Park Hill Primary School

part of

Wednesbury Learning Community Trust

Phonics Policy

Policy reviewed: September 2016

To be reviewed September 2017

Rationale:

At Park Hill, we believe that the teaching and learning of phonics develops the necessary skills and knowledge that children need in order to be confident and competent readers and writers.

The National Curriculum makes it clear that phonics should be emphasised in the early teaching of reading. It states the following:

The programmes of study for reading at key stages 1 and 2 consist of 2 dimensions:

- *word reading*
- *comprehension (both listening and reading)*

It is essential that teaching focuses on developing pupils' competence in both dimensions; different kinds of teaching are needed for each.

Skilled word reading involves both the speedy working out of the pronunciation of unfamiliar printed words (decoding) and the speedy recognition of familiar printed words. Underpinning both is the understanding that the letters on the page represent the sounds in spoken words. This is why phonics should be emphasised in the early teaching of reading to beginners (ie unskilled readers) when they start school.

The balance between word recognition and language comprehension shifts as children acquire secure and automatic decoding skills; the ultimate goal of learning to read is comprehension. We therefore plan guided reading and literacy lessons to develop both dimensions of reading.

Aims

At Park Hill, we aim to:

- Establish consistency throughout the school regarding the approach, progression and continuity in the teaching of learning of phonics.
- Teach phonics "first and fast." It should be the first reading skill taught and both phonics lessons and progression should be of a quick pace.
- To differentiate phonics according to the needs of the children, so that they are all given a sufficient challenge at a level within which they can work.
- To give children strategies to enable them to become fluent readers and confident writers.

Teaching and Learning

At Park Hill, we follow the Letters and Sounds Principles and Practice of High Quality Phonics.

Class teachers must teach new grapheme-phoneme correspondences carefully, by using multisensory activities and lots of oral work within the phonics lesson. Opportunities for children to apply their new learning should also be planned, for example, if children are learning the phoneme /ue/ in one session, then the teacher should provide a few words containing /ue/ for the children to blend (decode) or chop (encode). They may apply this new learning in an activity that the teacher deems appropriate.

Children should work through the six phases of Letters and Sounds by the end of Year 2.

Children should be introduced to the phases at approximately the following times:

Phase	Year Group
1	Nursery – although it is important to note that Phase 1 should continue throughout the Early Years and Key Stage 1.
2	Reception - although some children in Nursery will begin to learn Phase 2, depending on their individual needs.
3	Reception
4	Introduced in the final half of the summer term in Reception. Continued in the first half of the autumn term in Year 1.
5	Year 1 – although the requirements of the Programmes of Study for English should be referred to, particularly Spelling Appendix 1.
6	Year 2 – although the requirements of the Programmes of Study for English should be referred to, particularly Spelling Appendix 1.

Children in Year 3, who did not pass the re-check of their phonics screening in Year 2, should be supported in reading and spelling using phonics.

Key Stage 2 teachers should use assessments of reading to determine whether children need to continue learning phonics.

As a guideline, phonics should:

- Be systematic and introduce grapheme–phoneme correspondences in a clearly defined sequence and build upon the previous day's learning.
- Teach children to apply the highly important skill of blending phonemes in the order in which they occur, all through a word to read it.

- Teach children to apply the skills of segmenting words into their constituent phonemes to spell.
- Be part of a broad and rich curriculum that engages children in a range of activities and experiences to develop their speaking and listening skills and phonological awareness.
- Be multisensory to enliven core learning.
- Be time-limited - the great majority of children should be confident readers by the end of Key Stage 1.
- Be taught discretely at a brisk pace.
- Be used in opportunities across the curriculum, such as in shared and guided reading.

Delivery of the Subject:

Class teachers should plan phonics, although both teachers and support staff will deliver phonics lessons to the children in their class.

Phonics lessons are planned with the following basic structure:

1) Revisit and review: grapheme-phoneme recognition and/or introduction of new grapheme-phoneme correspondences
2) Teach: teacher modelling of new GPC.
3) Practise: blending (decoding) and/or segmenting (encoding – "chopping") words containing new GPC.
4) Phased introduction of hard-to-decode tricky words and common exception words.
5) Apply: reading or writing a full sentence/text, containing the session's new GPC.

