



Teaching of Phonics

The teaching of phonics underpins and is intricately linked to early reading and writing in the Foundation stage and in Key Stage 1. We teach systematic, carefully planned and tailored phonics lessons every day, based on the 'Letters and Sounds' scheme published by the DfE, to equip children with the skills needed to become fluent readers and confident writers. Phonics equips children with the tools needed to decode and segment unfamiliar words so that they are able to read, write and spell with understanding, fluency, confidence and accuracy, thus achieving the capabilities of an independent reader.

Phonics lessons throughout the Thames Bridge Federation are taught, in Reception and Key Stage 1 classes, every day through fast paced lessons which last 20 minutes with the following aims:

- To consistently structure and sequence phonics so that sounds are learnt, revised frequently, understanding consolidated and knowledge progressed
- To provide opportunities for children to apply their phonological knowledge in their reading and writing in purposeful contexts.
- To differentiate the phonics taught according to the needs and ability of the class, using ability grouping and making effective use of teaching assistants.
- To use a variety of teaching strategies that appeal to a range of learning styles and include physical activities as well as practising reading and writing.
- To use regular and accurate assessment to gain an understanding of the areas of strength, to track the progression of phonological knowledge and to identify areas of weakness. Where areas of weakness are identified action is put in place to ensure appropriate progress is maintained.

Phonics sessions consist of a variety of activities and are designed to enable children to consolidate their understanding of previously taught phonemes and graphemes whilst introducing and teaching new ones.

Phonics sessions generally follow the basic structure:

- Revise previous phonemes
- Teach new phoneme
- Practise new phoneme (oral and written)
- Apply new phoneme in context
- Consolidation

Further information about the letters and sounds scheme, including free resources for parents can be found here. <http://www.letters-and-sounds.com/>

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