

Downham Preparatory School and Montessori Nursery



Phonics Policy

Letters and Sounds

Date of last review: January 2023

Date of next review: January 2024

Rationale

At Downham Preparatory School we strive to ensure all children become fluent readers by the end of Key Stage One.

Aims

- To teach children aural discrimination, phonemic awareness and rhyme awareness in order to encourage good spelling.
- To encourage repetition and consolidation, so that spelling becomes automatic.
- To encourage children to segment and blend.

Objectives

- To learn to read and write all 44 graphemes in the English language.
- To teach children specific strategies to help them remember tricky words.
- To ensure that the teaching of phonics is lively, interactive and investigative.
- To encourage children to apply their phonic skills in all curriculum areas.

Introduction

At Downham Preparatory School we use the **Letters and Sounds** phonics programme, alongside our own resources, which aim to build upon children's speaking and listening skills as well as preparing them for learning to read by developing their phonic knowledge and skills. It sets out a detailed and systematic programme for teaching phonic skills for children with the aim of them becoming fluent readers by the age of seven. Letters and Sounds are split into 6 phases. Please see appendix for details regarding what children will learn in each phase. Alongside this, we use many of our own phonics learning tools such as 'Reading Rules' which was produced by Mrs Sharpe. We have chosen to follow a slightly different order of teaching the letters as we feel this works best for our children and fits in with our first reading schemes books 'Pat and the Cat'.

Differentiation

We aim to encourage all children to reach their full potential through the provision of varied opportunities to access phonics. We recognise that our phonics planning must allow pupils to gain a progressively deeper understanding of the phonetic structure of the English language as they move through the school to ensure all children are provided with the key tools needed to become a fluent reader. Careful thought will be given to the provision of appropriately structured work for children with SEN, often through intervention groups or 1-1 sessions. The school has a variety of strategies to enable all children to have increased access to the curriculum through broad-based, multi-sensory, visual, auditory and kinaesthetically planned phonics sessions. The most able children within our school are identified so that their individual needs are acknowledged. Planning attempts to ensure that the level of challenge is appropriate to their specific needs. Our small class sizes allow us to teach the children at their own pace, allowing us to achieve high reading ages and phonics screening pass rates.

The Early Years Foundation Stage





We encourage the development of Literacy skills in the Early Years, as this is part of the current Early Years Foundation Stage guidance. We relate the Literacy development of the children to the objectives set out in the Development Matters and Early Learning Goals.

The children's learning includes developing letter and sound recognition, word building and word recognition as part of their phonics learning, spelling and handwriting development and they follow the Letters and Sounds programme supported with a range of visual resources.

The Year 1 National Phonics Screening Check

The Year 1 phonics screening check is a compulsory short assessment to confirm whether individual pupils have learnt phonic decoding to an appropriate standard.

It is administered during the summer term by your child's English teacher. The check involves pupils reading 40 words- 20 real words and 20 pseudo words. Your child's class teacher will discuss the phonics screening check with you during parents evening in the Spring Term.

| Practice sheet: Real words | Practice sheet: Pseudo words |
|----------------------------|---|
| in | ot  |
| at | vap  |
| beg | osk  |
| sum | ect  |

Resources

We have a range of phonics resources which are used from Pre-Primary to the end of Year 2. These can also be used to support older children during 1-1 sessions or intervention groups. The main aim is to supplement teaching of phonics from phase two to six throughout KS1 and children who may require this in Year 3 and 4.

Equal Opportunities

The teaching of phonics will be in accordance with the present policy for Equal opportunities. We aim to provide equal access to phonics for those children with Special Educational Needs and those pupils who are very able and require extension activities, through small group work, through the support of teaching assistants where available and through carefully differentiated activities.

Professional Development

At Downham Preparatory School we firmly believe that continuing professional development for all staff features highly in the school improvement plans to aid the development of the children. All aspects of Letters and Sounds teaching will be monitored by the English Leader on a regular basis; assessments will be checked, teaching will be observed and plans are to be scrutinised with feedback given and support allocated accordingly.

