



Phonics Policy

Reviewed – November 2022

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Phonics and Spelling Policy

At the Acorn Federation we believe that learning to read fluently allows children to access learning in all subjects and reading for pleasure stimulates children's imaginations and expands their understanding of the wider world. We support all of our children to become fluent and confident readers who can apply their knowledge and skills in a wide range of situations.

In order for our children to achieve this, staff at the Acorn Federation will use the All Aboard Systematic, Synthetic, Phonics Programme. Staff promote a love of reading by regularly sharing stories and reading aloud to the children, encouraging reading at home and having a comprehensive and engaging library. We promote a love of writing by using exciting stimulus and topics. Through daily phonics teaching, we ensure all children make progress in phonics and all staff will have high expectations of the children when applying these skills to their reading and writing.

Research shows that when phonics is taught in a structured and systematic way – starting with the easiest sounds and progressing through to the most complex – it is the most effective way of teaching children to read and spell.

Staff follow the All Aboard scheme with fidelity, this ensures that teaching is consistent between all staff and children are able to focus on the new learning in the lesson.

Aims

Children in the Acorn Federation will:

- Learn to read and write with ease, fluency, good understanding and confidence.
- Develop a love of reading by reading widely and often, for both pleasure and information
- Develop a technical vocabulary with understanding of phonetic terminology

Statutory Requirements

The EYFS Development Matters states that children in EYFS should be taught to, -

- Read individual letters by saying the sounds for them.
- Blend sounds into words, so that they can read short words made up of known letter–sound correspondences.
- Read some letter groups that each represent one sound and say sounds for them.
- Read a few common exception words matched to the school's phonic programme.
- Read simple phrases and sentences made up of words with known letter–sound correspondences and, where necessary, a few exception words.
- Re-read these books to build up their confidence in word reading, their fluency and their understanding and enjoyment.
- Form lower-case and capital letters correctly.
- Spell words by identifying the sounds and then writing the sound with letter/s.
- Write short sentences with words with known sound-letter correspondences using a capital letter and full stop.
- Re-read what they have written to check that it makes sense.

The National Curriculum states that Pupils in Year 1 should be taught to, -

- apply phonic knowledge and skills as the route to decode words
- respond speedily with the correct sound to graphemes (letters or groups of letters) for all 40+ phonemes, including, where applicable, alternative sounds for graphemes

- read accurately by blending sounds in unfamiliar words containing GPCs that have been taught
- read common exception words, noting unusual correspondences between spelling and sound and where these occur in the word
- read words containing taught GPCs and –s, –es, –ing, –ed, –er and –est endings
- read other words of more than one syllable that contain taught GPCs
- read words with contractions [for example, I'm, I'll, we'll], and understand that the apostrophe represents the omitted letter(s)
- read books aloud, accurately, that are consistent with their developing phonic knowledge and that do not require them to use other strategies to work out words
- reread these books to build up their fluency and confidence in word reading

Subject Organisation

EYFS and Year One

In EYFS and Year One, children have daily phonics sessions in order to develop essential skills such as blending, segmenting and grapheme-phoneme correspondence which prepare our learners for early reading and writing. Within the classroom, EY learners are provided with opportunities to develop apply the phonic skills they are learning on a daily basis, with a focus on child initiated activities. The children have continuous access to a range of materials to experiment and practise mark making/letter formation (and eventually to practise and apply taught skills) and other learning areas, such as the role play area, are enhanced to provide children with the opportunity to read and write in a range of contexts and for enjoyment. The children have access to a range of texts, including fiction and non-fiction, and enjoy daily 'story time' in which they become familiar with stories and authors and begin to develop a love of reading. Adult led activities in the EYFS are often linked to cross curricular topics, stories, poems or nursery rhymes.

Please see appendix one for guidance on the terminology used during phonics lessons.

Marking and Feedback

Children work in small groups during phonic sessions so all staff are able to respond verbally to the work they are doing. Staff use this time to address misconceptions in the moment and support children with correct letter formation.

Assessment

Children are assessed every half term using the All Aboard assessments. Staff use assessments and the All Aboard intervention book to plan interventions for pupils with gaps in triher phonic learning.

In Year 1, children complete a statutory phonics screening check to test their decoding and blending skills. Any children who do not pass the test in Year 1 will be required to re-take the test in June of Year 2.

Inclusion in Phonics

When planning Phonics, staff in the Acorn Federation carefully consider the needs of all children in order to support them in reaching their full potential. Children with Special Educational Needs are

encouraged to take part when and where this is appropriate and may follow additional intervention programmes and have extra adult support to ensure progression.

