

Teaching of Reading and Phonics at Datchet St Mary's

Our Aims in teaching Phonics

- To teach pupils phonic awareness and rhyme awareness in order to encourage good spelling.
- To encourage repetition and consolidation, so that spelling becomes automatic.
- To encourage pupils to segment and blend.
- To learn to read and write all 44 graphemes in the English language.
- To teach pupils specific strategies to help them remember tricky words.
- To ensure that the teaching of phonics is lively, interactive and investigative.
- To encourage pupils to apply their phonic skills in all curriculum areas.

High-quality phonic teaching secures the crucial skills of word recognition that, once mastered, enable children to read fluently and automatically therefore allowing them to concentrate on the meaning of the text. By securing automatic decoding skills through daily phonics lessons taught at Datchet St Mary's Academy, children will progress from 'learning to read' to 'reading to learn' for purpose and pleasure. As children develop their phonetic awareness and read fluently, their understanding and comprehension of the various text types will advance.

Overview of Phonics at Datchet St Mary's Academy

- Where possible a multi-sensory approach is used to cater for all visual, auditory and kinaesthetic learners. Sessions should include opportunities for active involvement and creative activities.
- Children should be taught that phonemes should be blended from left to right in order to read and that words can be segmented into their phonemes for spelling and that this is the reverse of blending. It is essential that this is demonstrated to children throughout the phonics session and reinforced whenever appropriate in other lessons, differentiated group activities and within continuous provision.
- Throughout the six phases, all children should be taught the grapheme/phoneme correspondences (GPC), high frequency words (including Tricky Words: those that do not conform completely to grapheme/phoneme correspondence rules) and how to use their phonetic knowledge to read and write both regular and irregular words. Phonics is taught daily as a 25-minute discrete lesson throughout the Foundation Stage and Key Stage One. In Key Stage Two it is used as an intervention for those who need further support.

Nursery

The children in Nursery are taught phonics through discrete lessons following letters and sounds / phonics play. The children are taught to discriminate between sounds such as environmental and instrumental awareness of rhyme, rhythm and alliteration. In the summer term, children are introduced to phase 2 sounds and well as oral blending and segmenting.

Reception

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Children learn to memorise the different graphemes in during phonic lessons, they are encouraged to use their developing phonic knowledge in their play as well as in guided writing and individual reading and writing sessions.

Key Stage One

The children in Key Stage One are taught phonics in differentiated groups through adapted schemes (from Phonics Play which follow the Letters and Sounds programme) to suit the needs of individual children. Where appropriate we try to link the spellings given, to the sounds the children are learning so that they are given a further opportunity to practise segmenting and understanding the different graphemes that represent those phonemes. Throughout Key Stage One, children are regularly exposed to Nonsense Words which are made up words containing different graphemes. This is so that children are given the opportunity to blend phonemes in unrecognisable words allowing their phonetic knowledge to be monitored.

Key Stage Two

The children in Key Stage Two are continually monitored by the members of staff who work with them. Children who need further support/who are not making expected progress are supported through differentiated spelling lessons and interventions where needed.

Phonics Assessment and Monitoring

Children will be assessed regularly (every short term) within their ability groups on sounds learned through each phase. In addition, children who are yet to take their Year 1 Phonics Screening and Year 2 children who have not quite passed, will be assessed throughout the year in the style of a Phonics Screen check to prepare them better. This allows children to become familiar with the process beforehand.

Although we believe phonics is a fundamental approach to reading, we understand that not every child learns this way and therefore, use other appropriate strategies to help these children to succeed.

Our Approach to the teaching of Reading

At Datchet St Mary's Academy, we aim to create a stimulating environment in which children are actively encouraged to enjoy books, and are motivated to want to read independently. We strongly believe that pupils should read effectively for different purposes, should read widely and across all subjects, and acquire the key phonics skills and understand the rules governing the structure of language.

Foundation Stage

Children are taught to read in the Foundation stage using the Letters and Sounds programme of work. Children will be introduced to Letters and Sounds (Phases 1-3) in the autumn term and throughout the rest of the year, in order to give them good foundations for learning to read. The reception high frequency words are introduced alongside reading books for children to develop a good sight vocabulary.

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Key Stage One

Teachers continue to build on the children's reading skills further by modelling good reading and continuing to teach the remaining phases from Letters and Sounds. As part of our Literacy provision guided reading sessions enable teachers to target ability groups for reading and teach specific skills. Children are introduced to a range of text types including; multicultural stories, poems, rhymes, fairy tales, traditional tales, encyclopaedias, dictionaries, non-fiction texts, picture books and stories by significant authors. Children are taught how to read for meaning and answer questions about texts looking at characterisation and plot.

Key Stage Two The phonics programme is continued with the children who need extra support in reading.

Children are also given opportunities for silent reading and guided reading. A range of genres are introduced to older children including autobiographies, letters, diaries, short stories, poems and play scripts. Through shared reading and guided reading sessions, children are taught how to analyse texts and comment on author creativity.

Children have regular opportunities to read aloud to adults and peers. This enables us to monitor mastery of sight vocabulary, application of phonics, development of fluency and expression, knowledge of the structure of language and audience awareness.

Reading Schemes

Rather than one specific reading scheme we have a collection of texts that are banded by colour via the Pearson scheme this works alongside our online Bug Club reading Scheme. Offering a broad choice enables children to develop skills in book selection, as well as reading skills. The wide range of texts includes provision to support reluctant readers, higher achieving readers.

Books are chosen, initially with adult help, at the appropriate level for the children. Children read regularly to their teacher and are encouraged to read often and widely across all subjects. Bringing into school books that children have enjoyed reading at home is a really effective way of fostering a joy of reading, and as such this is encouraged. Comments on the children's progress are noted in a home/school reading record book.

Library

Choosing and reading books from the library is seen as very important in the development of independent reading. We try to make our library as attractive as possible and to provide a range of literature suitable for all age ranges and abilities. Each class have two children who are trained as class librarians they are taught how to manage the library developing a love of reading and books in all their forms.

Assessment

Children in Years Y1-Y6 are assessed termly and progress is monitored through pupil progress meetings. Intervention provision is established where appropriate.

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Glossary

Phoneme - The smallest unit of sound. There are approximately 44 phonemes in English (it depends on different accents). Phonemes can be put together to make words.

Grapheme - A way of writing down a phoneme. Graphemes can be made up from 1 letter e.g. p, 2 letters e.g. sh, 3 letters e.g. tch or 4 letters e.g. ough.

GPC - This is short for Grapheme Phoneme Correspondence. Knowing a GPC means being able to match a phoneme to a grapheme and vice versa.

Digraph - A grapheme containing two letters that makes just one sound (phoneme).

Trigraph - A grapheme containing three letters that makes just one sound (phoneme).

Oral Blending - This involves hearing phonemes and being able to merge them together to make a word. Children need to develop this skill before they will be able to blend written words.

Blending - This involves looking at a written word, looking at each grapheme and using knowledge of GPCs to work out which phoneme each grapheme represents and then merging these phonemes together to make a word. This is the basis of reading.

Oral Segmenting - This is the act hearing a whole word and then splitting it up into the phonemes that make it. Children need to develop this skill before they will be able to segment words to spell them.

Segmenting - This involves hearing a word, splitting it up into the phonemes that make it, using knowledge of GPCs to work out which graphemes represent those phonemes and then writing those graphemes down in the right order. This is the basis of spelling.