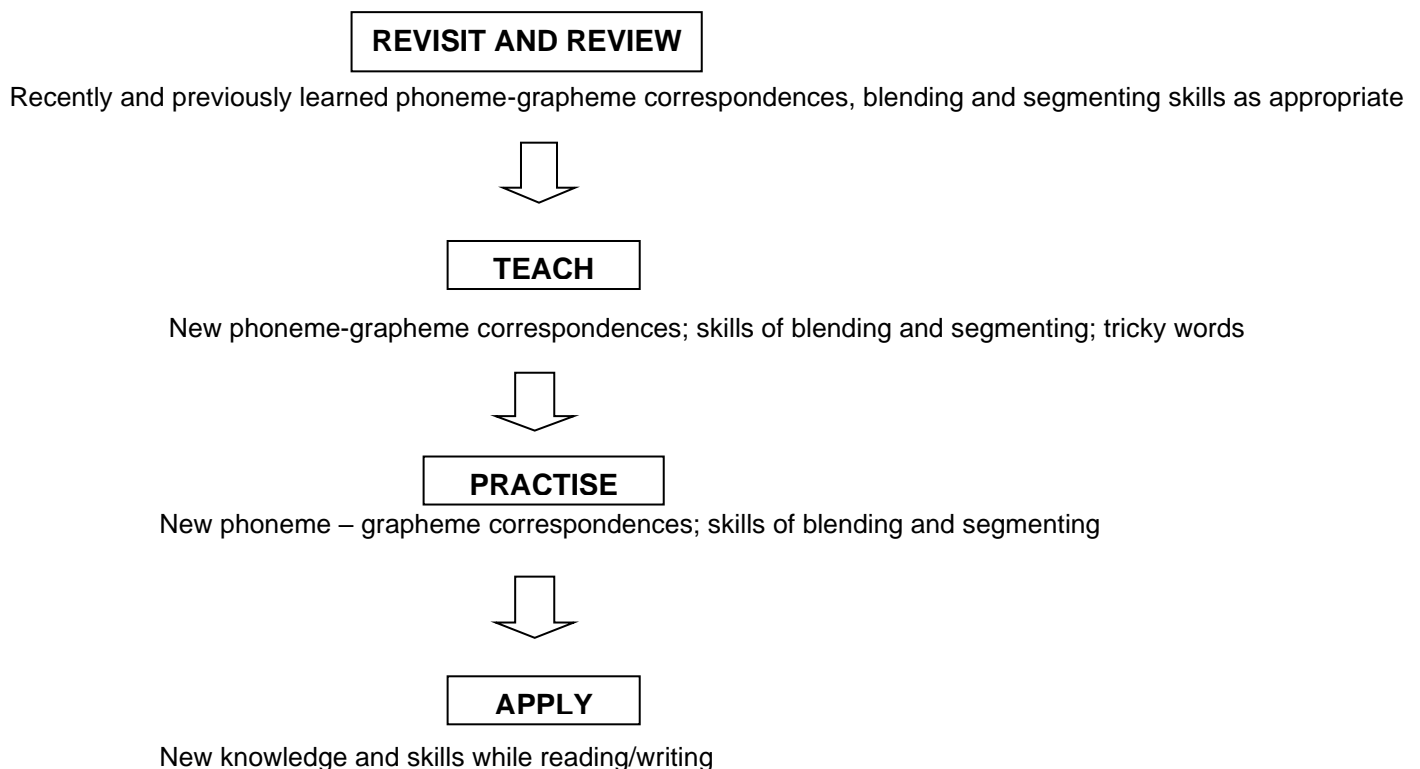
Monitoring and Review

The monitoring of this policy will be the responsibility of the English Leader in conjunction with the Leadership Team. This policy will be subject to a review every year or sooner if significant changes occur.

