



Teaching Phonics at Hunsbury Park Primary School

INTENT

At Hunsbury Park Primary School, we strive to teach children to read quickly and effectively by following the Phonics programme 'Sounds-Write'. This programme has been acknowledged by the Department for Education as meeting all criteria for an effective phonics teaching programme. We are passionate about all of our staff members being rigorously trained in this programme to ensure consistency in our teaching. In practice, the children learn the 44 common sounds in the English language and are taught how to blend these sounds to decode (read) words. Following this programme enables us to teach reading, spelling and writing to children from when they very first begin at Hunsbury Park in Reception. It is then continued as a daily staple in the children's timetable throughout Year 1 and is fine-tuned with more of a spelling focus in the rest of the year groups.

At Hunsbury Park Primary School we are extremely dedicated and committed to prioritising Phonics lessons in order to teach children the skills of reading and writing. They are fundamental life skills which ultimately unlock the rest of the curriculum and give children a sense of independence and freedom.

IMPLEMENTATION

The direct teaching of Phonics.

EYFS and Year 1

In EYFS and Year 1 the children have a Phonics lesson every day. These last for approximately 30 minutes and are taught using a whole-class approach. During these lessons, the children have the opportunity to recap previous learning to embed it, learn new phonemes and graphemes, build words, read words and apply their learning in their writing. The lessons are structured, consistent, well-paced and interactive to allow children to have more opportunities to 'do' than just to 'listen'.

Year 2

In Year 2 Phonics is taught 3-4 times per week, however it is during this year that it takes on more of a spelling focus too, as opposed to just reading and writing. Children will learn the spelling rules of the English Alphabetic Code alongside still recapping phonemes and graphemes they have been taught previously. The children will still experience a whole-class introduction to the lesson, however will then be split into groups accordingly depending on what the next step in their particular learning is.

Years 3-6

The Sounds-write programme is still followed throughout Hunsbury Park Primary School, all the way up to year 6, however as the children grow older the programme content changes slightly. They will continue to learn more about spelling rules and patterns, as well as grammar, and have the opportunities to apply their learning in their writing.

Interventions

Our Sounds-Write Phonics programme lends itself well to teaching children in pairs or very small groups. We understand that not all children learn the same way or indeed at the same pace, therefore we are very pro-active about our Phonics intervention programmes. Children who may need some extra teaching or practise to pick up their reading and writing skills will have the opportunity to work with their class teacher or teaching assistant to recap and apply their learning.

Phonics Screening Check

In the Summer Term of Year 1, children are required to take part in a Phonics Screening Check for the government. It involves them reading 40 words to their teacher from a given booklet. The words are a mixture of real words and 'nonsense' (made-up) words. The pass mark changes each year depending on national results, however usually sits at around 32/40. The children are well prepped for this screening check in class by being given lots of opportunity and practise to decode both real and nonsense words. We also put on an open afternoon for parents to let you know how you can help and support with this at home. If children do not pass in Year 1, they will retake the check in Year 2.

Reading

All of the Phonics learning that takes place in school is of course supported by all of the reading that we do at Hunsbury Park. Children experience reading in many forms, including but not being limited to; whole class reading; guided reading; 1:1 reading; daily read-aloud sessions; the Readathon reading challenge and the Reading Vipers. Please see the Reading at Hunsbury Park Primary School document on our website for more information about these.

Individual Reading Books

At the end of each term, all children will be assessed against the Sounds-Write benchmarks. These assessments, alongside the teacher's informal daily observations, means that pupils are issued suitable reading books which are closely matched to their increasing knowledge of phonics and ability to read 'tricky words'. It is important to us that children experience early reading success and gain confidence that they are readers, as well as consolidating the learning that takes place in school.

Children in EYFS, Year 1 and Year 2 take home a phonics book that links to the Sounds-Write units that have been taught. The children should be able to decode these books using their phonic knowledge.

All children from Year 3 onwards are expected to take home a colour banded reading book that matches their decoding ability. This is a book that the children should be able to read with a certain amount of independence. When children have developed the fluency to read the colour banded books they move on to become a 'Free Reader.' All children are encouraged to visit our well-resourced library to select books to take home to share with their families.

IMPACT

By the time children leave Hunsbury Park Primary School to go onto secondary school, they are competent and confident readers who have a good understanding of the English language. They are able to read for information but also choose to read for pleasure. This is embedded so well that it lasts them throughout their life course.