Jolly Phonics mnemonics will be used to teach new GPCs (songs and actions).

Reception and Year 1 should have daily phonics sessions of 30 minutes, preferably in the morning.

Year 2 should have three phonics and spelling sessions of 30 minutes per week, preferably in the morning.

Planning:

Within the Early Years, phonics is planned on the CL planning format for Foundation 2 (Reception). Foundation 1 (Nursery) planning details the Phase 1 learning that is taking place each day.

In Key Stage 1, phonics is planned on the Thematic and Literacy planning proforma; the new learning, consolidation and application that is being taught. The phases at which the children are currently at is detailed on the planning and differentiated activities are outlined. Any activities taken from Letters and Sounds are included and a brief description of the resources used is given.

In Key Stage 2, phonics should be planned as part of the class teacher's intervention for children who are identified as less fluent readers; details should be given on the class' provision map.

Assessment:

All teachers should use assessment in phonics to inform their planning.

Reception and Year 1 should complete termly phonics assessments and trackers, which were developed by the subject co-ordinator. Areas for development should then be addressed through phonics sessions e.g. particular digraphs that children have difficulties with or CCVC words. Phonics tracking grids are analysed by the subject co-ordinator.

Continual formative assessment should take place through observation and questioning of the children on a daily basis.

At the end of Year 1, there is a statutory assessment of children's phonics ability. This will take place in the June of each year and should be carried out by the children's class teacher/another familiar teacher. Learning support staff must not carry out the check. It contains both real words and pseudo words and is designed to assess whether children are using phonics as their first approach to decoding.

Children who do not meet the requirements for the expected standard in phonics are re-tested in Year 2 (at the same time as pupils in Year 1).

Equal Opportunities/Inclusion:

We recognise the fact that there are children of widely different abilities in phonics and we aim to provide equal access to high-quality phonics teaching for those children with Special Educational Needs and those pupils who are very able. This can be achieved through small group work with the teacher/support staff, carefully differentiated activities and through extension activities for the most able learners.

Resources:

Resources for the daily teaching of phonics will be found in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 classrooms. Resources for reading intervention in Key Stage 2 will be found in the classrooms and in the PPA room.

Collins Big Cat is installed on every teacher's computer, as well as the children's computers. Interactive electronic games are accessible in the Collins Big Cat programme and we have a subscription to Education City. There is also a phonics folder on the shared area, where many useful resources have been uploaded.

Some "staple" resources that are used when teaching phonics include:

- Mini-whiteboards and pens
- Magnetic letters
- Phoneme frames
- Grapheme-phoneme correspondence flashcards with mnemonics
- Word cards
- High frequency word cards
- Pseudo word cards
- Yes/no questions
- Phoneme spotter stories
- Mirrors
- Balls
- Bingo boards
- Playdough mats
- Sand

Glossary

blend — to draw individual sounds together to pronounce a word, e.g. s-n-a-p, blended together, reads snap.

cluster — two (or three) letters making two (or three) sounds, e.g. the first three letters of 'straight' are a consonant cluster.

digraph — two letters making one sound, e.g. sh, ch, th, ph.

vowel digraphs comprise of two vowels which, together, make one sound, e.g. ai, oo, ow

split digraph — two letters, split, making one sound, e.g. a-e as in make or i-e in site

grapheme — a letter or a group of letters representing one sound, e.g. sh, ch, igh, ough (as in 'though')

grapheme-phoneme correspondence (GPC) — the relationship between sounds and the letters which represent those sounds; also known as 'letter-sound correspondences'

mnemonic — a device for memorising and recalling something, such as a snake shaped like the letter 'S'

phoneme — the smallest single identifiable sound, e.g. the letters 'sh' represent just one sound, but 'sp' represents two (/s/ and /p/)

segment — to split up a word into its individual phonemes in order to spell it, e.g. the word 'cat' has three phonemes: /c/, /a/, /t/

VC, CVC, CCVC — the abbreviations for vowel-consonant, consonant-vowel-consonant, consonant-consonant-vowel-consonant, and are used to describe the order of letters in words, e.g. am, Sam, slam.