

YEAR 1 PHONICS SCREENING INFORMATION AND GUIDANCE FOR PARENTS

At Minchinhampton Academy we teach your children phonics. Our approach to learning phonics in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 is by using the Phonics Bug approach . We also follow a kinaesthetic approach in Reception where children are given an action to help them learn each different sound. This is an effective and interactive way for young learners to recall phonemes. Please watch the following link for further support with pronunciation of phonemes.

<https://www.youtube.com/embed/lwJx1NSineE>

In our daily phonics sessions, we use games and resources to support our teaching of phonics. We aim to build pupils' speaking and listening skills, as well as prepare pupils to learn to read, by developing their phonic knowledge and skills.

What is the phonics screening check?

The national phonics screening check was introduced in 2012 to all Year 1 pupils. It is a short, statutory assessment to ensure that children are making sufficient progress in the phonics skills to read words and are on track to become fluent readers who can enjoy reading for pleasure and for learning.

The check is not about passing or failing but checking appropriate progress is being made. If children do not reach the required standard, then we will be in touch to discuss plans and offer additional, tailored support to ensure that your child improves their reading skills. Children progress at different speeds so not reaching the threshold score does not necessarily mean there is a serious problem. Your child will re-sit the assessment in Year 2, the following summer term. In our school we already identify individual children who need extra support and provide early intervention support, however we must comply with the statutory requirement.

Who is it for?

We are required to administer the check during the set week in June. If a child is absent during that week, the school can administer the check the following week.

How is the check structured?

The check consists of a list of 40 words, half real words and half alien words, the alien words will be shown to your child with a picture of an alien. This not only makes the check a bit more fun, but provides the children with a context for the nonsense word which is independent from any existing vocabulary they may have.

Is it stressful to test such young children?

The assessment will be age-appropriate, with children sitting with a familiar teacher and reading one-to-one. It should be an enjoyable activity for children which will take no more than 10 minutes.

Why are nonsense words included in the screening check?

Nonsense/alien words are an established assessment method of many schools, and are included in many phonics programmes. They are included because they will be new to all pupils, so there won't be a bias to those with a good vocabulary knowledge or visual memory of words. This is a test of a child's ability to decode using phonics. Children who can read non-words should have the skills to decode almost any unfamiliar word.

How will the results from the phonics screening check be used?

We have to inform parents towards the end of the summer term in Year 1 of their child's results. If your child does not reach the required level, we will tell you what provision we are going to be making at the end of Year 1 and beginning of Year 2 to help this be addressed and also how you can support us in developing this key skill.

How can I help my child?

In school we are continually checking your children's phonic development within our approach to the assessment of reading. This screening forms part of our overall assessment procedure. However, there are a number of things that parents can do to support early reading skill development.

- Let your child see you enjoying reading yourself – they are influenced by you and what you value!
- Immerse your child in a love of reading: share books and magazines with your child, take them to the library to choose books, read to them regularly, point out texts around you, e.g. in the street etc.
- Make time for your child to read school books to you regularly – encourage them by pointing to the words and ask them about the story they are reading
- Use phonics play www.phonicsplay.co.uk. This is a website which is packed with interactive phonics games to help children to learn to hear sounds and blend sounds. We use this in school and some aspects of it are free to use at home.
- Help your child to practice reading the alien words which will be sent home.
- Communicate with your child's teacher through their reading record

What shall I do if my child is struggling to decode?

- Say each sound in the word from left to right.
- Blend the sounds by pointing to each letter, i.e. /b/ in bat, or letter group, i.e. /igh/ in sigh, as you say the sound, then run your finger under the whole word as you say it.
- Talk about the meaning if your child does not understand the word they have read.
- Work at your child's pace and have FUN!

Remember! We are here to help your child to do their very best and develop a fluency and love of reading.