

Phonics and Reading

Westminster CE Primary Academy

Phonics

Phonics is taught in a highly structured programme of daily lessons across reception and Key Stage One in differentiated groups according to children's phonic awareness and development. The DFE Letters and Sound programme is followed, providing a synthetic approach to the teaching of phonics. This is supplemented by phonics play, Education City and other ICT games. Children are also taught the Jolly Phonics actions to help embed the sounds with the letter.

Children receive a 20 minute phonics session each day and each session gives an opportunity for children to revisit their previous experience, be taught new skills, practise together and apply what they have learned. Phonics is also taught across the curriculum where pupils are given opportunities to apply their phonological awareness to help read and write. Please see separate document on the actions.

Phases of the Phonics Programme

Children in Nursery begin with Phase 1 which provides a range of listening activities through play, to develop their listening skills. Progress is tracked at the end of each term. As children move into Reception they continue to build upon the listening activities and are introduced to Phase 2 which marks the start of systematic phonic work. Grapheme-phoneme correspondence is introduced. The process of segmenting whole words and selecting letters to represent those phonemes is taught writing the letters to encode words. Phase 3 completes the teaching of the alphabet and then moves on to cover sounds represented by more than one letter, learning one representation for each of the 44 phonemes. At this stage just one spelling is given for each phoneme. When children become secure they continue into Phase 4 where they start to read and spell words containing adjacent consonants. No new phonemes are introduced at this phase. It is expected that children will enter Phase 5 as they begin year 1, broadening 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. It is expected that children entering Year 2 will start Phase 6 which develops a variety of spelling strategies including word specific spellings eg see/ sea, spelling of words with prefixes and suffixes, doubling and dropping letters where necessary. Also the accurate spelling of words containing unusual GPC's eg laughs, two.

The school spelling programs complement the phonics learning from Reception through to the end of KS2. The spelling of high frequency and tricky words are taught continuously throughout the phases.

Phonics Assessment

Children's progress is continually reviewed. Children are formally assessed at the end of each term.

The national Phonics screening check is performed in June of Year 1. Prior to this, the Year 1 phonics workshop gives parents information about how they can support their children at home with phonics. The purpose of the screening check is to confirm that all children have learned phonic decoding to an age-appropriate standard. The children who did not meet the required standard for the check in year 1 enter again in year 2 with additional support. As children enter KS2 provision is made for those children still requiring daily phonics.

Reading

At Westminster CE Primary Academy children will learn to read with confidence, fluency and understanding, providing them with the skills required to achieve a lifetime of enjoyment through reading.

Children read in school independently, in guided groups and as a shared class session. They listen to adults and other children read.

Our Reading aims are:

- To develop phonetic skills which lead to blending and reading accurately and fluently.
- To promote confidence and positive attitudes to reading through access to a wide range of literature.
- To develop their vocabulary and comprehension of what they have read.
- To monitor each child's progress through the use of a range of assessment strategies
- To support those children who require additional support with their reading.

Reading in School

Many activities take place which promote pre-reading skills. Children become aware of print in their environment and match pictures and words. Language comprehension is developed by talking and reading to the children. As children gain phonic knowledge they start the process of decoding.

Initially, as children learn to read, they are given a picture book with no words with the intention that they will share the book and take part in a conversation generated by the pictures. Gradually as the children's knowledge of letters and sounds develop they begin to phonetically decode words.

Our reading books are organised into coloured Book Bands. Children are assessed regularly and move onto the next Book Band when their fluency and understanding show that they are ready. Children move through the Book Bands until they reach the required standard to become a Free-Reader, choosing a book to read from our well-stocked school or class libraries. In addition to a personalised reading book children are able to take a book home from the school library.

Assessment of Reading

Reading is assessed regularly and monitored on the school tracking system. In addition, children in KS1 are assessed using the PM benchmarking to check progress in reading. Rising Stars reading tests are also used to monitor progress. Liaison with the school SENCO and external agencies is arranged for children who require additional support and reading intervention strategies and pupils who fall below the expected standard for their age are listened to 1:1 daily by a member of staff at school.