be continued into key stage 2 in the form of interventions or class teaching (particularly in LKS2). At this point, pupils are monitored by the SENDCo to assess for additional needs.

Home Learning Expectations

Parental involvement is key in the acquisition of phonics and supports us in developing a cohesive whole-school approach. A phonics workshop for Reception parents is held in the second autumn term and there is a phonics workshop for Year 1 and Year 2 parents later in the year. During these sessions, we share information and video links on techniques, such as saying pure sounds and

blending. We also share support resources and phonically decodable reading books are also sent home for parents to support their child's phonics/reading.