Buckingham Primary School & Nursery

Phonics Policy September 2024

Rationale

At Buckingham Primary School & Nursery we strive to ensure all children become committed, enthusiastic and fluent readers by the end of Key Stage One.

We recognise the 'fundamental importance of improving reading standards on a child's future academic achievement, wellbeing and success in life.' DfE Reading Framework – 2021

Aims

Our aim at Buckingham Primary School & Nursery is for children to develop a love of reading and to become confident, secure readers by the end of Key Stage 1. We want our children to quickly develop automatic decoding skills and to progress rapidly from 'learning to read' to 'reading to learn.' The ultimate goal of learning to read is comprehension. It follows that, in order to comprehend written texts, children must learn to recognise – decode – the words on the page. The Rose Report (2006) identified that the teaching of an effective, systematic, synthetic phonics programme is the most effective approach to teaching children to read. The Department for Education reaffirms this view and requires all educational settings to implement such a programme. We teach phonics through 'Time for Phonics' – one of the government's approved providers.

Intent

At Buckingham Primary School & Nursery, we aim to deliver high quality phonics teaching which secures the crucial skills of sound/ word recognition that, once mastered, enable children to read fluently and automatically enabling them to concentrate on the meaning of the text. We do this by ensuring knowledge is taught through appropriate coverage, content, structure and sequencing and that our Time for Phonics programme is implemented effectively to the bespoke needs of our children. We aim to establish consistent practice, progression and continuity in the teaching and learning of phonics and spelling throughout the school. We do this through responsive teaching, assessment and good subject knowledge and pedagogy. Within Time for Phonics we give children strategies that will enable them to become fluent readers and confident writers.

Implementation - **Non-Negotiables**

- Each member of teaching staff involved with phonics must be confident with the **pronunciation of all of the phonemes and phonics terminology**.
- **Letter and digraph rhymes** to aid children's ability to recall should be used as per the lesson plans, and displayed so the children can clearly see.
- The structure of the 4-part lesson, namely; **revisit and review, teach, practise, apply,** should be followed as per the Time for Phonics lesson plans.
- Phonics should be taught as a **whole class**.
- The lessons should be **paced well**, and should make the most of the time for teaching to maximise the number of words children read and spell.
- Time for Phonics materials including flashcards, sound mats and display resources should be used during each lesson.
- Children should take part in **written work whilst sitting at tables**, not on the carpet, as per the guidance in the 2021 Reading Framework.
- During direct teaching, all children should have a **clear view of the teacher,** and should clearly be able to see any of the resources used.
- **Children should all be actively involved**, especially during the practise and apply sections, and the teacher should be constantly checking and encouraging all of the children to stay on task.

- **The lowest 20% of children should be actively targeted** and seated as close to the teacher or support staff as possible.
- During call and response, **all children should answer in unison,** not as individuals.
- Whole Class **reading should take place daily** for approximately 15 minutes, using GPCs and tricky words that children are confident with (so not GPCs they have only just learned).
- **Phonics assessment should be regular** to ensure that the lowest 20% of pupils are quickly identified and given additional support, through a structured intervention programme.
- When reading 1:1 with children, or during guided reading, adults should encourage children to decode and blend words using their decoding skills. Children should under no circumstances be encouraged to guess or infer words.
- If a child cannot decode the word, the adult can help by prompting them, perhaps by suggesting a similar sounding/rhyming word to help the children decode.
- The adult should also ask questions about the meaning of the book to check that children understand the story/concept.
- Children who are in the lowest 20% should be reading 3 times per week 1:1 with an adult in addition to guided reading sessions.

Assessment

Time for Phonics includes formative and summative assessments. The daily sessions include whole class revision and new phoneme focus sections which identify those children who need immediate extra support during the subsequent guided independent work. Summative assessments are included at the end of each phase ensuring frequent and detailed feedback for teachers to act on.

At Buckingham Primary School we use **Phonics Tracker** in partnership with Time for Phonics. It is an instant assessment and tracking program for phonics, high frequency words and the phonics screening check. Through Phonics Tracker, teachers instantly record whether a child can successfully pronounce the phoneme or word, tracking progress across the primary English curriculum**.** Time for Phonics is carefully mapped out to ensure teachers can cover the required curriculum before the Year 1 Phonics Screening Check.