Daily Lesson Structure

The flow chart below shows how each daily phonics lesson is structured.

Daily Discrete Phonics session - from Phase 2 onwards



Suggested timings

- Revisit/review - most recent phonemes or gaps **3 - 5 minutes**
- Teach – **5 minutes**
- Practise – opportunity for games with all children involved, fun activities **8 -10 minutes**
- Apply – don't over emphasise the writing element at earlier phases, can be differentiated with different words or captions **3 minutes**

NB In total no longer than 20 minutes

We focus our weekly lessons with the following structure:

Monday: Read words with the corresponding grapheme

Tuesday: Read sentences containing words with the corresponding grapheme

Wednesday: Sight words, reading and writing

Thursday: Write words containing the corresponding grapheme

Friday: Write sentences using words containing the corresponding grapheme.

Classes 1 and 2 build up the amount of phonics they cover throughout the year and will often spend 40-50 minutes consolidating their weekly sounds.

Procedures for Policy monitoring and dissemination

People responsible

English Leader – KS1 and Reception

Appendix

Phase One (Pre-school/Start of Reception)

The aim of this phase is to foster children's speaking and listening skills as preparation for learning to read with phonics. Parents can play a vital role in helping their children develop these skills, by encouraging their children to listen carefully and talk extensively about what they hear, see and do.

In this on-going phase, your child will be learning to:

- Have fun with sounds
- Listen carefully
- Develop their vocabulary
- Speak confidently to you, other adults and other children
- Tune into sounds
- Listen and remember sounds
- Talk about sounds
- Understand that spoken words are made up of different sounds.

Phase 1 consists of seven interlinking parts:

- Environmental sounds
- Instrumental sounds
- Body percussion
- Rhythm and rhyme
- Alliteration (words that begin with the same sound)
- Voice sounds
- Oral blending and segmenting.

Phase 1- Ways to support your child at home:

Aspect 1: Environmental sounds

- ☒ Go on a sound walk, what can you hear? Encourage your child to listen out for cars, birds tweeting, people walking etc. Are they loud or quiet sounds?
- ☒ Make sounds together using sticks. Can you make a loud sound by banging the stick on the ground?
- ☒ Play sound lotto using the sounds heard on the sound walk.
- ☒ Draw pictures of the sound source e.g. cars, birds, aeroplanes and ask your child to guess the sound source e.g. car from your impression of a car revving.

Aspect 2: Instrumental sounds

- ☒ Make junk model instruments together using margarine tubs, tubes and boxes. These can be filled with a variety of rice and pasta and will make a range of sounds.
- ☒ Take a song or rhyme that your child knows well and create new lyrics! You could use the junk model percussion instruments to accompany the new songs.

Aspect 3: Body percussion

- ☐ Sing songs that involve actions, such as Roly Poly.

(Ro...ly...po...ly...ever...so....slowly

Ro...ly...poly faster.

(Increase the speed of the action as you increase the speed of the rhyme

Stamp...your...feet....ever.....so.....slowly

Stamp....your feet faster.

You could then add your own sounds and movements).

Aspect 4: Rhythm and rhyme

- ☒ Regularly read rhyming books. Encourage your child to join in with repetitive phrases

e.g. from the Gingerbread Man such as 'Run, run, as fast as you can, you can't catch me, I'm the Gingerbread Man'.

- ☒ Encourage your child's word play by inventing new rhymes with them such as Hickory, Dickory Dable, the mouse ran up the.....

