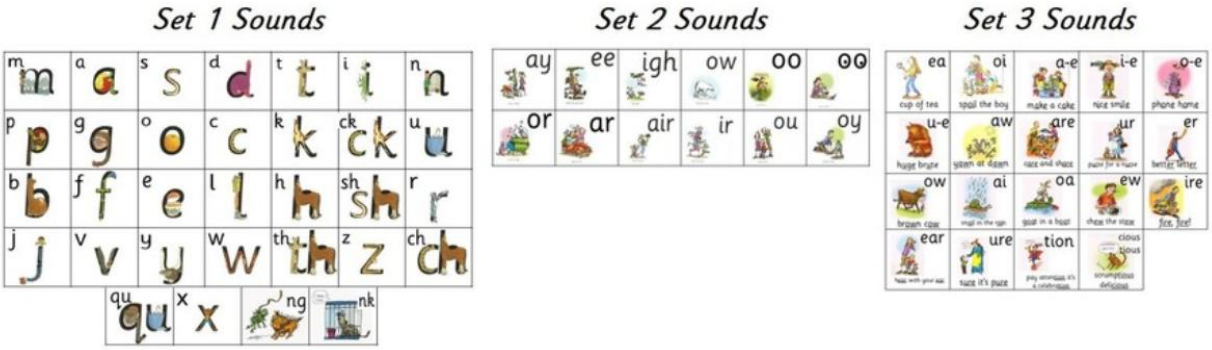
Phonics Policy

Coates Primary School follow the *Read Write Inc* (RWI) phonics programme, which is a systematic synthetic approach to phonics. Children learn the sounds and the letter, or groups of letters that represent the different speech sounds within the English language. These are split into 3 Sets of sounds:



The Set 1 sounds include rhymes to help the children develop their letter formation and the Set 2 and 3 sounds have simple rhymes and pictures to help all children grasp the letter-sound correspondences quickly. Sounds are taught and consolidated every day. High frequency words that are not phonically regular are called 'Red words' and are explicitly taught and practised frequently.

Delivery of teaching of phonics

At Coates Primary School, RWI phonics is taught throughout Reception and KS1, and also as interventions for identified children in KS2 using Fresh Start RWI.

- In KS1 it is delivered as a discrete session, which is taught 5 times a week.
- Pupils are organised into differentiated groups within the key stage so that targeted sessions are delivered based on the level the children are working at.
- The phonics session is delivered as a two part session which consists of:
    1. 10 minute speed sound session
    2. 30 minute book session using a phonically decodable text.
- All sessions follow the format above and are repetitive in structure and organisation so that children can focus on learning and applying the sounds that are being covered.

Speed Sound Session

Speed sound sessions incorporate the following aspects:

1. Say the sound
2. Read the sound
3. Review the sounds (new sound with sounds that have been taught previously).

Word time:

1. Read the words (with the new sound)
2. Review the words
3. Reading assessment (nonsense words)
4. Spell words with Fred fingers
5. Spell review
6. Final challenge

Fred talk and Fred fingers

Fred is a frog who helps children learn how to read and write. He can say the sounds in words but he cannot say the whole word. It is therefore the children's job to help him.

Fred talk

- Adults use Fred talk to say a word and the children blend it together.
- Children use Fred talk to sound out a word in order to read it.

Fred in your head

- Once children can Fred talk a word out loud, they then learn how to sound out words in their head when they are reading.

Fred fingers

- Children are taught to count the sounds in a word by pinching their fingers. This is initially done orally but then children use this to help them sound out and spell words in their writing.

Reading

Children are presented with a new, phonically decodable story every week (*Apart from the red and ditty groups). During the week they read the story at least three times. On the first read, they focus on *accurate* word reading; the second on developing *fluency;* and the third, on *comprehension*. Fluency and comprehension increase with each repeated reading.

Accuracy

Children learn to:

- Read new sounds and review previously taught sounds.
- Sound out the names of characters and unfamiliar words.
- Understand the meaning of new words.
- Read the story (first read).

Fluency

Children learn to:

- Read the words in the story speedily.
- Track the story, 'jumping in' when the teacher hesitates.
- Read the story with increased speed (second read).

Comprehension

Children learn to:

- Predict the outcome, after listening to a story introduction.
- Discuss and compare key moments in the story.
- Read the story with a storyteller's voice (third read).
- Answer questions about the story.
- Read the same story at home.

**Children within the Ditty and Red groups have 'A Ditty a Day' and read a new short text every day.*

At the end of the week children take home a black and white version of the story they have been working on that week to share with someone at home. The following

Monday they take home a 'Book Bag Book'. This is a new story, which focuses on the same sounds and red words that they have been reading in their group during the previous week, to help reinforce them.

When reading stories the children are specifically taught three types of words:

Story green words:
These are low frequency words with sounds children have already been taught. They include names and words that are particular to the storybook. The words are taught before they start reading the story so they can practise decoding unfamiliar words and learning new vocabulary. Therefore when they read the book, their focus is on understanding the story rather than sounding out every word.

Speedy green words:
Speedy green words are common words with common graphemes (sounds) included frequently in the storybooks. They are taught by sound blending and then the children practise reading them at speed.

