

Phonics Policy

Meir Heath Academy



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Meir Heath Academy Phonics Policy

Phonics Intent

At Meir Heath Academy, we believe that all our children can become fluent readers and writers. This is why we teach phonics/reading through Supersonic Phonics Friends, which is a systematic and synthetic phonics programme. All children in Reception and Key Stage 1 follow the progression of Supersonic Phonic Friends which ensures children build on their growing knowledge of the alphabetic code, mastering phonics to read and spell as they move through the school.

We believe that phonics provides the foundations of learning to make the development into fluent reading and writing easier. Phonics is the process that is used to help children break down words into sounds, as well as building letter and word recognition. This can then enable children to use unknown words in the future. Children learn to segment words to support their spelling ability and blend sounds to read the words.

As a result, all our children are able to tackle unfamiliar words as they read. At Meir Heath Academy we also model the application of the alphabetic code through phonics in shared reading and writing, both inside and outside of the phonics lesson and across the curriculum. We have a strong focus on language development for our children because we know that speaking and listening are crucial skills for reading and writing in all subjects.

Phonics is taught through whole class teaching input, through provision in the setting and in small group activities. For children in Reception, phonics is taught in whole class groups. In Key Stage One, phonics is taught in differentiated groups according to pupils' secure phonological knowledge. Where extra intervention is necessary, this is provided for children through the school.

At Meir Heath Academy, we value reading as a crucial life skill. By the time children leave us, they read confidently for meaning and regularly enjoy reading for pleasure. Our readers are equipped with the tools to tackle unfamiliar vocabulary. We encourage our children to see themselves as readers for both pleasure and purpose.

To develop our pupils as decoders and spellers we:

Foundations for phonics in Reception

From September, we provide a balance of child-led and adult-led experiences for all children. These include:

- Sharing high-quality stories and poems
- Learning a range of nursery rhymes and action rhymes
- Activities that develop focused listening and attention, including oral blending
- Attention to high-quality language

Once children are able to orally segment and blend the sounds in CVC words, they begin to learn the grapheme-phoneme correspondences (GPCs).

Daily phonics lessons in Reception and Key Stage One

- Teach a discrete daily 20-30 minute phonic lesson in both Reception and Key Stage 1. We review the week's teaching to help children become fluent readers.
- Follow the Supersonic Phonic Friends programme.

- Model the correct letter formation when writing as well as saying the pure letter sound when speaking.
- Encourage children to use letter sounds when blending words and letter names when spelling out loud.
- Teach children to segment sounds with actions before writing to identify the different sounds in the word.
- Give children opportunities to apply the grapheme they have learnt within a caption or sentence.
- Introduce children to subject specific vocabulary as appropriate e.g. digraph, trigraph, split digraph.
- Give children opportunities to apply their phonic knowledge using phonetically decodable reading books which closely match our teaching in phonics lessons.
- Plan for high-quality phonic based activities within the Early Years provision to develop children's speaking and listening skills in order to increase their awareness of the sounds around them and support them in developing their blending and segmenting skills.
- Provision is made for children who require extra support through targeted teaching interventions.

Sessions are taught daily and have a clear structure following the model: Review & Revisit, Teach, Practise and Apply.

Here at Meir Heath Academy, we follow Supersonic Phonic Friends. This is a phonics scheme aimed at meeting the needs of every child. Every lesson is fun and engaging. The lessons are enriched with movement, a fundamental pre-writing skill and each lesson maximises the learning connections. Supersonic Phonic Friends begins in The Basics in Reception and develops progressively through to Year 2 until the Higher Levels of Phonics – Switch it Spell sounds are reached.

Progression – Supersonic Phonic Friends

The Basics 1 and 2

This phase begins in Reception. This phase teaches children at least one spelling for 18 of the 44 sounds of the English language. Children will use their auditory processing and memory skills from Firm Foundations in Phonics 1 to start to recognise the spellings for the sound and begin to segment and build new words (writing). They will also begin to blend these sounds together for reading. At the end of The Basics 2, children will be able to hear up to 3 sounds in words, recognise spellings and read and spell simple CVC words (e.g. cat, tap) with the 18 spellings for sounds. Children will begin to learn high frequency words and tricky words for reading.