Phonics Screening Check

In the summer term, Year 1 children will take a Phonics Screening Check in which children will be expected to read 40 decodable 'words'. This progress check identifies those children not at the expected level in reading – and these children will be re-checked in Year 2.

Phase 6

Children who are secure at phase 5 go onto phase 6, focusing on spelling. Sessions include direct teaching of spelling strategies, proofreading, high frequency words. This will be completed in spelling and English lessons.

Additional Support

If there is a need, pupils will be given extra support through a 'keep up' approach to help them improve reading skills and make progress. Support will also be provided for pupils who may be experiencing difficulty in reading/writing because they have missed or misunderstood a crucial phase of systematic phonics teaching. Some of this support is delivered using Speech Link and NELI (Nuffield Early Language Intervention).

KEY STAGE 2

Some children continue to require support to consolidate their phonological understanding through Key Stage 2. This support is delivered in a bespoke variety of ways using the Time for Phonics scheme to meet the needs of a group or individual.

Time and Organisation
Reception & KS1

Five 20-25 minutes phonics sessions are taught each week. Generally, a new phoneme (phoneme-grapheme correspondence) will be introduced in four of these sessions (Monday – Thursday) with a review session taking place on Friday. Whole class reading takes place daily, guided reading three times a week and one to one reads daily for those not making expected progress. In Key Stage 1, priority readers are heard as frequently as every day as necessary.
Every pupil has a reading record to enable parent communication. Reading for Fluency books are exactly matched to a child's phonic ability through Reception and Key Stage 1 using the Big Cat Collins for Letters and Sounds books. Children also have a high quality Reading for Pleasure book to share at home.

Home / School Partnership and Parental Involvement
Phonics and Early Reading workshops are provided for parents to come in and learn about the way that Time for Phonics is taught at Buckingham Primary School. Time for Phonics online parental support is shared offering advice for supporting phonics at home.

The Role of the Headteacher

- To ensure that the National Curriculum is implemented.
- To encourage and support the subject leaders approach to Phonics development across the Curriculum.
- To support and encourage all staff in the teaching of Phonics.
- To promote Time for Phonics in school.
- To make necessary resources available to enable the development of Phonics.

The Role of the Subject Leader

- To review and monitor the planning, teaching and assessment of Phonics and follow-up concerns.
- To promote Phonics across school.
- To provide good examples of the teaching of Phonics in the classroom.
- To make resources available.
- To plan for future development through action plans.
- To work alongside staff when required.
- Attend relevant courses and give information back to staff.
- Arrange INSET courses for staff.
- Encourage parental involvement.

The Role of the Staff

- To ensure that phonics is used in the classroom in line with the National Curriculum through the implementation of the Time for Phonics scheme.
- To implement the teaching of phonics with fidelity to Time for Phonics.
- To assess the children's progress and ensure interventions are in place for those not making the expected progress.
- To ensure that there is equality of opportunity in the teaching of phonics.
- To inform the co-ordinator of any problems which may arise in the implementation of phonics.

The Role of the Governing Body

- The Governors will monitor the development and implementation of Phonics in school.

Review

This policy is to be reviewed every year.

Scheme progression

Time for Phonics By Discovery Education

Department for Education Validated SSP programme

Time for Phonics Long-term Suggested Planned Programme Progression Guide

Time for Phonics is planned so that children start by learning the simplest GPCs, moving on to the more complex correspondences within phase 5. It covers all the main correspondences so children become confident and effective readers. Children are introduced to high-frequency decodable and tricky words throughout the phases and can consolidate learning at the end and beginning of each phase. The scheme progression provides pace and the chance to revisit, review, practise and apply knowledge.

The progression below is only a *suggestion*, as you will need to do what is best for your children according to their progress; you can use our assessment materials to help with this, alongside our planned intervention programme.

Use this guide to ascertain where children should be with their phonics knowledge during the school year and to help identify those at risk of falling behind – based on what is best for your children. There is no expectation that all children will be able to blend the high frequency words allocated to Autumn 1. However, if by the end of Autumn 2, children are still struggling to blend these words, use the assessment materials to help identify those children who need interventions.

