

Teaching of Phonics at Burley Gate C E Primary School

At Burley Gate C E Primary School, it is our intent that all children have a secure understanding of the letter sounds and spelling system of English. Phonic skills need to be developed in a systematic, staged approach in order to help all children to 'achieve their potential'.

What is Phonics?

Phonics is a way of enabling children to read.

Children are taught how to recognise the sounds each individual letter makes and to identify the sounds that different combinations (blends) of certain letters make such as 'sh' and 'oo'. Children are taught to read by breaking down words into separate sounds or 'phonemes'. They are then taught how to blend these sounds together to read the whole word.

Why Phonics?

Research shows that when phonics is taught in a structured way, starting with the easiest sounds and progressing through to more complex sounds, it is the most effective way of teaching children to read. It is particularly helpful for children aged 5-7.

Letters and Sounds

At Burley Gate C E Primary School we teach phonics following the Letters and Sounds programme. From Early Years Foundation Stage, through into KS1, the 'Letters and Sounds' programme schedule is followed, using Phonics Play and other resources.

The programme focuses on securing word recognition skills, essential for children to decode (read) and encode (spell) words accurately and reading comprehension.

In addition to discreet phonics teaching, phonic skills are applied in reading and writing opportunities as well as in other areas of the curriculum. Teachers will check pupil progress i.e. in their understanding of grapheme-phoneme (letter sound) correspondence.

Year 1 Phonics Screening Check

In the Summer Term, Year1 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 Y2.

What are Nonsense or Pseudo words and why are they included?

These are words that are phonetically decodable but are not actual words with an associated meaning e.g. 'brip', 'snorb'. These words are included in the check specifically to assess whether your child can decode a word using phonic skills and not their memory. The pseudo words will be shown to your child with a picture of an alien. The children will be asked what the alien's name is by reading the word. This will make the check a bit more fun and provides the children with a context for the nonsense word. Crucially it does not provide any clues, so your child has to be able

to decode it. Children generally find nonsense amusing so they will probably enjoy reading these words.

How will the results from the screening be used?

You will be informed of your child's progress in phonics and how he or she has done in the screening check, towards the end of the Summer Term. All of the children are individuals and develop at different stages. The screening check ensures that teachers understand which children need support with decoding.

Please see link below to the Department of Education Document - Letters and Sounds

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/190599/Letters_and_Sounds_-_DFES-00281-2007.pdf