Equal Opportunities

We have high expectations for **every child**, regardless of their background, ability or circumstances and value what each individual child brings to our school. We recognise that children learn best when they are happy, healthy, safe and engaged and so, in order to engage all children, diversity is celebrated. Our English curriculum includes a wide range of texts and resources which represent a variety of backgrounds.

Role of the Subject Leader

The subject leader for English is Mrs Bosley. The subject leader is responsible for maintaining/improving the standards of teaching and learning in English, including phonics by:

- Monitoring and evaluating English, including phonics; pupil progress, planning, marking and feedback, curriculum coverage, teaching, role of teaching assistants, English provision
- Taking the lead in policy development
- Auditing and supporting colleagues in CPD
- Purchasing/organising resources
- Keeping up to date with developments in English, including phonics, education

Homework

All children are expected to read with somebody at home each day. This is recorded in their reading records and children are rewarded for their efforts.

Children in EYFS and Year One are expected to practice their phonics at home and recap the tricky words they are learning to read.

Parental Involvement

We aim to involve parents as much as possible in school life, and therefore in the development of children's skills, knowledge and understanding in English. In September parents are invited to phonics open morning where they are able to see a phonics lesson being taught and then receive handouts with guidance for supporting the learning at home. The school website has links to the All Aboard YouTube channel to help parents to support their children at home. Parents are invited in to school for weekly Celebration Assemblies and regular opportunities to view their child(ren)'s work.

Formal parent meetings take place on two occasions across the school year where parents are updated on their children's progress, attainment and effort in reading and writing and a full written report is provided at the end of the academic year, detailing their child's achievements in English alongside other curriculum areas. In addition to this, parents and/or teachers can organise additional formal meetings if they feel necessary and they have the opportunity to chat with staff in the playground each day, before and after the school day.

The results of statutory assessments are reported to parents in accordance with government legislation.

Appendix 1: Glossary

Blending	The process of putting the sounds together to form the word, after sounding out a word. For example, a child might sound out t-o-p and then blend them together to say top.
CVC	This stands for consonant-vowel-consonant.
Decoding	Reading words by working out the phonemes relating to each grapheme and blending those together. Sounding out + blending = decoding
Digraph	A grapheme containing two letters that represent one phoneme, e.g. <ch>
GPC (Grapheme Phoneme Correspondence)	The fact of a particular grapheme being able to represent a particular sound. GPCs are not unique links for each grapheme and phoneme. For instance, there is a GPC between the grapheme <ow> and the phoneme /ow/ (as in “cow”). There is another GPC between the same grapheme <ow> and the phoneme /oa/ (as in “low”).
Grapheme	A written representation of a phoneme. Graphemes can be made up of one to four letters. For example in “thought” the graphemes are <th>, <ough>, <t>.
Letter name	The name commonly used when referring to letter shapes and sung when singing the alphabet.
Oral Blending	This involves hearing phonemes and being able to merge them together to say a word. Children need to develop this skill before they will be able to blend the sounds of written words silently.
Oral Segmenting	The act of hearing a whole word and then splitting it up into the phonemes that will make it. Children need to develop this skill before they will be able to segment words to spell them. For example, a child could hear the word ‘dog’ and they would break it down into “/d/ /o/ /g/”
Phoneme	The smallest unit of sound in a word. There are 44 phonemes in the English language. Phonemes can be put together to make words. For example, the word “cat” is made up of the phonemes /k/, /a/ /t/.
Phonemic Awareness	The ability to hear, identify and manipulate individual sounds in spoken words.
Pictophone	A distinctive visual character representing a sound of the English language which can be used as an aid in reading practice.
Segmenting (for spelling)	Segmentation for spelling is a combination of oral segmenting and letter recall. In the early stages of spelling development, one must first orally segment the word into its sounds, and then recall the letters which represent those sounds, and write them down.
Sound Button or Bar	A sound button is a dot shown below a single grapheme. Sound bars are lines drawn underneath digraphs and trigraphs to indicate that the letters combine to make one sound.
Split Vowel Digraphs	For split vowel digraphs use a curved line underneath the word to join up the two letters of the split digraph
Tricky Words	Frequently used words that cannot be decoded easily because they have unusual GPCs, e.g. “the”
Trigraph	A grapheme containing three letters that represent one sound (phoneme), e.g. <air>, <igh>, <tch>

Appendix 2: Displays

The Garden Class will have two phonics displays, one for EYFS and one for Year One.

- All Aboard poster with taught sounds on.
- Key terms poster.
- All Aboard alphabet poster.
- All Aboard Sound Mats are available for children to use.