

Hartsfield JMI School



Phonics Policy

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Hartsfield JMI School Phonics Policy

After a rigorous review of our current practise against The Department for Education and Ofsted's requirements for effective phonics practice, we have ensured that our phonics teaching and learning covers:

The Seven Features of Effective Phonics Practice

Through the English Hubs Programme, seven key features were identified as characterising phonics teaching in highly successful schools, ***no matter which programme was used.***

The features are:

1. direct teaching in frequent, short bursts
2. consistency of approach
3. secure, systematic progression in phonics learning
4. maintaining pace of learning
5. providing repeated practice
6. application of phonics using matched decodable books
7. early identification of children at risk of falling behind, linked to the provision of effective keep-up support

At Hartsfield we have tailored our own Phonics Programme for our own pupils, staff and parents.

Our programme offers:

1. Direct teaching in frequent, short bursts

EYFS has two daily 10-minute phonics sessions for Phase 2, building up to 20-minutes sessions for Phases 3 and 4. The children are taught as a whole class with intervention and catch-up sessions for any children who have not grasped the phonemes and graphemes taught. The children read phonetically matched books in groups of 6, daily. There is also a 'Book Talk' session every day to develop comprehension and vocabulary through reading books of a high quality beyond the children's reading stage.

Children with exceptional needs, developmental delay or missed formal learning in an educational setting will be taught Phase 1 alongside the introduction of Phase 2. This foundational stage will focus on developing crucial listening and sound discrimination skills, laying the groundwork for future reading and writing proficiency.

Year 1 has a daily 30-minute phonics session where the children are taught as a whole class plus intervention and catch up for any children who have not grasped the phonemes and graphemes taught.

The children read phonetically matched books in groups of 6, daily. There is also a 'Book Talk' session every day to develop comprehension and vocabulary through reading books of a high quality beyond the children's reading stage.

Year 2 has a daily 30-minute lesson covering the National Requirements for Year 2 plus intervention and catch up for any children not at the expected standard for phonics. The children read phonetically matched books daily, if they are not at the expected standard. There is also a 'Book Talk' session every day to develop comprehension and vocabulary through reading books of a high quality beyond the children's reading stage.

Year 3 to 6 have 3 weekly sessions for Essential Spellings covering the National requirements for each year group plus regular phonics intervention and catch-up for any children not at the expected standard for phonics.

2. Consistency of approach

The whole school rigorously follows the **Letters and Sounds** sequence for teaching and learning phonics, following our own bespoke written scheme (HUPS Hartsfield United Phonics Scheme) *without exception*.

HUPS is used throughout **EYFS** and **Key Stage 1** to teach phonemes, graphemes, common exception words and high frequency words. **Year 3 to 6** follow the Hertfordshire Scheme of Essentials Spellings plus **HUPS** for **all** of those children still needing phonics teaching.

Each lesson is planned in daily detail following the 'sequence of teaching' structure as set out in **Letters and Sounds**:

Each lesson consists of:

Revisit – recap on previously taught sounds.

Teach – teach new sounds and words.

Practise – provide opportunities to practise saying and reading the sound through games and activities for children.

Apply – apply the new skill to read and write words, captions and sentences

A detailed plan of the order and when to teach each phase is rigorously followed.

Each lesson is fast paced and structured to ensure pupils receive clear direct instruction with opportunities to practise and apply the skills to build on their previous learning.

All phonemes, graphemes, words and sentences, printed out or on Smartboards, throughout the school are in the **Twinkl** font.

High Frequency Words and Common Exception Words are taught as set out in a specific order.

Staff are trained to ensure sounds taught are 'pure' and soft sounds. e.g. sss not 'suh' as this is central to phonics teaching and the children's ability to blend and segment sounds in words.

Seating is carefully arranged to suit the age of the children during sessions, so that pupils are seated where they can visibly see the adult's mouth to support the precise pronunciation of sounds.

Children in EYFS use whiteboards for writing before the introduction of writing books. They have writing opportunities in continuous provision alongside formal letter formation practice. The school follows the Twinkl letter formation, without exception. Children in Years 1 and 2 use lined books for all their phonics and PHiGS lessons.

Staff are regularly trained and supported and the Phonics Lead Teacher observes lessons in addition to regular consultation with staff to ensure consistency of teaching and learning across the school. One to one training with the Phonics Lead teacher is given if needed otherwise training is whole school or year groups. New staff are trained immediately.

Phonics displays include previously learnt phonemes, in isolation and in words alongside high frequency words and tricky words. The sound being taught that day is also displayed. Children will be encouraged and taught to engage with these displays to reinforce their learning in the daily sessions and to handwriting policy. Any on-table phonics and words aide memoires are always available. This will be in the Twinkl font.

3. Secure, systematic progression in phonics learning

Our phonics teaching uses a systematic synthetic phonics approach, following the Letters and Sounds programme and is taught to all children to enable them to:

- Recognise, say and write all phonemes within each phase 2-5 of Letters and Sounds.
- Apply and understand spelling patterns, e.g. suffixes and prefixes, that are taught through phase 6 (Punctuation, Handwriting including Grammar and Spelling PHiGS) in year 2.
- Use their phonic knowledge to blend and segment phonetically decodable words.
- Use their phonic knowledge to read complex words and to recognise from sight 'Tricky Words' (High Frequency Words and Common Exception Words).
- Read with fluency for both pleasure and to retrieve information.
- Write clearly, accurately and coherently using phonic knowledge and spelling knowledge and rules.

