

# All Saints' CE VC Infant School

'Building the bridge to success'



## Phonics Policy

September 2013

### AIMS AND PURPOSES

The ability to read and communicate effectively is an essential life skill and phonics teaching underpins the acquisition of these skills. It is our belief that children learn best when they are actively involved in their learning and we firmly believe that children will learn best when they are involved in purposeful talk, games, reading and writing activities.

The Rose Report makes clear that "high quality phonic work' should be taught systematically and discretely as the prime approach used in the teaching of early reading." (Rose 2006)

By adopting a whole school approach to phonics we aim:

- To enable pupils to become fluent and confident readers.
- To enable pupils to become confident writers.
- To teach children grapheme-phoneme correspondences in a clearly defined, incremental sequence.
- To equip children with the skill of blending phonemes in the order in which they occur and so enable them to apply this in their reading of unfamiliar words.
- To equip children with the skill of segmenting words into their constituent phonemes and so enable them to confidently attempt the spelling of unfamiliar words.

### PLANNING AND ORGANISATION

The teaching of phonics is delivered in discrete, daily phonics sessions, then reinforced in other reading and writing activities across the curriculum. The school bases its phonics teaching on 'Letters and Sounds' as supplemented by the resources from the Jolly Phonics scheme. Phonics sessions of 20 minutes each day are delivered by teachers, assisted by support staff as appropriate. Lessons are carefully planned and structured to the needs of the children. Throughout the majority of Foundation Stage children are taught in mixed ability classes, ensuring there is no ceiling to their learning. Towards the end of the Foundation Stage and throughout Key Stage 1 children are set into groups according to the relevant phonic phase that they are working at.

### TEACHING STRATEGIES

#### Early Years Foundation Stage

The emphasis at this stage is on systematic, multi-sensory, high quality phonics work which is embedded within a rich language experience. Phonics lessons follow the four part model of revisit, teach, practise, apply and are differentiated for the children's ability. The practice element of each session is always a hands-on, practical reading or writing game in which the children can actively participate. The main focus is to ensure that children are able to decode words by blending sounds and are able to spell simple words by segmenting them into phonemes and matching them to one of

the 44 sounds of the English Language. Age related expectations are that children will be working within phase 3 or 4 of 'Letters and Sounds' by the end of the Foundation Stage. The application of phonics in writing will be offered through shared and guided writing and independent writing opportunities linked to the seven areas of learning.

### **Key Stage 1**

Phonics continues to be planned and taught on a daily basis within four part lessons as recommended within 'Letters and Sounds'. Children will continue to develop their decoding skills by blending sounds to read words, using a wider range of grapheme-phoneme correspondences. For writing and spelling purposes, the emphasis is on the children's ability to segment words into phonemes and then match the most likely letter or letters to each sound. Children will continue to learn how to spell a number of high frequency words and common irregular words enabling them to write fluently. As they progress through the phonics phases children will investigate and learn how to use common spelling patterns, frequently used prefixes and inflectional endings in their own writing.

### **Parental Links and Homework**

As new sounds are introduced in the Foundation Stage, the corresponding graphemes are sent home on small flashcards together with the related Jolly Phonics action to enable parents to support their children in learning grapheme-phoneme correspondences. These cards can also be used to reinforce the blending and segmenting skills that the children have learnt within school. As children move into Key Stage 1, they will begin to take spellings home to learn on a weekly basis. These spellings will be linked to the phonics that they are learning.

Phonics workshops and information events are held at key points during the year and all parents are invited to participate in these. Information to help parents support their child with their reading and phonics is also available on the school website.

### **ICT**

Teachers use interactive whiteboards to support their phonics teaching and to produce high quality resources to use in the practise element of lessons. The school uses the Phonics Bug websites to supplement the reading scheme and children targeted for additional support are registered to enable them to access the eBooks on the Bug Club website.

### **INCLUSION AND EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES**

Provision will be made for those children having additional needs, including children with special educational needs/disabilities, children working above or below age-related expectations and children for whom English is an additional language.

- Children with SEN/working below age-related expectations will work towards the same objectives with support/ appropriate differentiation. Those working well below the level of their peers will work on a related objective. Interventions will be planned to support children's progress and narrow gaps in achievement; for example, children may have an individual education plan and as part of that would receive additional individual/group support.
- Children who are gifted and talented will work to deepen or broaden their understanding of the objective which may sometimes be from a later year.
- Children learning English as an additional language (EAL) will receive appropriate support to enable them to access objectives.

## **ASSESSMENT OF PHONICS**

Teachers keep individual records which are updated as children reach the end of a phase. Tracking grids are kept for each class in Foundation Stage 2 and for each set in Key stage 1 and are completed each half term.

Assessment for learning is at the heart of effective planning and assessment of phonics and outcomes from each phonics session are used to plan future sessions, addressing issues or gaps in children's learning as appropriate.

All children in Year 1 take part in the Phonics Screening which was introduced by the Government in June 2012. Children who do not meet the expected standard in Year 1 are targeted for additional support to ensure that they will meet this standard before they leave Key Stage 1. Common issues identified from the Phonics Screening each year are highlighted and addressed in the daily phonics teaching across the school.

## **RESOURCES**

There is a range of reading resources in school; these are stored centrally and support the teaching of phonics. (See Reading policy). In addition, the Phonics Bug and Bug Club websites are available to support phonics teaching and the practice of phonics skills at home.

## **MONITORING AND REVIEW**

The planning, teaching and assessment for phonics are monitored by the subject co-ordinator and senior leadership team. This is done by lesson observations, looking at planning and assessment and talking to the children. The subject leader tracks pupil progress in reading using the assessments entered into phonics tracking grids by the class teachers each half term. Pupil progress meetings are planned for each term to ensure class teachers evaluate their own class progress and set targets for intervention for those children underachieving. Feedback is given to individual teachers and to the team as a whole as appropriate. Issues are highlighted and addressed and a review of any monitoring is shared with the senior leadership team. Regular meetings are held during the year between the literacy governors and the subject co-ordinator.

Mrs K. Fox

(Literacy Co-ordinator)

Mrs K. Fisher Mrs V. Grainger

(Literacy Governors)

This policy has been approved by the governors of All Saints' CE Infant School.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# Glossary

## Phonics Terminology

**Phoneme** : The smallest unit of sound in a word is called a phoneme. There are 44 phonemes or sounds in the English language.

**Grapheme** : A way of writing down a sound. This may be one letter (eg the sound 's' in sat) or it may be more than one letter (eg the sound 'sh' in shut).

**Grapheme Phoneme Correspondences (GPCs)**: A grapheme that represents a sound. Children are taught the sounds in a particular order. There are around 44 sounds in the English language, but there is often more than one grapheme to represent each sound. (eg the **ee** sound in the word **sheep** could be written as **e** in the word **be**, **ea** in the word **sea**, **y** in the word **happy** and **ey** in the word **key**)

**Blending** : Children are taught to be able to blend. This is when children say the sounds that make up a word and are able to merge the sounds together until they can hear what the word is. This skill is vital in learning to read eg: c-a-t is cat.

**Segmenting** : Children are also taught to segment. This is the opposite of blending. Children are able to say a word and then break it up into the phonemes that make it up. This skill is vital in being able to spell words. Eg being able to hear that cat is made up of the sounds c-a-t.