Year Group	Term	Phase/Weeks	Focus/GPCs	High Frequency (blending) + Tricky Words
Nursery		Phase 1	• Aspect 1 - Environmental Sounds • Aspect 2 - Instrumental Sounds • Aspect 3 - Body Percussion • Aspect 4 - Rhythm and Rhyme • Aspect 5 - Alliteration • Aspect 6 - Voice Sounds • Aspect 7 - Oral Segmenting and Blending	
Reception	Autumn 1	Phase 1, weeks 21-25. Phase 2, weeks 1-3.	• Revisit and review phase 1 with a focus on aspect 7 • GPCs: s, a, t, p, i, n, m, d, g, o, c, k • Assessment and intervention support for children falling behind	• **Tricky word:** to • **High frequency words:** a, an, as, at, in, is, it, on, can, dad, and, not, got
	Autumn 2	Phase 2, weeks 4-6. (Week 6 can be repeated if needed.)	• GPCs: ck, e, u, r, h, b, f, ff, l, ll, ss • Revision of all phase 2 graphemes • Assessment and intervention support for children falling behind	• **Tricky words:** to, go, the, no, I • **High frequency words:** if, of, off, had, back, get, big, him, his, up, mum, but, put
	Spring 1	Phase 3, weeks 1-5. Repeat lessons as needed.	• GPCs: j, v, w, x, y, z, zz, qu, ch, sh, th, ng, ai, ee, igh, oa, oo, ar, or, ur, ow • Assessment and intervention support for children falling behind	• **Tricky words:** my, you, her • **High frequency words:** will, that, this, then, them, with, see, for, now, down, look, too
	Spring 2	Phase 3, weeks 6-8. (Week 8 to be repeated as needed.)	• GPCs: oi, ear, air, ure, er • Revision and consolidation of phase 3 graphemes	• **Tricky words:** he, she, we, me, be, was, they, all, are
	Summer 1	Phase 3, weeks 9-10. (Weeks 9 and 10 to be repeated as needed.)	• Words containing a combination of phase 3 graphemes • Revision and consolidation of all phase 3 graphemes • Assessment and intervention support for children falling behind	• **Tricky words:** my, you, her, she, we, me, be, was, they, all, are

	Summer 2	(If needed, repeat phase 2, week 6 and phase 3, weeks 9 and 10.)
		Phase 4, weeks 1-4.
		Repeat lessons as needed.
			• Revision of phase 2 and 3 graphemes
			• Phase 4:
			  ○ Reading and spelling CVCC words
			  ○ Reading and spelling CCVC words
			  ○ Reading sentences
			  ○ Writing short sentences with tricky words
			  ○ Reading adjacent consonants
			  ○ Reading polysyllabic words
			• Assessment and intervention support for children falling behind
				• **Tricky words:** your, said, so, have, like, some, come, out, were, there, little, one, do, when, what
				• **High frequency words:** went, it's, from, children, just, help

Year Group	Term	Phase/Weeks	Focus/GPCs	High Frequency (blending) + Tricky Words

One	Autumn 1	If needed, repeat phase 2, week 6 and phase 3, weeks 9 and 10.
		Phase 4 weeks 1-5.
		Repeat lessons as needed.
			• Recalling phase 2 and 3 graphemes
			• Phase 4:
			  ○ Reading and Spelling CVCC words
			  ○ Reading and spelling CCVC words
			  ○ Reading sentences
			  ○ Writing short sentences with tricky words
			  ○ Reading adjacent consonants
			• Assessment and intervention support for children falling behind
			• Suffixes
				• **Tricky words:** your, said, so, have, like, some, come, out, were, there, little, one, do, when, what
				• **High frequency words:** went, it's, from, children, just, help

