



## Phonics and Early Reading at Great Wood

At Great Wood, we believe becoming fluent and comprehensive readers is the key to accessing learning across the whole curriculum. Phonics lessons are taught from EYFS, throughout KS1 and conclude when the children are confident, fluent and skillful readers and writers. Children in EYFS and KS1 are also taught to read through their daily English lessons, weekly guided reading lessons and the sharing of class stories and texts.

### What is phonics?

- ✓ Phonics is a way of teaching children to read quickly and skillfully, and our prime approach to reading and writing at Great Wood.
- ✓ The children are taught how to recognise the sounds that each individual letter makes, identify sounds that different letter combinations make, (such as 'sh, ee, ear') and blend these sounds together from left to right to make a word.
- ✓ Children are explicitly taught how to blend sounds together to make words, for example 'b-oa-t becomes boat.
- ✓ To support spelling, children are taught to segment, whereby words are broken up into sounds, for example sheep becomes sh-ee-p.
- ✓ Whenever children meet new words either in reading or writing, they should be taught to use phonic skills and knowledge first to decode or spell the word.

### How is phonics taught at Great Wood?

- ✓ At Great Wood phonics sessions are planned so that they are: pacy, positive and purposeful.
- ✓ We are explicit in our teaching and ensure that children practise, practise, practise to develop automaticity and confidence.
- ✓ We teach phonics systematically using the Letters and Sounds Program. This means that we teach the sounds and letter combinations (known as phoneme-grapheme correspondences) in a specific order. The children move through the phases set out in the Letters and Sounds Program as their phonetic knowledge develops. At Great Wood, children learn phonics for at least 20 minutes daily, alongside others of a similar ability.
- ✓ There are 6 Phases set out in Letters and Sounds, starting in Reception and ending in Year 2. To summarise, Phase 1 begins in Nursery, Phases 2, 3 and 4 are taught in Reception and consolidated in Year 1. Children cover Phase 5 in Year 1 and Phase 6 in Year 2. More information about the content of these phases is saved additionally on our website.

- ✓ In cases whereby children are struggling to access the expected phase, rigorous interventions are put in place to help the children make rapid progress

### What vocabulary should be used?

At Great Wood, we use specific vocabulary when teaching phonics. Below is some of the key vocabulary that we use with the children, right from Reception.

A phoneme is the sound a letter or group of letters make.

A grapheme is the written letter or letters representing a sound.

A digraph is two letters making one sound, for example 'ay' or 'ou'.

A trigraph is three letters making one sound, for example 'igh' or 'dge'

Split digraph is a digraph where the two letters making the sound are not next to each other. For example, a-e makes the 'ay' sound in the words **make**, **cake**, **place**.

Blending is recognising the letter sounds in a written word and then merging them in the order in which they are written, for example, c-oa-t would blend together to make coat.

Segmenting is identifying the individual sounds in spoken words and writing down letters for each sound to form words, for example breaking the word sharp into the sounds sh-ar-p.

### What do our phonics lessons look like at Great Wood?

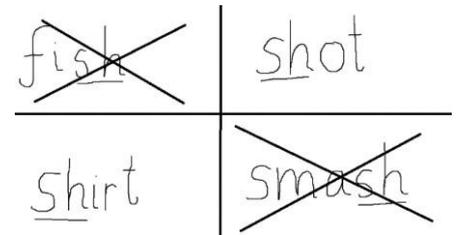
- ✓ We are fortunate in that all staff that teach phonics have received recent training and are skilled in teaching fun, interactive lessons.
- ✓ We use specific actions, visual aids and mnemonics to help us remember our sounds. Unfortunately for copyright reasons, we cannot post these online but please ask your teacher for paper copies of the sound mats that we use. We hand these out regularly to support reading at home.
- ✓ We use a range of resources such as flashcards, songs, websites and practical games to make our phonics lessons fun and pacy.
- ✓ Phonics lessons follow a similar structure each day, revisit (recap previous sounds), teach (introduce new sound), practise (opportunities to practise reading and writing words which use the new sound) and apply (use our new sound in sentences).
- ✓ We teach tricky words using games and songs. Tricky words cannot be sounded out using the usual phonetic code and just need to be learned, for example, 'said, the, people'.