At Hartsfield the progression in phonics learning covers:

- all the phonemes in English words
- correct pronunciation of the phonemes
- all commonly occurring grapheme-phoneme correspondence (GPCs)
- blending for reading
- segmenting for writing
- the sequenced learning of appropriate high frequency and tricky words

Our programme establishes a clear sequence that enables children to begin to read and write simple words, phrases and sentences as early as possible. It systematically and cumulatively works towards children being able to decode any unknown words in age-appropriate texts by the time they complete the programme.

Phoneme buttons are used in phonics teaching to distinguish the sounds within words and support reading.

4. Maintaining pace of learning

Children need to learn to read as rapidly as practically possible, so they can move from learning to read to reading to learn, giving them access to all age-appropriate reading material. Their progress must include reaching national standards by the required times, for example in the Phonics Screening Check in Year 1. This means they should successfully cover the full phonic progressions over the timespan of the school's programme so the pace requirements reflect this.

This needs to be balanced by our understanding that children do not manage well if they have to learn too many new things simultaneously. Pace of learning is therefore also about spacing out new learning to avoid overload, and to allow time for repetition and consolidation, so that learning becomes fully embedded in long-term memory. Optimum pacing is a balance between these two considerations.

The Pace of Learning must be:

EYFS –

Autumn 1 - Phase 2 (children acquiring the skills to write in continuous provision)

Autumn 2 - Phase 2 Repeat (alongside writing the graphemes)

Spring 1 – Phase 3

Spring 2 – Phase 3

Summer 1 – Phase 3 Repeat

Summer 2 – Phase 4

Year 1 –

Autumn 1 –Phase 3 Repeat

Autumn 2 – Phase 4

Spring 1 – Phase 5

Spring 2 – Phase 5

Summer – Phase 5 Repeat (PSC)

Year 2 – Any children who scored below 36/40 in the PSC will receive additional phonics teaching starting on the phase they are not secure with.

Autumn 1 and 2 – PHiGS

Spring 1 and 2 – PHiGS

Summer 1 and 2 –PHiGS Repeat

5. Providing repeated practise

Our HUPS scheme is fast paced but also gives enough time to repeat phases with whole year groups. The definitive goal of teaching phonics is that children read effortlessly, identifying most words instantly and using phonics to decode any unknown words. This means that phonics knowledge needs to be embedded in long term memory so that its application becomes automatic.

Repeated, spaced out practice is by far the most effective way of transferring knowledge from short to long term memory. Effective phonics teaching offers repeated practice at the point of learning and returns to practise the same elements again at intervals over an extended period.

At Hartsfield we believe that practice makes permanent.

6. Application of phonics using matched de-codable books

Books should be available to the children that are fully decodable so they can practise and apply their phonic knowledge. This is an expectation of the DfE, Ofsted and a requirement of the National Curriculum. More importantly, it gives children the vital opportunity to practise the phonic skills they are learning without the distraction of words they have not yet learned to decode. In EYFS and Year 1, children have access to these books daily. In Year 2 children requiring catch-up learning have access to these books daily. Once confidently recognising words without decoding, children read any age-appropriate books. All books taken home are for sharing only in EYFS and Year 1. Children should have access to books they have ***chosen themselves*** and ***that are of interest*** to them, to share with their friends, adults within school and at home. These do not need to be phonetically decodable as they are sharing them when reading. Parents are informed of the phonemes, graphemes, words and sentences the children are covering via a sheet of information. Parents are encouraged to work on phonic activities and games at home.

Teachers should read and share a wide range of non-decodable high-quality books with individuals, groups and their class.

7. Early identification of children at risk of falling behind, linked to the provision of effective keep-up support

At Hartsfield we aspire to **all** children passing the Phonics Screening Check in Year 1 unless a specific need is identified early on. We have high expectations to drive the pace of learning, and success is built for all children by identifying those having difficulties very early on. These children are then provided with sufficient additional support to help them keep up.

This involves:

- simple but effective continuous assessment, informal and more formal
- regular progress reviews for all children
- methods of informal support understood by all teachers and teaching assistants and implemented as soon as necessary
- systems for formal support clearly established and implemented as soon as necessary
- plans and materials for effective support readily to hand and taught well.

Reading Practice Sessions

Children should be given regular opportunities to apply the phonics they have learned to reading fully decodable books. The reading practise sessions focus on decoding, prosody (reading with meaning, stress and intonation) and comprehension (understanding).

We have an assessment procedure to regularly check progress and to identify pupils in need of intervention.

Progress and attainment for children in EYFS and Year 1 are tracked using Phonics Tracker. Each book the children read is tracked, documented and annotated.

The children in EYFS are tracked against phonic knowledge, and the Early Learning Goals.

In Year 1 they are tracked against the phonic phase they are learning and the Year 1 reading and writing statements.

In Year 2 they are tracked against the phonic phase they are learning and the Year 2 reading and writing statements.

All the books that children read and share are documented by adults. By the time children reach the end of Year 1 they are expected to document and comment on all books they read alongside adult comments.

A thorough assessment procedure to track and monitor children's progress in developing and applying their phonics knowledge is in place. Children are tracked which includes Year 1 pupils completing a sample phonics screening past paper each half term.

Children in Year 2, who did not pass the phonics screening test in Year 1 will also complete a past paper each half term. The data from these assessments is analysed and used to identify gaps and inform planning for interventions. Staff submit tracking sheets to the Phonics and English Leader for monitoring and guidance.

Children with Exceptional Needs

Children with diagnosed exceptional needs will require specialised and bespoke phonics teaching. This will include the teaching of, although not exclusively, Phase 1 phonics. This foundational stage will focus on developing crucial listening and sound discrimination skills, laying the groundwork for future reading and writing proficiency.

Reading for pleasure and as the gateway to knowledge

At Hartsfield we promote reading for pleasure with exposure to a range of age-appropriate texts and we are proud of the culture of a love for books.

Reading is the gateway for children that makes all other learning possible.