The Basics 3

This phase continues in Reception. The Basics 3 teaches children the spellings for the further 26 of the 44 sounds of the English language including digraphs (two letters that make one sound e.g 'sh') and trigraphs (three letters that make one sound e.g 'air'). Children will use their auditory processing and memory skills from their pre-phonics in the Firm Foundations and their Basics 2 skills to continue to recognise the spellings for the sound and will begin to write and read more complex words including two syllable words. As part of this phase children will continue to learn a selection of high frequency words and tricky words for both reading and writing. The children also begin to learn the letter names. Children should have learnt all 44 phonemes and graphemes by the end of Reception class.

The Basics 4

This phase is covered in Year 1. The Basics 4 teaches children to be able to hear more than 3 sounds in a word. They will continue to embed their mastery of The Basics 1 and 2 spellings for sounds in words and progress to 4, 5 and 6 sounds in a word. Children will learn more complex high frequency words and tricky words for both reading and writing.

The Higher Levels of Phonics 5

This phase begins in Year 1. This phase teaches children the concept that there is more than one spelling for a sound that they can hear in a word. They will find out all about 'sounds the same but looks different' e.g. 'oi' and 'oy' and learn when to choose to use the spelling rules for up to 85 spellings for the 44 sounds of the English Language. They will also learn about 'looks the same, sounds different' and 'switch it' spelling sounds where one spelling can make up to 2 different sounds in words. Throughout the phase children will continue learning high frequency words and tricky words for both reading and writing.

The overall aim is for children to be ready for the higher level of phonics 6 by the time they leave Year 1. This phase is revisited in Year 2.

The Higher Level of Phonics 2

This phase takes place in Year 2 after previous phases are revisited and consolidated. Children apply their phonic knowledge to recognise and spell complex words. This phase has a clear focus on spelling, including tenses, prefixes and suffixes, doubling and dropping letters. The children will be able to independently and automatically read and spell an increasing number of high frequency words and tricky words.

- Children have the opportunity to practice their reading with books that are carefully aligned to the phonics phase they are secure in.

Assessment

Assessment is used to monitor progress and to identify any child needing additional support as soon as they need it.

Assessment for learning is used:

- Daily within class to identify children needing 'keep-up' support.
- Weekly, to assess gaps, address these immediately and secure fluency of GPCs words and spellings.

Summative assessment is used:

- Every half term to assess progress, to identify gaps in learning that need to be addressed, to identify any children needing additional support and to plan the 'keep-up' support that they need.
- By class teachers and through Pupil Progress meetings. Progress is scrutinised through the school phonics assessment tracker and using Phonics Tracker, to narrow attainment gaps between different groups of children and so that any additional support for teachers can be put into place.

Statutory assessment:

- Children in Year 1 sit the Phonics screening check in June. Any child not passing the check re-sits it in Year 2.

Ongoing assessment for catch-up:

- Children in Year 2 are assessed through:
 - Their teacher's ongoing formative assessment.
 - The School's Phonic Assessment document.
 - The appropriate half-termly assessments.

Equal Opportunities and Inclusion

- All children are given access to an ambitious and well-structured Phonics curriculum regardless of gender, ability, race or religion.
- Provision will be made for individual needs (SEND).
- Equal opportunities are provided for boys and girls, also for children with special needs, those who are talented or gifted and children from different cultural backgrounds.
- Children with English as an additional language (EAL) will be given access to additional resources and teaching to support their learning and to ensure they make maximum progress from their individual starting point.

SEND

Teachers will plan lessons so that pupils with SEND can study every National Curriculum subject, wherever possible, and ensure that there are no barriers to every pupil achieving. We do this by responding to each child's different needs. Level of challenge should not be altered, rather that we change the tools we give to children, so that they can be successful. If a child is tracked on PIVOTS they may receive a more individualised curriculum and may receive a different level of challenge as appropriate. See SEND policy for further details.

Monitoring this Policy

SLT will ensure that staff are clear on the policy. SLT and the Phonics Lead will scrutinise work in Phonics to ensure the policy is being followed and feedback to the Principal with regards effectiveness and issues that have arisen.

It is the responsibility of all staff members to ensure they are clear on the expectations and ethos behind the Phonics Policy and to see clarification from SLT if unclear. The policy will be evaluated and reviewed with staff having an input into any changes.

A Fisher
Phonics Lead

Ongoing assessment for catch-up

The Basics 4