If you wish to find more information about what is taught in each phase, please see the Phase Overview documents saved below. There is also information regarding the Phonics Screening Check for Year 1 parents and some Year 2 parents.

### How can parents help at home?

- ✓ Reading every night for at least 10 minutes. The children will bring reading scheme books home each night to read at home. These are matched to the phase and sounds that they have been practising in school.
- ✓ Share books, stories and poems as much as possible, these can be any books or stories that you have at home or online.
- ✓ If your child is struggling to decode a word, help them by encouraging them to say each sound in the word from left to right and then blend the sounds together. You can demonstrate oral blending to your child, for example, 'r-ai-n blends into rain'.
- ✓ Play lots of speaking and listening games with your child, such as guess the sound, Simon Says, or Eye-Spy.
- ✓ Discuss the meaning of words if your child does not understand what they have read, this will help your child develop their comprehension skills.
- ✓ Speak to your child's teacher for specific advice or if you require new sound/mnemonic mats.
- ✓ You could make games using paper and pencils, such as sound treasure hunts, memory games, bingo, sorting activities or play teachers.



### Useful Websites

<https://new.phonicsplay.co.uk/> There are lots of free games on here. The games are sorted into phases and available on phones, laptops and tablets. During the Covid-19 outbreak, all games are available for free- instructions on the website.

<https://home.oxfordowl.co.uk/reading/learn-to-read-phonics/#> There are lots of guidance about how to pronounce different sounds and videos which demonstrate correct pronunciation and blending.

<https://www.discoveryeducation.co.uk/free-resources> Here there are many free games. Click Polly's Phonics' for child friendly videos, games and activities.

### Search Tricky Words on YouTube

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MaqI5-0d-MM&list=PLLhLRwvEimbCmlsD-JXwS2PqC0LvvIVTu&index=5>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e2dx65u59aw>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ri4u0TjAZ38>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3NOzgR1ANc4>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TvMyssfAUx0&list=PLLhLRwvEimbCmlsD-JXwS2PqC0LvvIVTu>

### EYFS and KS1 Reading Scheme

In Reception, children begin reading books from our colour banded reading scheme. We have a variety of authors and publishers in our reading scheme to give children a wide and varied diet of fiction, non-fiction and poetry books. Books are organised into phases to match the phase that the child is working on in their phonics lessons. The pace that children move through the reading scheme depends on each individual. We have regular phonics and reading assessments to ensure that they are reading within the correct book band. The children continue reading books within the reading scheme until they are ready to move onto Rainbow Readers, usually in KS2.

Your child should also bring home a bookmark which is the same as the colour book band that they are reading. These bookmarks contain guidance for parents to refer to whilst reading with their child and has a list of useful comprehension style questions.

### Listening to our readers

Learning to read takes practice to develop automaticity and confidence. We check the children's reading records daily to view comments from parents about their child's reading. At Great Wood, EYFS and KS1 children are heard read:

- ✓ By a member of school staff or teaching assistants weekly.
- ✓ By their class teacher fortnightly.
- ✓ By volunteers and reading champions as much as possible.
- ✓ By parents, family members or friends every night.

At Great Wood, we are fortunate to have a team of reading champion volunteers who come into school and listen to our children read. We provide training and the children really enjoy reading to new people. If you would like to become a reading champion volunteer, please let the school office know.

If you have any questions about the teaching of phonics and early reading at Great Wood, please see your child's class teacher or contact Miss Smith (Phonics Leader) at [amy.smith@greatwood.lancs.sch.uk](mailto:amy.smith@greatwood.lancs.sch.uk)