

Dear Parent / Carer

National Phonics Screening Test

We are writing to inform you about the National Phonics Screening Test which will take place in Key Stage 1 during the week beginning 6th June. This letter aims to explain this process, in addition to providing you with ideas to help your child with phonics at home.

Who takes the test?

All children in year 1. In addition, any child in year 2 who did not reach the required level when they took the test in year 1 will take the test again in year 2. If for any reason, we feel that there is a valid reason why your child should not take the test in Year 1, the class teacher will discuss this with you. Please note, this is only done in exceptional circumstances and your child would still be eligible to take the retake when they are in Year 2.

What is phonics?

Phonics is a way of teaching children to read. They are taught how to:

- Recognise the sounds that each individual letter makes
- Identify the sounds that different combinations of letters make e.g. sh and oo
- Blend these sounds together from left to right to make a word.

Children can then use this knowledge to segment and blend new words that they hear or see.

Why phonics?

Research shows that when phonics is taught in a structured way – starting with the easiest sounds and progressing through to the most complex – it is the most effective way of teaching young children to read.

What is the phonics screening check?

As you may have already heard, the government introduced an annual phonics screening check. This will further inform our continual assessment of the children's phonic knowledge and the results of the check will be shared with parents/carers.

It comprises of a list of 40 words that children read one-to-one with a teacher. The list is a combination of both real and made up (Non-words) which rely purely on using phonics to decode. The non-words will be shown with a picture of an imaginary creature so that children know they are not 'real' words.

The phonics screening check will take place one-to-one but the children will largely be unaware of it being a test and have already participated in some practice ones.

What are nonsense words?

Your child will be told during the check which words are nonsense words (that he/she will not have seen before). Your child will be familiar with this because we already use 'nonsense-words' when teaching phonics in school. Nonsense words are important to include because words such as 'vap' or 'jound' are new to all children. Children cannot read the non-words by using their memory or vocabulary; they have to use their decoding skills. This is a fair way to assess their ability to decode.

After the check

We will tell you about your child's progress in phonics and how he or she has done in the screening check as part of the end of year report. If your child has found the check difficult, we will also tell you what support we have put in place to help him or her improve. You might like to ask your child's class teacher how you can support your child to take the next step in reading. All children are individuals and develop at different rates. The screening check ensures that teachers understand which children need extra help with phonic decoding.

Helping your child with phonics

Phonics works best when children are given plenty of encouragement and learn to enjoy reading and books. Parents play a very important part in helping with this. Here are some simple steps to help your child learn to read through phonics:

Step 1 – identify 'special friends' (children are allowed to underline the sounds)

Step 2 – Fred talk the sounds (say each sound separately)

Step 3 – read the word (blend sounds together)

- Use the speed sounds chart. Point to a sound and ask your child to say the sound.
- Choose 4 sounds a week to display at home that your child is unfamiliar with. Use the sound phrases first to identify the sound and then move onto just saying the correct sound.
- You can then highlight these sounds when you read with your child.
- Practise a mixture of real and nonsense words for your child to practice. An example of a phonics screening check test has been included.
- Make up nonsense words and ask your child to read. Then ask your child to make up a nonsense word for you to read.
- With all books, encourage your child to 'sound out'/'Fred talk' unfamiliar words and then blend the sounds together from left to right rather than looking at the pictures to guess. Once your child has read an unfamiliar word you can talk about what it means and help him or her to follow the story.
- Try to make time to read with your child every day. Grandparents and older brother or sisters can help, too. Encourage your child to blend the sounds all the way through a word.
- Word games like 'I-spy' can also be an enjoyable way of teaching children about sounds and letters. You can also encourage your child to read words from your shopping list or road signs to practise phonics.
- Lots of Fred talk at home!!

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us or your child's class teacher.

Yours sincerely,

Mr Knapper, Mrs Altier and Mrs Burton

Complex Speed Sounds

Consonant sounds

f	l	m	n	r	s	v	z	sh	th	ng
ff	ll	mm	nn	rr	ss	ve	zz	ti		nk
ph	le	mb	kn	wr	se		s	ci		
					c		se			
					ce					

b	c	d	g	h	j	p	qu	t	w	x	y	ch
bb	k	dd	gg		g	pp		tt	wh			tch
	ck				ge							
	ch				dge							

Vowel sounds

a	e	i	o	u	ay	ee	igh	ow
	ea				<u>a-e</u>	y	<u>i-e</u>	<u>o-e</u>
					ai	ea	ie	oa
						e	i	o
							y	

oo	oo	ar	or	air	ir	ou	oy	ire	ear	ure
<u>u-e</u>			oor	are	ur	ow	oi			
ue			ore		er					
ew			aw							
			au							

Phrases to help remember the sounds

ay: <u>ma</u> y I <u>pl</u> ay
ee: what can you <u>see</u>
igh: fly <u>high</u>
ow: <u>bl</u> ow the <u>sn</u> ow
oo: <u>po</u> o at the <u>zo</u> o
oo: <u>loo</u> k at a <u>boo</u> k
ar: <u>st</u> art the <u>ca</u> r
or: shut the <u>door</u>
air: that's not <u>fair</u>
ir: <u>wh</u> irl and <u>tw</u> irl
ou: <u>sh</u> out it <u>ou</u> t
oy: toy for a <u>bo</u> y

ea: cup of <u>tea</u>
oi: <u>spoi</u> l the <u>bo</u> y
a-e: make a <u>cake</u>
i-e: nice <u>smile</u>
o-e: <u>ph</u> one <u>h</u> ome
u-e: <u>h</u> uge <u>br</u> ute
aw: <u>yawn</u> at <u>dawn</u>
are: <u>share</u> and <u>care</u>
ur: <u>pur</u> se for a <u>nur</u> se
er: a <u>better</u> <u>letter</u>
ow: <u>brown</u> <u>cow</u>
ai: <u>snail</u> in the <u>rain</u>
oa: <u>goat</u> in a <u>boat</u>
ew: <u>chew</u> the <u>stew</u>
ire: <u>fire</u> <u>fire</u> !
ear: <u>hear</u> with your <u>ear</u>
ure: <u>sure</u> it's <u>pure</u> ?
tion: (<u>celebration</u>)
tious / cious: (<u>scrumptious</u> / <u>delicious</u>)
e: <u>he</u> <u>me</u> <u>we</u> <u>she</u> <u>be</u>

Examples of phonics screening check assessment. Please note these are the answer sheet for the teacher administering the test. This is not the sheet children will read from.

Section 1			
Word	Correct	Incorrect	Comment
dat			
cag			
rin			
ept			
jash			
quib			
coid			
quass			
glog			
blard			
disp			
murbs			
chum			
kick			
reef			
short			
blot			
greet			
dust			
parks			

Section 2			
Word	Correct	Incorrect	Comment
tay			
sloam			
zued			
meve			
clend			
braits			
scrug			
spue			
high			
feast			
goal			
shape			
trunk			
groups			
straw			
scribe			
model			
person			
chapter			
reptiles			