

# Longmoor Primary School



## Phonics Policy 2024 - 2026

## Aim

At Longmoor Primary we aim to ensure that all children have the best possible start in becoming confident, fluent readers by the end of Key Stage 1. We believe we can achieve this through a combination of high quality, discrete lessons that follow a comprehensive system to teach children to read, spell and write. Our teaching of phonics aims to teach all key elements of conceptual understanding, factual knowledge and the three essential skills of blending, segmenting and phoneme manipulation necessary for learning to read and spell. This will result in children then being able to move onto developing higher order comprehension skills.

This policy is aimed at reinforcing a consistent, high quality approach to the teaching of phonics across the foundation stage, Key Stage one and into Key Stage two for children who still need this further support.

## Objectives

- To provide consistent, high quality phonics teaching that ensures all children have a strong foundation upon to become confident readers.
- To ensure that the teaching of synthetic phonics is systematic and progressive throughout the foundation stage, key stage one and key stage two for those children who still need further support.
- To ensure that children have strong phonetic knowledge, understanding and the skills enabling them to blend and segment so that they can decode words confidently.
- To ensure children are taught how to identify and decode 'tricky words' within the English language.

## Phonics Planning

We follow the Sounds-Write Programme to teach daily phonics. This includes a very structured approach in teaching phonics in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2, and beyond when required.

We aim to:

- Ensure all teaching staff are well trained in the Sounds-Write programme to ensure high quality phonic sessions are delivered.
- Teach daily phonics for 30 minute sessions following the Sounds-Write scheme.
- Reinforce and apply acquired knowledge and skills as they move through the units with a clear programme of learning to secure progression.
- Promote the use of multi-sensory engagement by using a combination of visual, auditory and kinaesthetic activities at all times.
- Ensure each lesson has pace.

## The Sounds-Write Programme

Sounds-Write is a linguistic programme that begins with the sounds in language before moving onto the sounds in written words. The programme is divided into three main teaching sections:

**1. The Initial Code** - Children are taught the essential skills (segmenting, blending and phoneme manipulation) needed in order to decode the English language. This section looks at words with the structure of CVC, VCC, CVCC, CCVC, CCVCC, CVCC and CCVC. It also looks at some spellings that can be written with a double consonant.

**2. The Extended Code** - The extended code continues to use the skills previously taught but moves on to the more complex concepts of 'one sound, different spellings' and 'one spelling, different sounds'.

**3. Polysyllabic Words**-This section uses previously taught skills, but this time with words that are made up of more than one syllable. It includes lessons where children use the skills they have learnt to help read and spell these words.

## Teaching and Learning

Phonics takes place daily for 30 minute sessions. It will follow the Sounds-Write units and use the lessons provided in the programme. The teaching of phonics will be cumulative so that any learning the children have encountered will be built upon at the next stage and again after that. There will be ample opportunities for children to rehearse, aloud, what they are learning. It is this process, repeated over and over again that enables their access to the alphabet code knowledge and phonemic skills to become totally automatic, internalised processes.

For this reason, it is unnecessary to demand 100% accuracy of each child at the end of each unit. 75% - 80% accuracy is sufficient to ensure pupils can progress to the next unit where they will encounter everything they have learnt in the previous units.

Once the next unit has started, the teacher will plug any inaccuracies in a child's knowledge while at the same time moving on to teach new code knowledge.

### Reception:

- Children in Reception are taught the 'Initial Code' as set out in the Sounds-Write programme. The Initial Code has 11 units.
- Units 1-6 include the teaching of simple, one sound/one spelling, one syllable, CVC words broken into units.
- By the end of the Autumn Term, Reception children will be up to Unit 7 the Initial Code. On average, each unit will take approximately 2 weeks. During Unit 7, children are gently introduced to 'two letters, one sound' whereby they represent the same sound as the individual letters do on their own - <ff>, <ll>, <ss> and <zz>
- Unit 8 of the Initial Code begins at the start of the Spring Term. This unit introduces and teaches VCC and CVCC words with no new codes taught.
- Unit 9 and 10 teaches CCVC, CCVCC, CVCCC and CCCVC words with no new codes being taught.
- Unit 11 is the final unit of the Initial Code. It introduces 'two letter, one sounds' where the sound represented is not related to either of the individual letters involved, e.g. <sh>, <ch>, <th> etc.
- By the end of Reception, children will be familiar with all the sounds in the Initial Code.
- If there are children who appear to be picking the Initial Code up quickly and proficiently and they have good segmenting and blending skills, they may start to learn polysyllabic words which otherwise appear in Year 1 and 2.