	Autumn 2	Phase 5, weeks 1-4. If needed, repeat lessons or revision lesson as needed.	• Phase 5 alternatives: ○ GPCs: ay, ou, ie, ea, oy, ir, ue, wh, ph, ew, aw, au, ey, oe, a-e • Consolidation of phase 5 graphemes taught • Assessment and intervention support for children falling behind	• **Tricky words:** oh, people, their, Mr, Mrs, looked, called, asked, could • **High frequency words:** about, day, made, came, make, saw
	Spring 1	Phase 5 weeks, 5-9. Repeat lessons as needed.	• Revisit and review of phase 5 graphemes • GPCs: e-e, i-e, a-e, o-e, u-e • Alternative pronunciations: i, o, a, e, u, c, g, y, ch, ow, ie, ea, ou, er, ey • New phoneme /zh/ • Consolidation of phase 5 GPCs taught so far	• **Tricky words:** little, one, do, water, where, who, again, thought, work, through, mouse, many, laughed, because, any, eyes, friends, different, once, please • **High frequency words:** don't, old, very, time, I'm, by
	Spring 2	Phase 5 alternative spellings, weeks 10-14.	• Consolidation of phase 5 GPCs taught so far • Alternative spellings listed on the following page	• **High frequency words:** house, here
	Summer 1	Phase 5 alternative spellings, weeks 15-18.	• Consolidation of phase 5 GPCs taught so far • Alternative spellings listed on the following page • Assessment and intervention support for children falling behind • Phonics Screening Check practice	
	Summer 2	Phase 5 alternative spellings, weeks 19-21. Repeat lessons as needed, including previous phases.	• Consolidation of phase 5 GPCs • Alternative spellings listed on the following page	

Phase 5 alternative spellings – suggested coverage

Week 10 **ture** - picture, adventure, creature, future, nature, puncture **tch** - match, hatch, catch, latch, thatch, stitch, ditch, kitchen **dge** - fudge, nudge, hedge, wedge, bridge, badge, lodge **mb** - lamb, limb, comb, crumb, thumb, numb, plumber Consolidation	**Week 16** **ti** - caption, station, mention, position **ss** - passion, session, mission **alt s** - sugar, sure **sc** - science, scissors, scent Consolidation
Week 11 **gn** - gnat, gnome, gnaw, sign, design **kn** - knit, knot, knight, knew, knee, knife, knob **wr** - wrap, wrist, wreck, wrong, write, written **st** - whistle, listen, Christmas, bustle, castle Consolidation	**Week 17** **ce** - chance, choice, fence, fleece, force **mn** - autumn, column, solemn, hymn **ou** - touch, young, country, countryside, tough, rough **o** - some, come, won Consolidation
Week 12 **se** - mouse, house, horse, grease, purse, loose **alt se** - please, tease, ease, cheese, browse, noise **ere** - here, severe, adhere **eer** - deer, cheer, beer, sneer, peer, career Consolidation	**Week 18** **le** - nettle, kettle, wrestle, puddle, muddle, bubble, little, simple **ve** - have, love, carve, dove, calve **gh** - ghost, spaghetti, ghastly **alt gh** - rough, tough, enough, cough Consolidation
Week 13 **a** - wash, watch, wand, waddle, wander, swan **al** - calf, half, calm, palm, balm **alt ere** - there, where, nowhere, somewhere, everywhere **ear** - pear, bear, wear, tear, swear Consolidation	**Week 19** **alt ea** - break, steak **ui** - fruit, suit, bruise, suitcase, cruise **y** - gym, crystal, myth **eigh** - eight, neigh Consolidation
Week 14 **are** - bare, care, share, dare, fare, hare, scare, stare **alt al** - all, talk, walk, wall, ball, fall, hall, call **our** - four, pour, your, court, fourth, tour **augh** - taught, caught, naughty, daughter Consolidation	**Week 20** **aight** - straight **oar** - soar, board, hoard **ore** - store, core Consolidation
Week 15 **alt ear** - learn, earn, earth, early, pearl, search **or** - work, word, worm, world, worth, worse **oul** - could, would, should **ci** - special, facial, social, artificial Consolidation	**Week 21** **oor** - door, poor, floor, moor **ge** - strange, verge, large Consolidation *u* - put, pull, full, push, cushion, playful* *a* - father, path, bath, last, rather* **accent dependent*

