

Year 1 Phonics Screening – Parent Meeting – Friday 26th April 2.30pm in the hall

What is the Phonics Screening?

The phonics screening check was developed by phonics experts with Head Teachers, teachers and other interested specialists. It was piloted in around 300 schools during 2011 (including ours) and was independently evaluated. The check gives information on how well a child can apply their phonic knowledge and is not necessarily an indicator for how good their reading is overall.

The first statutory phonics screening check for all year 1 pupils took place in June 2012. Children who do not reach the required standard at the end of year 1 receive extra support in Year 2 so their phonic decoding skills can improve. They will then retake the screening check in the summer of Year 2.

The check happens at the end of Year 1 after the initiative 'Reading by Six' showed that children who are 'readers' by the age of 6 are best placed for the next stages in their learning.

Phonics and Reading

Blending and segmenting (using phonics) is the prime approach used to teach children to decode unfamiliar words. Children first learn the phonemes (sounds) for all single letter graphemes (s, a, t, p, i, n) before moving on to graphemes with two or more letters (ll, ss, ff). Lastly they learn alternative graphemes for the same phoneme (a, ay, ai). ***A phoneme is a sound made by one or more letters, a grapheme is one or more letters that represent a single phoneme (sound).***

This knowledge is taught through daily planned letters and sounds sessions from Foundation Stage 1 to Year 2. Alongside these sessions we are teaching the other skills children need for working out unfamiliar words such as reading on and using pictures. It is very important that in addition to phonic skills children are developing comprehension through effective 'book talk' with adults.

The Screening

Week beginning Monday 10th June children will spend some time with their class teacher completing the screening. They work in a quiet place and the teacher explains what the child needs to do. There is a set of strict criteria that teachers must adhere to. If your child is away in that week there is a chance for them to do the screening in the third week of June.

<https://vimeo.com/39441143> (A guide for teachers on how to score the screening)

As you can see from the video it is very important for children to blend any word they have segmented. There is not a time limit on the screening; teachers will make a judgement about whether children need a break between sections.

There are 40 words - 20 real and 20 alien/non-real. The children read each word in turn and the teacher uses the mark sheet to record their responses. The pass mark has been 32 each year since the screening was introduced, the pass mark for 2019 will be published at the end of June. After this we will write to you and inform you of your child's score and whether they have met the expected standard. As a school we are fully committed to ensuring the screening is administered in a way that children are made to feel comfortable and confident.

We send the results of the check to County who pass these on to the DfE.

How you can help...

The screening is a statutory assessment and children will probably be unaware they are even doing anything different, we have been practicing and the children are often looking at alien words in Letters and Sounds. Unless your child talks about it there is no need for you to mention it to them. The screening takes place 1:1 with their teacher and involves reading a booklet of real and alien words containing the graphemes they have been learning since starting school.

* At home please continue to read regularly, referring to the book band stickers in the reading record and talk about the books you and your child read together.

* The flashcards sent home in the autumn term and before the Easter holidays contain the sounds that children need to be familiar with in the screening. If you have lost these (or have worn them out with practice) please ask your child's class teacher for a new set.

Our main aim is to promote a love of reading and equip children with the skills and knowledge to be successful readers and talk confidently about their books.

Please talk to your child's class teacher if you have any questions.