



Transforming children's lives  
through partnership and collaboration

## A Whole School Approach to Phonics at Woodside Primary School

### How Phonics is taught at Woodside Primary School

At Woodside Primary School, phonics is taught daily in all classes from Nursery to Year 3. By the end of the first term, children in Reception are grouped according to their ability. Children will move through the 6 phases of the DFES 'Letters and Sounds' publication. Each session is structured around four areas.

- Review – Practise previously learned *graphemes*
- Teach – Teach new *graphemes* and *tricky words*
- Practise – Practise *blending* and reading words with the new *GPC*. Practise *segmenting* and spelling words with the new *GPC*.
- Apply – Read or write a sentence using one or more High Frequency words and words containing new graphemes.

Our approach to learning phonics in EYFS and KS1 is through using 'Letters and Sounds: Principles and Practice of High Quality Phonics' as well as the 'Jolly Phonics' programme. We have a multisensory approach in EYFS and by using 'Jolly Phonics' the pupils are provided with a picture, a song and an action to help them learn each different sound. This is an effective and interactive way for young learners to recall *phonemes*.

'Letters and Sounds' provide us with games and resources to support our teaching of phonics. It aims to build pupils' speaking and listening skills. It sets out a detailed programme for teaching phonic skills, with the aim of pupils becoming fluent readers by age seven.

Children in KS2 continue to work through the phases of 'Letters and Sounds'. To support phonics in KS2, teachers use 'Read Write Inc' materials by Ruth Miskin to support the delivery of phonic teaching. 'Read Write Inc' is a carefully constructed teaching programme, with well matched resources and books, which provides a lively, structured, and above all, rigorous approach to the teaching of phonics. Children who are finding phonics difficult in KS2 will be given additional provision

## A Brief Overview of the 6 Phases of Phonics

### Phase 1

This phase is where the children will start in EYFS and it supports the development of children's speaking and listening skills. Children learn to listen carefully in order to discriminate between different sounds and noises.

### Phase 2

This is the start of the systematic phonic work. *Grapheme-phoneme correspondence* is introduced. The children learn to *blend* phonemes to be able to read words. They learn to *segment* whole words and to select letters to represent the *phonemes* through either writing the letters or using magnetic letters to *encode* words.

### Phase 3

This phase completes the teaching of all the sounds of the letters in the alphabet and then moves on to sounds represented by more than one letter (*digraphs*), learning one representation for each of the 42 *phonemes*.

### Phase 4

In this stage the children start to read and spell words containing *adjacent consonants*. There are no new *phonemes* taught within this phase.

### Phase 5

Teaching and learning within phase 5 looks at alternative spellings for some of the phonemes.

### Phase 6

This phase marks the transition between the end of Key Stage 1 and Lower Key Stage 2. Children focus on *prefixes* and *suffixes*. Words where letters are doubled such as *dripped* are learnt, as are words where letters are dropped. E.g. *come/coming*.

Throughout each of the phases the children will also be taught the 'tricky', high frequency words.

### **Helping your child with phonics**

Phonics works best when children are given plenty of encouragement and learn to enjoy reading and books. Parents play a very important part in helping with this. In Reception phonics homework is set each week.

### **Some simple steps to help your child learn to read through phonics:**

- Ask your child's class teacher about the school's approach to phonics and how you can reinforce this at home. For example, the teacher will be able to tell you which letters and sounds the class is covering in lessons each week.

- You can then highlight these sounds when you read with your child. Teaching how sounds match with letters is likely to start with individual letters such as 's', 'a' and 't' and then will move on to two-letter sounds such as 'ee', 'ch' and 'ck'.
- With all books, encourage your child to 'sound out' unfamiliar words and then blend the sounds together from left to right rather than looking at the pictures to guess. Once your child has read an unfamiliar word you can talk about what it means and help him or her to follow the story.
- Your child's teacher will also be able to suggest books with the right level of phonics for your child. These books are often called 'decodable readers' because the story is written with words made up of the letters your child has learnt. Your child will be able to work out new words from their letters and sounds, rather than just guessing.
- Try to make time to read with your child every day. Grandparents and older brothers or sisters can help, too. Encourage your child to blend the sounds all the way through a word.
- Word games like 'I-spy' can also be an enjoyable way of teaching children about sounds and letters. You can also encourage your child to read words from your shopping list or road signs to practise phonics.

## **Glossary**

*DFES*- Department for Education and Skills

*Grapheme*- the letters used to write a sound

*Phoneme*- the name for each sound used in words

*GPC*- grapheme, phoneme correspondence; the relationship between sounds and the letters which represent those sounds; also known as 'letter-sound correspondences'

*Blending* - to draw individual phonemes together to pronounce a word, e.g. s-n-a-p, blended together, reads snap.

*Segmenting*- to split up a word into its individual phonemes in order to spell it, e.g. the word 'cat' has three phonemes: /c/, /a/, /t/

*Digraphs* - two letters making one sound, e.g. sh, ch, th, ph.

*Adjacent consonants* - Adjacent consonants are two or more consonants that appear next to one another within a word and they each represent a different sound.

*Suffixes* - Suffixes are the addition of letters or words to the end of root words. These create new words and the most common suffixes are ed, ly, er and ful.

*Prefixes* - a syllable or group of syllables attached to the end of a word or root to change its meaning (s, ed, ing)