### Year 1:

o Based on their previous work children should now be able to:

Blend

Segment

Manipulate sounds and spelling

- Most children will be ready to begin work on the Extended Code when they are achieving about 75% - 80% accuracy in their Initial Code knowledge.
- There are 50 units in the Extended Code. Year 1 children will aim to get to Unit 26 by the end of the year.
- Each unit should take approximately 2 weeks.
- Throughout the units, children are taught that a sound can be represented by more than one spelling and the most common spelling which represent the target sound, e.g. /ae/ can be represented as <ai, ay, ea, a-e>
- They are also taught that a spelling can represent more than one sound and the most common sounds represented by the target spelling - e.g. <ea> can make the sounds /ea/ /ae/ and /ee/
- During Unit 4, the teaching of polysyllabic words begins.

- The lessons that appear in the Extended Code and Polysyllabic Words section on Sounds-Write are used to teach each session.

## Year 2

- The Extended Code continues in Year 2, picking up from Unit 26.
- There will be time at the start of the year to revisit units that appear before this as a recap.
- Polysyllabic words are taught alongside the Extended Code with lessons beginning with 2-syllable words and moving on to 3-syllable words then longer words.
- Children continue to learn the skills involved in segmenting to enable them to separate words into syllables and take each syllable and segment that into sounds which they can then blend then read the word.
- Children will be taught strategies to identify the syllables in words, such as clapping the syllables out.

## Teaching Points

- The lessons that appear in the Sounds-Write programme for the Initial Code, Extended Code and Polysyllabic Words are written in 'script' format to enable the teachers to use accurate language from the start.
- The sound is always referred to, not the letter name (e.g. /t/ not 'tee' and /a/ not 'ay').
- Precise pronunciation is vital, avoiding adding an attached vowel to a sound (e.g. /b/ not 'buh')
- Teacher gestures are important when saying the sounds and reading the words. These are consistent across each class and children are taught to do the same.
- Writing and spelling is a part of each lesson.
- Error corrections are used throughout each lesson using the scripts in the programmes. Errors and misconceptions are addressed immediately.

## Assessment

Sounds-Write progress checks are completed each term. These progress checks provide a way of recording what students have learned and identifying those who are not making expected progress. The progress checks are used in addition to the daily formative assessment that is at the heart of the Sounds-Write approach. The progress checks are chosen based on the units that have been taught.

The progress checks consist of:

1. Word dictation check (Spelling)
2. Word reading

The progress check results are analysed on the performance of each Child, noting where errors occurred. We use this information to adjust planning for the next sessions to re-teach or include additional practice for common errors and to identify any students who require more intensive support.

## Home Reading Books

Children in FS2 and Year 1 will be taking home a Dandelion Reading book, that covers the previous Unit they have been taught. Each Unit of the Initial Code or Extended Code is to be covered and explicitly taught over a two-week period, to ensure full consolidation both at home and in school. Children will take home a Dandelion Reader book linked to the previous sound that was taught, so that the children have some confidence when reading at home. Whether they take home Set 1, 2 or 3 will depend on how secure they are within that sound. In week 2 of the sound being taught children will move on to the next unit to consolidate and / or challenge further.

In Year 2 the Children read a variety of reading books linked to their level of reading. This enables them to apply their phonics knowledge to a range of texts. When the children reach the desired reading level they move on to using the Accelerated Reader program.

### **Phonics Screening Test**

The Phonics Screening Check is a test for children in Year 1. Children take it during June in a one-to-one setting with a teacher. This is usually their class teacher, but it could also be the headteacher or another teacher who knows the child well. During the Phonics Screening Check, children are asked to read (decode) 40 words. Most of these words are real words but some are pseudo-words. Pseudo-words are included to ensure that children are using their decoding skills and not just relying on their memory of words they've read before. The test itself is divided into two sections. In Section 1 children are asked to recognise simple word structures and Grapheme Phoneme Correspondences (GPCs) from the earlier phases of the phonics curriculum. In Section 2 children need to recognise GPCs from the later stages of the phonics curriculum. They also encounter graphemes that correspond to more than one phoneme (e.g. the grapheme 'ea' represents different phonemes in the words bread and bead.) Children in Year 2 who didn't pass the Year One Phonics Screening Test will be monitored carefully; should they need further support in class they too will take part in 'keeping Up' but will also take part in intervention sessions to plug gaps should they need it.