

Phonics Screening Check Year 1

A guide for parents

What is Phonics?

Phonics is a way of teaching children to read quickly and skilfully. Children are taught how to recognise the sounds each individual letter makes and to identify the sounds that different contributions of 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. At Duncombe Primary School we teach phonics, following the Letters and Sounds Programme.

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 an effective way of teaching children to read. It is particularly helpful for children aged 5-7

What is the phonics screening check?

The National phonics screening check is a statutory assessment that was introduced in 2012 to all Year 1 pupils and is a quick and easy check of your child's phonics knowledge.

Who is it for?

All year 1 pupils will take the phonics screening check in 2015 during the week beginning 15th June.

What is in the phonics screening check?

It comprises of a list of 40 words and nonsense words. It will assess phonics skills and knowledge learnt through reception and year 1. Your child will read one-one with a teacher. It will be your child's current teacher so it is a familiar face. They will be asked to 'sound out' a word and blend the sounds together. The check is very similar to tasks the children already complete during phonics lessons.

Is it stressful to test such young children?

The assessment will be age appropriate and the adults involved will all be familiar with it. The children at Duncombe Primary School are familiar with the set up as we are constantly reviewing children's progress in a similar way. Most children will complete the check in about 10-15 minutes. Children who need longer will be given a

break in between sections of the check. There will be a few practise words at the beginning to make sure your child understands the activity. We have also been careful to ensure that children are not aware they are being tested.

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

These are words that are phonetically decodable but not actual words with an associated meaning e.g. brip, snorb. These words are included in the check specifically to assess whether you 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 aliens 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.

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. **The purpose of learning phonics is to support children to learn to read. Some children struggle with phonics but are good readers. If this is the case for your child, don't worry if they don't pass the test. Becoming a fluent reader is the ultimate goal and phonics is just one way that this goal can be achieved.**

What happens if a child struggles with the screening check?

The screening check will identify children who have phonic decoding skills below the level expected for the end of year 1 and who therefore need help. Schools are expected to provide extra help and children will then be able to re-take the assessment in year 2.

How can I help my child?

- There are a number of things that parents can do to support early reading development:
- Let your child see you enjoy reading yourself. They are influenced by you and what you do! Immerse your child in a love of reading.
- Make time for your child to read their school book to you.
- With all books, encourage your child to 'sound out' unfamiliar words and then blend from left.
- We will send home practise materials with your child. Please practise these with them at home. Don't worry if they find it difficult, it is important not to put pressure on them.
- There are many phonic games for children to access on the internet.

We hope this information is useful. Remember, we are here to help your child achieve their very best. If you have any questions please ask Miranda (Phonics leader), or your child's class Teacher or TA. We are all happy to help.

Websites

Online games for children

<http://www.phonicsplay.co.uk/>

great games – can link to Letters and Sounds, select letters used in each game

<http://www.tutpup.com/>

A very addictive site. You can register your child, and then the child can make up their own user name and compete with other children across the world. Spelling matches (different levels) and also maths. Awards given to motivate children.

www.starfall.com

phonic games and phonic stories

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/wordsandpictures/cvc/index.shtml>

<http://www.ictgames.com/literacy.html>

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/ks1bitesize/literacy/>

http://www.kenttrustweb.org.uk/kentict/content/games/literacy_menu.html

Adult Resources

<http://www.communication4all.co.uk/http/PhonicsWeb.htm>

<http://www.societyforqualityeducation.org/stairway/readingmaterial.pdf>

hundreds of sentences for dictation or reading practice, linked to phonics

<http://www.adrianbruce.com/reading/games.htm>

http://bogglesworldesl.com/phonics_monsters.htm

<http://www.phonicsinternational.com/>

Ruth Miskin phonics cards can be bought from book shops, or from Amazon for £4.50:

<http://www.amazon.co.uk/ruth-miskin-phonics-cards/s?ie=UTF8&keywords=ruth%20miskin%20phonics%20cards&page=1&rh=i%3Aaps%2Ck%3Aruth%20miskin%20phonics%20cards>