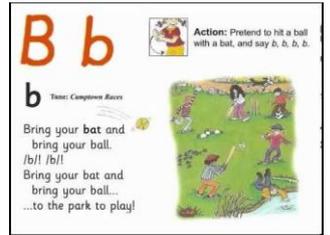


Belmont C of E Primary

Phonics: Our Approach

At Belmont C of E Primary School, we use a variety of different methods and approaches to teaching phonics. We have looked at a variety of well publicised schemes, and take on the ‘best bits’ of each of these to use in our phonics sessions. We currently follow the ‘Letters and Sounds’ phonics programme and teach the sounds in phases according to this. We also incorporate aspects of the ‘Jolly Phonics’ scheme to help children to remember the letter sounds. We believe that giving the children an action and a song for each sound helps to aid their memory and caters for several different learning styles. We teach the sounds through some of the recommended ‘Letters and Sounds’ games and activities, however, we do not stick to this rigidly and also incorporate other practical games and activities to meet the needs of all children.



An example of the Jolly Phonics song and action, which we use to accompany our ‘Letters and Sounds’ teaching.

The Phases

The ‘Letters and Sounds’ phonics programme teaches phonics in phases.

Phase 1 is about listening to sounds, making sounds and playing with words. This is taught throughout Nursery and revisited in Reception. It is also revisited throughout other year groups where children require further teaching of these skills.

Phase 2 is taught throughout Reception and allows the children to learn the first 23 graphemes including the ss, ff, ll, and ck digraphs. They will learn to say the sounds each letter makes, and how to blend it in words. They will also learn the formation of each letter and how to write words using these sounds. Children recap phase 1 aspects orally blending and segmenting words and then begin to read and write these words. They will learn how to blend a set of words using 19 common letters. They will also learn to read 6 ‘tricky’ words. They will learn to apply these skills to reading captions and short sentences and how to write their own captions and phrases. The ultimate goal is for children to be able to automatically read words containing these sounds.

Phase 3 is also taught throughout Reception and allows children to learn another 25 graphemes, most of them comprising two letters (e.g. oa), so the children can represent each of about 42 phonemes by a grapheme. Children also continue to practise CVC blending and segmentation in this phase and will apply their knowledge of blending and segmenting to reading and spelling simple two-syllable words and captions. They will learn letter names during this phase, learn to read some more tricky words and also begin to learn to spell some of these words.

Phase 4 is taught towards the end of Reception and allows children to consolidate their knowledge of graphemes in reading and spelling words containing adjacent consonants and polysyllabic words. They will also learn some further ‘tricky’ words. This phase is often revisited again at the start of Year 1.

Phase 5 is taught throughout Year 1. Throughout this phase children will broaden their knowledge of graphemes and phonemes for use in reading and spelling. They will learn new graphemes and alternative pronunciations for these and graphemes they already know, where relevant. Some of the alternatives will already have been encountered in the high-frequency words that have been taught. Children become quicker at recognising graphemes of more than one letter in words and at blending the phonemes they represent. When spelling words they will learn to choose the appropriate graphemes to represent phonemes and begin to build word-specific knowledge of the spellings of words.

At the end of Year 1, children will undertake the statutory Phonics Screening Assessment. This entails reading 40 real and ‘nonsense’ words in a short one to one session with their class teacher. In previous years, children were required to read a total of 32 out of 40 words in order to meet the expected standard. However, this figure is subject to change each year. Children are well prepared for this assessment throughout the year and enjoy the opportunity to practise their reading skills. Children who do not meet the required standard are given targeted support to ensure that they continue to work within year group expectations.

Phase 6 is taught in Year 1 and 2. The aim of this phase to allow children to become fluent readers and spellers. Past tense word endings and suffixes are taught throughout this phase.

It is worth noting that whilst each phase may be broadly specific to a year group, teachers use both formative and summative assessment throughout the year to ensure that provision matches the needs of all children. Therefore, Phonics groupings are flexible, allowing for both small group and whole class learning.

Our Daily Phonic Routine

Throughout Nursery, Phonic activities are shared throughout the day and through discussions with children as applicable. Good listening is always promoted including modelling eye contact and responding to what has been heard. Spoken language is developed and modelled to extend the vocabulary of children, and support them in forming comprehensible sentences. The EYFS leader teaches two discreet phonic sessions each week at times which can be accessed by most children.

In Reception, Y1 and Y2 Phonics is taught in daily discreet sessions. Each session will last 20-30 minutes and is introduced to the children at the start, explaining what they will learn in that session. Sessions consist of four parts:

1. Revisit and review
2. Teaching new material
3. Practising using new skills and previously covered skills
4. Apply new skills in a context.

What happens in each part of the session?

1. Revisit and review - When we revisit and review we look at the sounds and skills that the children have previously learned. This part is particularly useful for children to consolidate their previous learning.

This part of the session is usually fast paced and a quick recap of skills. This could be done through the use of flash cards or simple interactive speed read/wrote games.

2. Teaching new material – In this part of the session new sounds, words or spelling patterns are taught to the children. This is done through a variety of games and activities to cater for as many different learning styles as possible.

3. Practising using skills – In this part of the session the children will practise their new skills. For example if they have just learned the new sound ‘ai’ they may be required to hunt for, and read words containing an ‘ai’ sound such as rain or train. This will also be taught using short interactive activities and games to keep the children engaged and ensure that they enjoy their phonic sessions.

4. Applying new skills – In the final part of the session children will be asked to apply their new skills to a caption or sentence. This could be reading and matching words to a picture, or attempting to write short sentences and captions to match a picture.

We continually monitor and assess the children throughout phonic sessions so that we can ensure that they are progressing and that we are pitching our sessions at the correct level. It is our aim to provide children with the phonics ‘toolkit’, which will enable them to become independent and confident readers.