



# Birches First School

*Believe, Grow, Succeed*



## Phonics Policy

At Birches First School we recognise the importance of secure phonological understanding as a key factor in developing skills of early reading and writing. As children begin to access the world of the written word and begin to develop a love of reading with growing understanding and a widening range of texts, they begin to express themselves, thus becoming more independent readers and writers.

## Aims

- To provide pupils with a clear understanding of how the alphabet works for reading and spelling;
- To enable our pupils to become fluent and confident readers with a strong phonological awareness;
- To develop pupils' sight vocabulary to aid fluent reading;
- To enable our children to become confident and independent writers with accurate application of phonic skills and understanding.
- To provide opportunities for repetition and consolidation so that spelling and reading become automatic.

## Teaching and Learning of Phonics.

Our youngest children in Nursery develop secure foundations in key phonological skills through Phase 1 games and activities of the seven aspects outlined in the Letters and Sounds Framework. From Reception onwards we follow LCP planning for phonics for Phases 2-5, supplemented by Jolly Phonics actions, rhymes and other materials to capture the children and engage them with the sounds they are learning.

When teaching children new sounds, time and care is taken to ensure that the 'pure' sound is modelled and used.

Children are taught to recognise that letters have a name and a sound and as such are encouraged to use letter names when they are naming the letters in a digraph for example. They are also exposed to letters written in different fonts/styles to reflect the wide range of text in the world around us as well as becoming confident at recognising the letter names and associated sounds of both lowercase and capital letters.

Children in Early Years and Key Stage 1 receive daily phonics teaching. In Key Stage 2 children either continue to receive phonic input / interventions or move onto the Year 3 / 4 Spelling curriculum.

Daily Phonic sessions follow the following format;

Revisit/Recap

Teach

Practice

Apply

Assess

Sessions will involve a range of activities and experiences to practise and consolidate skills and understanding with a strong focus on the application of phonics to the contexts of reading and spelling for writing.

Teaching may be supported with the use of online learning resources such as Phonics Play, Spell Zone, Education City.

Phonic skills will be used and applied through other areas of the curriculum, skilfully supported by staff. Children are encouraged to apply their phonic skills and knowledge of spelling rules in their work using spelling application books in which they try themselves before asking for an adult to support them with the spelling.

Progression / Expectations by Year group;

Nursery – Phase 1 Developing Phonological awareness.

Reception – Phase 2 / 3 (end of Year expectation) with some Phase 4.

Year 1 – Revisit Phase 3 sounds via Phase 4 / Phase 5 (Teach Y1 Spelling Curriculum – Birches Spelling Scheme.)

Year 2 – Revisit Phase 5 / Phase 6 (Teach Y2 Spelling Curriculum – Birches Spelling Scheme.)

Year 3 – Teach Y3 Spelling Curriculum – Birches Spelling Scheme

Year 4 – Teach Y 4 Spelling Curriculum – Birches Spelling Scheme

## Assessment of Phonics

Ongoing formative assessments are made during daily sessions and used to adapt and plan for future learning/next steps. Children are also assessed at the end of each phase (Summative assessments).

Children in Years 3 and 4 are tested termly against their Year group Spellings list.

In Key Stage 1, children have a weekly spelling test following our Birches Spelling Scheme.

Children in Year 1 and Y2 children who did not meet the standard in Year 1 are taught the skill of decoding unfamiliar 'nonsense' words whilst also being taught to understand the application of such skills to reading and writing.

Groups are reviewed regularly following assessments to ensure that teaching best meets the needs of the children. Where appropriate children may be taught as a whole class or, children may be groups across school according to need.

In June each year, children in Year 1 (and those Year 2 children who did not meet the standard) are assessed as part of the statutory Phonic Screen Assessment. This assessment is carried out by the class teacher following completion of the online training resources.

## Interventions

Where children are identified as not making expected progress or working below ARE, they will be assessed using the Rapid phonics programme to identify key areas requiring support which will then be targeted through small group focus interventions. Some children may have more specific, individual areas of need within phonics which would be targeted through individual interventions/support and may form part of an ISP.

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