Aspect 5: Alliteration

- ☒ Using your child's name think up simple tongue twisters to link objects at home e.g. **Millie's marvellous, magic mittens** and **David's dangerous dinosaur**.
- ☒ Collect objects that start with the same sound in a box. Create a song such as 'what is in our sound box today?' before taking out each object, saying what it is and emphasising the initial sound e.g. s-s-snake, s-s-s-sock, s-s-s-sausage

Aspect 6: Voice sounds

-Show your child how they can make sounds with their voices, for example:

- Make your voice go down a slide- wheee!
- Make your voice bounce like a ball – boing, boing
- Hiss like a snake – sssss
- Keep everyone quiet- shshshsh
- Be a steam train chchchchch
- Buzz like a bumble bee – zzzzz
- Be a clock- tick tock

Aspect 7: Oral blending and segmenting

- ☑ Sound out simple words for your child e.g. **zip, pin, nip, tip, pit, pup, pig, tug**- can they blend the sounds to say the full word?
- ☑ I Spy- put some objects on the table e.g. **cup, peg, hat, ball**. Say "I spy with my little eye a **c-u-p**". Can your child blend the sounds together to say the word?
- ☑ Clapping sounds- show your child one of the objects from the eye spy game- can you split the word up into sounds together e.g. cat = c-a-t. Clap with your child each sound they can hear.

Phase Two

(Throughout Reception)

In Phase 2 children are taught a new letter and its sound in a daily 20 minute session. In the sessions children learn that words are made up of different sounds (phonemes) and these sounds can be linked to letters (graphemes). For example, the sound 's' can be made from the graphemes 'ss' or 's'.

In Phase 2, we have slightly altered the order of letters, so that it aligns with our first reading books. Children learn the following letters and sounds:

p a t h s c l f n b o r d
m w g u e l ck x z j y qu

The letters are taught in this order so that children are quickly able to blend the sounds to read simple words such as pat, cat, hat, tap.

We teach children to draw a 'sound button' (a dot drawn with their pencil) underneath each sound they can hear. Here are some examples:

s a t **p i n** **h u ff**

'Pseudo Words'

Pseudo words, sometimes called 'fake words/nonsense words' are words that can be sounded out and blended but have no meaning. These are very important as they help adults to understand whether a child has learnt the skills of decoding as the child probably won't have been exposed to the word before on signs and labels.

Phase 2- Ways to support your child at home:

Pseudo words- can your child read and spell these words? These words could be written onto small pieces of card to use at home

| | | | | |
|------|------|------|------|------|
| tis | tas | ip | nis | san |
| nam | mim | nim | pid | Dap |
| das | dit | gack | teck | tem |
| sot | nop | gom | gat | mig |
| gam | pom | gop | pom | nop |
| nug | gug | mun | dup | giff |
| fam | fot | holl | leb | nass |
| hess | pess | noss | | |

Tricky Words

Tricky words cannot be decoded and need to be learned as 'sight words' Can your child read the words in the table below?

| | | | | | |
|----|-----|----|----|---|------|
| to | the | no | go | l | into |
|----|-----|----|----|---|------|

Phase Three

(Throughout Reception)

By the time they reach Phase 3, children will already be able to blend (putting sounds together to read a word) and segment (splitting words up into sounds to spell) words containing the 19 letters taught in Phase 2.

Over the twelve weeks which Phase 3 is expected to last, twenty-five new graphemes are introduced (one at a time).

During Phase 3, children will also learn the letter names using an alphabet song, although they will continue to use the sounds when decoding words.

In Phase 3 more of the sounds that are made up of two letters (digraphs) are introduced, we also introduce sounds that are made up of three letters (trigraphs).

Digraph = 'sh' 'ch' 'th'

Trigraph = 'ure' 'ear' 'air'

In Phase 3 children learn the following sounds:

j v w x y z zz qu ch sh ch th ng ai ee igh oa oo ar or ur ow oi ear air ure er

We teach children to draw a 'sound button' (a dot drawn with their pencil) underneath each sound they can hear. Here are some examples:

Ch i p **th i ng** **c l ear**
• • • • • • • • •

Phase 3- Ways to support your child at home:

Pseudo words- can your child read and spell these words? These words could be written onto small pieces of card to use at home

| | | | | |
|-------|-------|-------|--------|--------|
| jom | jot | jad | vit | veb |
| woss | wid | waff | dex | hox |
| jix | yeff | zum | ruzz | zick |
| muzz | quiz | quib | quiss | chud |
| chog | lish | nush | yong | chait |
| chaim | reesh | theed | gight | bigh |
| woap | hoat | doan | yart | tark |
| zort | furp | zur | hinner | zadder |
| owf | yow | zoil | moin | theard |
| keard | quair | sair | nure | bature |

Tricky Words

Tricky words cannot be decoded and need to be learned as 'sight words' Can your child read the words in the table below?

| | | | | | |
|-----|------|-----|-----|----|-----|
| he | she | we | me | be | was |
| you | they | all | are | my | her |

Phase Four

(Consolidated by the end of Reception/Revise in Autumn Term of Year 1)

In Phase 4, no new sounds are taught. Children consolidate previous sounds taught in Phase 1 and 2 and are introduced to letters that blend together at the beginning or the end of words. We call these letters *adjacent consonants*.

Examples of adjacent consonants-

br- (as in **bran**) cr- (as in **crib**) fl- (as in **flip**)

These consonants together **do not** make one sound, they remain as two separate sounds. We teach the children to draw a separate sound button underneath each sound in adjacent consonants-

b r a n **c r i b** **f l i p**

In Phase 4, children will be introduced to 2 syllable words- clapping the beats in a word e.g. wind**mill**.

Phase 4- Ways to support your child at home:

Tricky Words

Tricky words cannot be decoded and need to be learned as 'sight words' Can your child read the words in the table below?

| | | | | | |
|------|------|-------|--------|-----|------|
| said | have | like | so | do | some |
| come | were | there | little | one | when |
| out | what | | | | |

Phase Five

(Throughout Year 1/Revise in Autumn Term of Year 2)

In Phase Five, children will learn more graphemes and phonemes. For example, they already know ai as in rain, but now they will be introduced to ay - as in day and a-e - as in make.

During Phase 5, children are taught the following new graphemes:

oy (b-oy) **ay (s-ay)** **ou (ou-t)** **ie (t-ie)** **ea (ea-t)** **ir (s-t-ir)**
ue (c-ue) **aw (s-aw)** **wh (wh-i-ch)** **ph (g-r-a-ph)** **ew- (d-ew)**
oe (t-oe) **au (P-au-l)**

During Phase 5, children are taught the following split digraphs, where the 'e' changes the sound of the

vowel from a short sound e.g. a,e,i,o,u to a long sound.

a-e (m-a-k-e) e-e (th-e-s-e) i-e (l-i-k-e)

o-e (h-o-m-e) u-e (r-u-l-e)

Phase 5- Ways to support your child at home:

Tricky Words

Tricky words cannot be decoded and need to be learned as 'sight words' Can your child read the words in the table below?

| | | | | |
|---------------|---------------|---------------|--------------|------------|
| oh | their | people | Mr | Mrs |
| looked | called | asked | could | |

Phase Six

(Throughout Year 2)

In Phase 6 children are given opportunities to become fluent readers and are encouraged to read with fluency and accuracy, taking punctuation into account.

The focus during phonics sessions is spelling and grammar, they are taught about writing in the 'past tense' and they investigate rules to change the endings of words e.g.

'I looked' not 'I was looking'

Suffixes

These are letters that are added at the ends of words to change the meaning

'ing' 'ed' 's' 'er' 'est' 'y' 'en' 'ment' 'ness'

like – liked read – reading full – fully rule – big – biggest write - riter

Spelling strategies

Children are also taught different spelling strategies:

1. Syllables – break the word into syllables
e.g. Sep-tem-ber
2. Base words = smiling smile+ing
3. Words already known e.g. could - think of should and would
4. Mnemonics – using a sentence you make up to help you remember a spelling
e.g. because - **big** elephants **can't** always **use** small **exits**.