



## **Fundamentals of effective Systematic Synthetic Phonics practice**

**A high-quality systematic synthetic phonics programme of proven effectiveness is followed with rigour and fidelity and children are taught consistently to use phonics as the route to reading unknown words.**

### **Teaching to include:**

- grapheme/phoneme (letter/sound) correspondences (the alphabetic principle) in a clearly defined, incremental sequence;
- a defined initial group of consonants and vowels, enabling children, early on, to read and spell many simple CVC words.
- highly important skill of blending (synthesising) phonemes, in order, all through a word to read it;
- the application of the skills of segmenting words into their constituent phonemes to spell; and that blending and segmenting are reversible processes.
- the introduction of a defined initial group of consonants and vowels, enabling children, early on, to read and spell many simple CVC words.
- The knowledge that phonemes should be blended, in order, from left to right, 'all through the word' for reading
- demonstrations of how words can be segmented into their constituent phonemes for spelling and that this is the reverse of blending
- Multi-sensory activities. They should be interesting and engaging but firmly focused on intensifying the learning associated with its phonic goal.

### **The programme.**

- The programme is begun almost immediately children enter Reception; with the expectation that they will be fluent readers having secured word recognition skills by the end of key stage one.
- The pace of the programme is maintained.
- Enough time and priority are given to fully implement the programme; teaching of the programme is not necessarily limited to former NLS '20 minutes'.
- Teaching extends beyond 'dedicated time' and is applied and reinforced when appropriate throughout day.
- The programme is carried through until at least the point where children can read almost all words fluently.
- There is no mix-and-match of programmes.
- The programme should not neglect engaging and helpful approaches to the more challenging levels where children have to distinguish between less common grapheme and phoneme variants.
- Children should not be expected to use strategies such as whole-word recognition and/or cues from context, grammar, or pictures.



**All staff involved are fully trained in teaching the programme.**

- Training providers are accredited experts in the programme.
- Senior management are included in the training.
- All grades of teaching assistant are included if they are involved in supporting reading in any way.
- Ongoing refresher training is periodically provided.
- Training is provided for all new staff.

**Children practise early reading with fully decodable books that:**

- are matched to phonic knowledge and which do not require use of alternative strategies.' (National Curriculum)
- are closely matched to programme used (often integral)
- are fully decodable at child's current level and do not simply practise phoneme(s) most recently taught
- are not mixed with non-decodable books for independent reading practice
- include a controlled, small number of 'tricky words' the decoding of which has been specifically taught
- are continued in progressive sequence until a child can confidently decode words involving most common grapheme representations of all phonemes.

**A dedicated phonics lead teacher ensures quality, consistency and continuity of teaching**

- This is a teacher with expertise in and direct experience of teaching phonics.
- Responsibilities include monitoring, mentoring and modelling (Could also involve oversight of peer observation and co-development).
- They are given enough dedicated time to fulfil role.
- In consequence quality, consistency and continuity of teaching are all of high quality.

**Effective provision is made for all abilities**

- Grouping is appropriate for the school and effective in ensuring success for all abilities
- TAs are deployed and used to optimum effectiveness.
- Progress is continually assessed using a simple but effective system.
- Regular progress meetings are held.
- There is particularly close monitoring of children making slowest progress.
- Children in danger of falling behind, or who are working under expected levels (lower 20%), are swiftly identified and enough additional support provided to enable them to keep up.



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- Children experiencing significant difficulty are provided with intensive, individual support to reach required standard.
- The Y1 Phonics Screening Check is understood and valued as an assessment tool.
- There is no excessive preparation for the Y1 PSC.
- No pressure is put on children before, during or after the Y1 PSC.
- All 'catch-up' retains an SSP focus.

### **A 'can-do' attitude permeates everything with full expectation that all children will attain or exceed expected standards**

- Teacher and school expectations are positive and high for all children regardless of background.
- There is confidence that teaching the programme will ensure success.
- Children are continually praised and encouraged.
- Small-steps success is built in and celebrated.

### **Development of word-reading ability is fully balanced by the development of vocabulary, comprehension and a love of books**

- A wide range of high-quality books are read to, and shared with, children daily.
- There is frequent discussion of books.
- Children explore books through role-play, art, movement, etc.
- Teachers have extensive knowledge of children's books.
- Teachers practise reading aloud and can do so with enthusiasm and in engaging ways.
- Books have high profile around classrooms and school.
- The development of comprehension is not confused with using guessing strategies for word-reading.

### **Every effort is made to help parents and carers understand and support the school approach**

- They are helped to know how best to support children in learning sounds.
- Appropriate reading at home is strongly promoted; behaviours are modelled.
- Teachers ensure that they understand how to work appropriately (and differently) with decodable books and with shared 'real' books.