Terminology	Meaning
Phonics	Phonics is a method used for teaching children how to read and write the alphabetic language. It is done by demonstrating the relationship between the sounds of the spoken language and the letters
Phoneme	Phonemes are the smallest unit of sound that makes up a word, and each phoneme has a distinct sound. For example in the word dog, there are three phonemes, d-o-g. Sometimes in the programme we simply refer to phonemes as 'sounds'. There are 44 phonemes in the English language.
Digraph	Two letters that make one sound, such as ch, sh, oo. Vowel digraphs contain two vowels, e.g. ai. Consonant digraphs contain two consonants,e.g. th.
Trigraph	Three letter that make one sound, such as igh, ear or air.
Split digraph	Split digraph are made up of two letters that are "split" by having a consonant placed in the middle of them which extends the vowel sound. For example a_e in "game" or i_e in "tide".
Grapheme	Graphemes are the written symbols that represent the sounds – the phonemes. They can be a single letter or a group of letters. There are often multiple ways to write each phoneme (multiple graphemes for each phoneme), for example the phoneme 'ay' as in 'play' can be written as 'ai', 'a', 'a-e', 'ei' and 'ey', depending on the word you are writing.
Blending	Blending is when children use their knowledge of phonemes to read words, saying the sounds in quick succession to hear the word. For example d-o-g = dog.
Oral blending	Oral blending is a prerequisite to reading, and is where children develop the skill of listening for the sounds within words and blending those sounds together orally to form words.
Segmenting	Segmenting means breaking down a word into its individual phonemes and identifying each one. That doesn't necessarily mean breaking down the word letter by letter however, as many phonemes contain multiple letters.

Adjacent consonants	Adjacent consonants are two or more consonants that are next to each other in a word. For example in the word “must”, the last two letters “s” and “t” are next to each other (or adjacent). Adjacent consonants can appear at the end and beginning of words, or at both ends of a word! You can see examples of adjacent consonants in all CVCC (consonant, vowel, consonant, consonant) words, like ‘lost’ or ‘best’ and CCVC (consonant, consonant, vowel, consonant) words like ‘grab’ or stop.’
GPC	Grapheme-phoneme correspondence - the phoneme that matches to the grapheme, or vice versa.
Sound buttons	Sound buttons are little spots or dashes that can be placed or written below sounds in words to help children with reading skills. Each sound button denotes an individual phoneme and helps the children to use their phonics blending and segmenting skills by identifying the individual phonemes or sounds within a word. For example in the word sh-ee-p, the sound buttons would go underneath sh, ee, and p, so there are three sound buttons in total. Dashes are typically used for digraphs/trigraphs rather than dots.
Vowels and consonants	The vowels are a, e, i, o, u. A consonant is every other letter in the alphabet.
CVC/CVCC/CCVC/CVCV words	A CVC word is a word made up of a consonant, vowel, consonant, for example dog. A CVCC word is made up of a consonant, vowel, consonant, consonant, e.g. lost. A CCVC word is made up of a consonant, consonant, vowel, consonant for example stop. A CVCV word is made up of a consonant, vowel, consonant, vowel for example note.
Schwa	A schwa is an unstressed vowel sound - it is so soft and gentle we barely open our lips. For example in the word ‘about’ we don’t pronounce the ‘a’ as an ‘a’, it is more of an ‘uh’ sound. We don’t refer to this in the programme, but it is helpful to be aware of.
Decoding	Decoding means using our knowledge of phonics to be able to read a word. Breaking a word down into its individual phonemes and then blending them together to read a word..
Tricky words	Tricky words is a phrase used to describe a word that cannot be decoded at a particular stage of phonics. That doesn’t meant that those words can’t be decoded later on, just that the children don’t know those sounds yet.

High frequency words	High frequency words are words that appear a lot in texts. Some will be decodable, some won't.
Alternative pronunciation	Alternative pronunciations are taught after a child has a good understanding of the 44 phonemes and the usual sounds they make. For example, the phoneme 'y' in the word 'yes' can also be pronounced as the igh sound like in the word 'cry' or the ee sound like in the word 'very.'
Alternative spelling	Alternative spellings for phonemes are, put simply, different ways of spelling the same phoneme. For example with the phoneme /ay/, this could be spelt ay, ai, a, a-e or even ea. Teaching children the different ways to spell phonemes is an important part of phonics, and helps to ensure that children spell words correctly.