Red word cards:
Red words are common words with a low-frequency grapheme. For example; 's**ai**d'. They are explicitly taught using emphasis and silly voices to help children remember the unusual spelling patterns.

Teacher modelling and participation

'My turn your turn' is used by teachers and TAs to model different things to the children. This ensures that all children are watching and mirroring what the adults are doing. The children then 'Turn to their partner' to practise what they have been taught or to discuss a new idea. These instructions are given using hand signals to reduce teacher talk and because they are easily understandable.

Assessment and grouping

Children are assessed at the end of every half term using the assessment grids within the RWI programme. These assessments are used to set the phonics groups to ensure the children are reading books that match their phonic knowledge. Ongoing assessment means that groups are constantly adjusting to ensure the best progress for each child.

Monitoring and evaluation

- The RWI Reading Leader is also the English Leader in school.
- Progression in phonics is monitored by the Reading Leader and analysed to set new groups. This information is then reported to the Headteacher and discussed within pupil progress meetings. Children are identified for further speed sound sessions or 1:1 pinny time to increase progress if needed.

Phonics progression throughout the school

The expected level of progression is explained below:

Preschool
At Goslings Preschool, children are introduced to Phase 1 of Letters and Sounds. This has a key focus on developing listening and attention skills as well as completing rhyming activities. The children are then introduced to the RWI picture cards and initial sounds. Fred talk is used to begin to teach children how to orally segment and blend words during the Summer term.

Reception
At Coates Primary School, children entering Reception begin to learn the Set 1 sounds. By December they should know all Set 1 sounds and be able to blend them. By the end of the school year they should be reading green/purple story books. During the Summer term, phonics data is analysed to form part of the screening process for children who may need additional support in the Autumn term of Year 1.

Year 1
Assessment data from Reception is used to set initial groups for phonics. By Christmas children should have been taught all Set 3 sounds and be working on pink/orange story books. By the end of the year they should be reading blue books.

Year 2
During the Autumn Term children consolidate their sounds and by Christmas they should have completed the colour stages and be ready to start the RWI spelling programme.

Key Stage 2
The teaching of discrete RWI phonics sessions continues in KS2 for identified children if necessary. Children in Year 3 follow the KS1 RWI programme and then from Year 4 children follow the Fresh Start RWI phonics programme. Sessions are carried out by class TAs. Children who did not pass the phonics screening check in Year 2 are closely monitored for further support.

We understand that some children might not necessarily meet these expectations and other children might exceed them. This is reflected in the differentiated groupings within class. Due to the ongoing impact of Covid-19 and lockdown, more children than usual might not have met the expected standard. Where children are working below expectations, they have additional 1:1 pinny time or speed sound sessions to accelerate progress. All groups are organised so that the most highly skilled member of staff teaches the lowest 20% of children. This ensures they receive the highest level of quality first teaching to help accelerate progress.

Year One Phonics Screening Check

Pupils in Year 1 take part in a statutory Phonics Screening check. It is designed to confirm if children have learnt the skill of phonic decoding to an appropriate standard. This takes place in the Summer Term and is a list of 40 real and pseudo (fake) words that children are asked to read. Pupils take part in the check individually and results are reported back to the Local Authority. Any child who does not meet the required standard in Year 1 will complete the statutory phonics screening check in the Summer Term of Year 2.

The Role of the Phonics/ Reading Leader

- Purchase, organise and maintain teaching resources.
- Encourage and lead training for TAs, teachers and parents.
- Be informed about current development in the subject.
- Provide a strategic lead and direction for the subject in the school.
- Advise the Headteacher of any action required (eg resources, standards etc).

- Monitor the standard of children's phonics and the quality of teaching across the school through observations.
- Monitor assessment and tracking grids.
- Inform parents about the phonics screening check, how and when it takes place.
- Inform parents about the RWI scheme and ways they can support their child.

Keeping parents informed

EYFS:
A meeting takes place in the Autumn Term to inform parents about how phonics is taught. It explains to them the expectations of progression and also the specific terminology that children will be expected to understand. It informs them of the different phonemes the children will be learning and also how they are expected to sound out and blend to read and spell words. Parents are also given a leaflet about RWI and also practical information about how they can support their child at home.

Year 1:
A meeting takes place in the Autumn Term to inform parents about the Phonics Screening Check. This meeting provides information about what the test involves and also how the children can be supported at home. RWI sound mats and rhymes are sent home during the Autumn term to enable children to work on their phonics at home. Follow-up information about the Phonics Screening Check takes place towards the end of the Spring Term to ensure parents and children feel prepared.

Year 2:
Information is sent home during the Autumn Term for parents of children who need to retake the Phonics Screening Check to ensure they are informed about what will happen and how they can support their child at home.

Equal Opportunities

The teaching of phonics is in accordance with the present policy for Equal Opportunities. We aim to provide equal access to phonics for those children with Special Educational Needs and those pupils who are very able and require extension activities through; small group work; the support of teaching assistants where available, and through carefully differentiated activities, resources and individual sound packs (kept within trays and sent home).

Monitoring and Review

The monitoring of this policy will be the responsibility of the English and Phonics Leader in conjunction with the Senior Leadership Team.

Linked documents:

- English Policy
- RWI Parent and child information booklet