

Phonics at Kingfisher Primary

Here at Kingfisher Primary we use an in-house synthetic phonics programme, which was specifically created and introduced by Teresa Heathcote (Literacy Consultant.) The programme is used to plan the pace and progression of phonological awareness and phonics in the EYFS and Key Stage One.

At Kingfisher Primary, we strive to ensure all children become fluent readers by the end of Key Stage One. We have high expectations of all children and the aim of the phonics policy is to ensure they have a firm foundation on which to build reading and writing skills. High quality phonics teaching helps children develop their reading, writing, spelling and general communication skills. It also helps secure the crucial skills of word recognition that enables children to read fluently, allowing them to concentrate on the meaning of the text.

Teaching and Learning

Planning

The school follows a synthetic phonics programme that has been adapted to meet the personal needs of pupils at Kingfisher Primary. A planning proforma is used which shows the sequence of a phonics lessons.

Exemplars have been given out to support all staff.

Resources

All phonics teachers have a range of resources to use which are appropriate for the level at which the children are working. They include practical resources such as sound cards and word cards etc. that should be used in every lesson to create a point of resonance. Children have their own phonics pack, which consists a white board, dry-wipe pen, white board rubber and mirror in a zip wallet. This is so that children are continually engaged with their learning. There should also be age and phase appropriate displays in Reception and Key Stage One classrooms as well as any intervention areas/rooms to support the teaching and application of phonics in Reading and Writing.

Delivery

Discrete 30-minute phonics lessons take place daily across Reception and Year One. Children work in small groups depending on the phase in which they are focusing on. Children in FS1 are introduced to phonemes in Summer 1. Children in FS2 start phonics lessons in Autumn 1 where all children are in class being taught by their class teacher. Children in Year One, are taught in three small groups. These lessons ensure that children are consolidating phonic knowledge and skills and that they are able to apply them in context. These lessons proceed at pace and include a range of practical and interactive activities to engage the children.

These activities are carefully chosen to ensure that children develop their skills in aural discrimination and phonemic and rhyme awareness, blending and segmenting as well as grapheme/phoneme correspondence.

Teaching follows a developmental approach through six phases. Teaching and support staff who deliver daily phonics sessions have all had phonics training or have observed FB (Reading Leader.)

Assessment

Assessment for learning is used throughout daily phonics lessons to identify elements that may need to be revisited in the next session. At the end of each half term, Frances Butler (Reading Leader) will assess children using a past Phonics Screening Check and then re-group the children accordingly based on assessment data. Both class teachers and the Reading Leader track this. These groups are fluid and flexible, meaning children can move as and when needed depending on their progression.

At the end of Y1, children will take the statutory National Phonic Screening Check. If the children in Y1 are unsuccessful in reaching the required pass mark, then they will be re-tested at the end of Y2. In addition, during the autumn, spring and summer terms, pupils in Y2 who did not pass the Phonic Screening Check in Y1 and pupils who are currently in Y1 are assessed using past Phonic Screening checks to ensure that they are on track to reach the threshold. At Kingfisher, phonics is taught up until Y1. During Y2, we introduce other strategies for those children who did not pass the Phonics Screening Check in Y1. Other strategies include small phonics interventions with the Y2 Teaching Assistant, focusing on spelling and sight-reading. We do this as we believe if the phonics strategies have not been embedded here at Kingfisher for the first 3 years then other strategies will be put in place and phonics is simply not the right strategy for those children.

Organisation

The Reading Leader is responsible for Phonics throughout school, ensuring all staff are up to date with any changes and that resources are in place and being used effectively. This includes ensuring continuity and progression from Y1 to Y2. Providing all members of staff with guidelines and an overview of phases, which are to be taught in the order shown and ensuring classrooms are well stocked with attractive and appropriate resources for the teaching of phonics. Also advising and supporting colleagues in the implementation of lessons and having an overview of the quality of teaching and learning in phonics across the school. The class teachers are responsible for ensuring the children in their class are making progress regardless of who leads the phonics session. They are responsible for developing and updating skills, knowledge and understanding of phonics. Planning effectively for phonics, following the overview of phases/ phonics lesson plan and liaising with phonics leader when necessary. Informing pupils and parents of their progress, achievements and attainment.

Intervention

Children who are identified and need additional support with phonics are targeted in small intervention groups. This is to further embed their phonic knowledge. This can either be one to one support or as a group. There are no more than 8 children in each intervention group and these interventions do not start any earlier than February to ensure quality first teaching takes priority. Interventions are delivered by the Reading Leader and tracked by class teachers and Alison Parsons (Deputy Head.)

Inclusion

All children have equal access to the curriculum. At Kingfisher, we ensure that phonics is accessible to pupils by setting suitable learning objectives, responding to the variety of learning styles and overcoming potential barriers of individuals and groups.