



At Ashfield Valley we care for and value every child in a nurturing, inclusive environment.

All members of our school community will work hard to ensure that every pupil achieves their full potential and has the opportunity to shine.

Phonics Policy

Reviewed: June 2024

Date of next review:
June 2025

Mission statement and aims

We are proud to be a happy, diverse and inclusive school where everybody matters. Our aim is to ensure all children are:

Articulate
Knowledgeable
Able to learn beyond the classroom
Curious
Included
Inspired

Intent

Phonics is the building blocks of reading and writing and equips children with the skills needed to become independent readers and writers. At Ashfield Valley, we are committed to ensuring that all children are taught the sounds and how to match them to letters and decode the words in order to read them. This is an essential skill for them to become competent readers and skilled writers.

Rationale

Phonics is:

- The knowledge of how the alphabetic sounds work and how these sounds are combined to correspond to the spoken word.
- Phonemes that are sounds, which are made by blending letters to correspond to the spoken word.
- Graphemes, which are the written equivalent of phonemes.

If children are to develop as competent readers and writers, it is vitally important that they have a secure understanding of the letter sounds and corresponding graphemes, as well as the spelling system of the English language.

Aims

- To teach pupils aural discrimination, phonemic awareness and rhyme awareness in order to encourage good spelling.
- To encourage repetition and consolidation, so that spelling becomes automatic.
- To provide the knowledge and skills in order for 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 age appropriate key 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.

Organisation

At Ashfield Valley we use the DfE approved Unlocking Letters and Sounds scheme. The children are assessed half-termly from The Foundation Stage to the end of Key Stage 1. These assessments are

recorded and progress tracked using the phonics tracker. Unlocking Letters and Sounds has a progression map which

Teaching of Phonics

At Ashfield Valley we use the DfE approved Unlocking Letters and Sounds scheme. It is a highly effective program in addressing the school aims by improving phonic knowledge and skills. Any children who have not achieved the expected standard in phonics by the end of Year 1 must continue to be taught using the program in Year 2. The programme supports children in Foundation Stage working towards achieving the objectives of the Early Learning Goals for Literacy and the transition of this into Key Stage One.

The teaching of phonics is right from the beginning of Nursery. We begin by looking at sound discrimination, phonological awareness, rhyme, oral blending and segmenting. This phase reflects the development stages for communication, language and literacy in the Early Years Foundation Stage. It paves the way for a programme of systematic phonic work to begin. Phonics sessions in the Nursery are to be taught daily by teachers and teaching assistants lasting for 15 minutes. In addition, constant and enhanced activities are to be set up in the environment for children to access during their independent learning time. Phase 2 phonics is taught when appropriate.

We begin teaching phonics in the first week of Reception and children make rapid progress in their reading journey. Children begin to learn the main sounds heard in the English Language and how they can be represented, as well as learning 'Common Exception' words for Phases 2, 3 and 4. They use these sounds to read and write simple words, captions and sentences. Children leave Reception being able to apply the phonemes taught within Phase 2, 3 and 4.

Planning

We follow a detailed progression for Unlocking Letters and Sounds which shows the Grapheme Phoneme Correspondences and Common Exception Words that are taught on a week-by-week basis. A separate chart is also available showing how the Ransom Reading Stars programme of reading books matches the Unlocking Letters and Sounds progression. At least two new fully-decodable reading books are available to read every week, for all Phases.

Assessment

Assessment for learning should occur through the entire phonics lesson, enabling teachers/ teaching assistants to adapt their teaching/input to meet the children's needs.

Children with specific gaps in their learning will complete a phonics intervention in order to 'plug the gaps'. This will be planned by the class teacher and delivered daily, where possible, by a teacher or teaching assistant. At the end of the intervention, children will be reassessed in order to track the progress from start to finish.

The children are assessed half-termly and these assessments are recorded and progress tracked using the phonics tracker. Children in Year One sit the Year 1 phonics screening test during the summer term. Children who do not reach the pass level on the Year 1 phonics screening test will be retested the following summer.

Benchmarks:

By the end of Year one all children will:

- Have learned phonetic decoding to an age appropriate standard.
- Give the sound when shown any grapheme taught.
- Blend phonemes in order to read words.
- Know most of the common grapheme-phoneme correspondences.
- Read phonetically decodable one syllable and two syllable words.
- Apply phonics knowledge and skill in order to read unfamiliar words and those which are not completely decodable.
- Recognise and read frequently encountered words automatically.
- Read three-syllable, phonically decodable words.
- Read a range of age appropriate texts fluently.
- Demonstrate an understanding of age appropriate texts.
- Read by the age of 6.

SEND

Phonics teaching is made accessible to as many pupils as possible and adjustments to schemes of work will be made as required. Teachers will liaise with the English coordinator and SENDCO in order to analyse how children with specific needs respond to the teaching of phonics. It is the role of the teacher to ensure that every child in their class has equal and balanced access to the teaching of phonics and to ensure that it is differentiated appropriately.