



Westgate Primary School Phonics Teaching

At Westgate Primary School, phonics is at the heart of developing our children as readers. Without being able to decode, reading cannot be developed and this limits access to the rest of the curriculum. We are passionate about phonics: aiming for all children to become fluent readers by the end of key stage one and develop a life-long love of reading.

We teach reading through a systematic, synthetic phonics programme called Red Rose Letters and Sounds, which ensures that children will become enthusiastic and successful readers and writers.

Using the Red Rose Letters and Sounds programme we intend for our pupils to be able to:

- Recognise, say and write all phonemes within each phase
- Use their phonic knowledge to blend and segment phonetically decodable words
- Use their phonic knowledge to attempt to read and write more complex words
- Learn to read 'Tricky Words' and High Frequency Words smoothly and on sight
- Read easily, fluently and with good understanding, age and ability appropriate texts
- Develop the habit of reading widely and often, for both pleasure and information
- Write clearly, accurately and coherently, using phonic knowledge

We start teaching phonics in Reception as soon as the children start school. Our phonics curriculum takes children through five phases, with children typically moving through phases 1 – 4 during Reception and then onto phase 5 throughout year 1 and 2.

Phase 1

This phase concentrates on developing children's speaking and listening skills and it lays the foundation for phonic work which starts in phase 2. The focus is on listening and making sounds. E.g environmental sounds, rhyme, rhythm, alliteration, oral blending and segmenting and early letter recognition.

Phase 2

Children entering Phase 2 will continue to build on the foundations from Phase 1. They should have experienced a wealth of speaking and listening activities, including songs, stories and rhymes, alongside oral blending and segmenting. The purpose of Phase 2 is to teach 23 GPCs with single letter graphemes and some digraphs, with application into reading and writing. Explicit teaching focuses on the recognition of GPCs alongside oral blending and segmenting, and application into reading and writing words and sentences. Children will also be taught how to read and spell 6 tricky words with automaticity of reading tricky words being essential. From Week 3 onwards in Red Rose Letters and Sounds, children begin to be exposed to the concept of a sentence. Carefully considered sessions have been planned which have a focus on blending or segmenting. Later in Phase 2, these skills are combined. Where it suggests writing words or sentences, it is recommended that the role of the adult scaffolds this process. For example, if children are not developmentally ready with finger

strength and letter formation, adults can model writing and/or magnetic letters can also be used to practise application.

Phase 3

Phase 3 teaches 28 GPCs including single letter graphemes, digraphs and trigraphs. We begin to introduce phonic journals for the children who are ready to write with pencil and paper in order to practise GPCs, words and sentences. Children will also be taught how to read and spell 11 phase 3 tricky words. From week 12 onwards, children will begin to be exposed to pseudo (nonsense words) words to read. Pseudo words are linked to the Phonics Screening Check Framework.

Phase 4

This phase will build on the learning from phase 2 and 3. Oral blending and segmenting is explicitly taught, blending for reading and segmenting for spelling. Children will revisit reading and spelling 15 phase 4 tricky words, introduced in phase, with automaticity of reading tricky words being essential. Children will be exposed to pseudo words throughout phase 4.

Phase 5

Children entering this phase should be secure in recognition of all GPCs, tricky words and high frequency words from phases 2, 3 and 4 with application into reading of words and sentences and decodable texts. In phase 5, 21 further graphemes for reading, 19 alternative pronunciations for graphemes and 95 alternative spellings for phonemes with application into reading and writing. Writing journals should be used. Children will also be taught how to read and spell 12 phase 5 tricky words and 25 high frequency words. Children will be exposed to pseudo words throughout phase 5

Teaching and Learning

The Red Rose teaching sequence should be 20 minutes.

1. Revisit/Review
2. Teach
3. Practise
4. Apply

1. Review

Graphemes- reading or writing Tricky words High Frequency words Words with previous GPCs
Games to be played

2. Teach- three sections

Teach tricky words

Teaching a new GPC (New learning...)

Hear it and say it =>see it and say it => Say it and write it

Modelling correct enunciation and pick up on any incorrect enunciation

Say phonemes in sound talk and ask the children to blend them together – blending hands

Say the full word and ask children to use the consistent segmenting strategy- phoneme fingers

Segment the word – sound buttons/phoneme frame

3. Practise

Reading and/or writing words with new grapheme taught in Reading and/or writing the tricky word taught. Use of activities from Red Rose Phonics

4. Apply

Reading or writing one or two sentences which include the newly taught grapheme and tricky word
Use previously taught GPC's within sentence too

In every phonics lesson consistent strategies are used:

Red Rose Handwriting formation patten

phoneme fingers (encouraging children to use non writing hand) to segment the words

blending hands when blending the phonemes together

Smooth reading when blending the phonemes together

Sound buttons

Phonemes exposed in words not just phoneme flash cards

Stars around tricky words

Highlighting parts of the tricky would we know and the parts that trick us

Stretch and challenge words to be used

Phonics box of resources in every classroom

Phonic journals for pupil's recording

Reading Books

Home Reading books, while children are cracking the phonetic code, match the phase the children are confident in or are currently learning. Our phonic reading books have been organised to match the teaching sequence week by week so the books can be closely matched. This ensures children are able to practice and apply their phonetic skills as much as possible in order to read.

At a later time, and as children become more fluent readers, the comprehension of what they are reading develops further so they can not only decode words, but also make sense of what they are reading. We recognise this as also being a vital part of a child's reading development.

Daily keep up lessons

Any child that needs additional practice has daily keep up support. This support matches the teaching sequence and uses the same resources but it is delivered in smaller steps with more focus on repetition so every child can secure their learning.

Children in years 2 and 3 who are not fluent readers or who did not pass the phonics screening check have extra phonic or reading sessions tailored to their needs at least three times a week to catch up. These children are assessed to identify gaps in phonic knowledge.

If any children in year 4 to 6 have gaps in their phonetical knowledge when reading or writing, interventions to address specific reading gaps are timetabled at least three times a week.

Phonic Assessments

Staff assess children's phonics knowledge every day through formative strategies and make adaptations to their teaching to ensure the best possible outcomes. Children's progress is continually reviewed and they are formally assessed at the end of each term. We use Phonics Tracker to assess progress and highlight any gaps in knowledge which can then be targeted.

The National Phonics screening check is performed in June of Year 1. The purpose of the screening check is to confirm that all children have learned phonic decoding to an age-appropriate standard. The children who did not meet the required standard for the check in Year 1, enter again in Year 2 with additional support. As children enter KS2, further targeted provision is provided for those children requiring phonic support.

What can I do to help my child?

First and foremost, reading to and with a child is proven to improve their life chances. Reading at any age improves mental health and wellbeing, improves memory and keeps the brain active. Supporting your child on their reading journey is vital and makes a huge difference to a child's reading ability.

Setting aside quality time to listen to and help your child read the phonetic books sent home will help with your child's reading development as they need as many opportunities as possible to apply the phonetic skills taught in school. These books are designed and matched to support your child's phonic development. A second book, is also chosen by your child to be shared for pleasure. This can be read by a parent/carer and helps to promote a child's love of reading and listening to stories.

Research also shows that where children experience a rich and enjoyable source of books from a variety of genres, they will learn more confidently not only in English but across the curriculum. They will therefore stand a better chance of achieving well in their school years and beyond. At Westgate, we believe that 'Reading is the Key to Learning' and endeavour to develop children who are readers for life. After all, we learn to read and read to learn.