



# Phonics Teaching and Learning

## A guide for families

### What is the phonics?

Phonics is a way of teaching children how to read and write. It helps children hear, identify and use different sounds that distinguish one word from another. Phonics involves matching the sounds of spoken English with individual letters or groups of letters. Teaching children to blend the sounds of letters together helps them decode unfamiliar or unknown words by sounding them out.

### What does phonics teaching look like?

At Middleforth we have fidelity to the teaching of Phonics through the use of Pearson's Phonics Bug which provides a systematic synthetic phonics approach. Daily phonics sessions are fun and lively, involving lots of phonics games. The focus is on children's active participation. They learn to apply their phonic knowledge for reading and writing activities. Each phonics session follows the 'Revisit, teach, practise, apply' approach where children revisit previously taught sounds and high frequency or tricky words. Children are then taught a new sound or strategy which they practise and then apply to their reading and writing. Phonics teaching is divided into six phases, with each phase building on the skills and knowledge of the previous learning.

### When do children start to develop phonic skills?

At Middleforth phonics teaching begins with our Middleforth Minis in nursery, where children are immersed and attuned to the sounds around them. Phonics teaching continues through Reception through to Year 3 where required.

### Supporting Phonics Teaching both in school and at home

Children in Early Years through to Year 3 are offered access to Phonics Bug Club both in and out of school. Bug Club is an online reading world which offers eBooks and games to support the phonics teaching that has taken place in school that week. Books up to phase 5 are fully decodable, and the eBooks in the online reading world offer audio to help with pronunciation. Quizzes and games based on the phonics teaching taken place that week are also available along with notes for parents to help support their children in developing their phonics skills.

### Assessment

Children are regularly assessed by staff during lessons. At the end of each unit of teaching or phonics phase children may be asked to read a range of words appropriate to the phase being taught and teachers will always be looking for evidence of phonics being applied in written work.

### The National Phonics Screening Check

This is a statutory assessment comprising of a list of 40 words; some real and some pseudo, or 'alien' words as the children refer to them. The assessment is carried out by the Class Teacher in a relaxed and quiet area on a one-to-one basis. Should your child not meet the expected standard in Year 1, they will be offered to take part in the phonics intervention programme in Year 2, where they will re-take the assessment in the Summer Term of Year 2.

### What if my child struggles with phonics or does not meet the expected standard in the Phonics Screening check?

Children identified as requiring phonics intervention will take part in the Lancashire Fast Track phonics or Bounce Back Phonics booster programme. Fast Track Phonics and Bounce Back Phonics have been developed to support children in Year 2 who did not achieve at the expected level in the Year 1 Phonics Check. Both programmes are designed to address gaps in learning and are run separately to the daily phonics lesson. These booster / intervention programmes are delivered by the classes Teaching Assistant, who are trained in delivering phonics teaching.

### How can I help my child?

- Let your child see you enjoying reading yourself – they are influenced by you and what you value!
- Immerse your child in a love of reading.
- Visit the library, when safe to do so.
- Make time for your child to read home reading books to you regularly, encourage them by pointing to the words.
- Help your child practise key words and sounds found on the inside cover of their home reading book.
- Encourage your child to access Phonics Bug to practise phonics learning taken place that week in school.
- Communicate with your child's Class Teacher through their Home/School reading record or via SeeSaw.
- Make up nonsense (alien) words for names of toys or things around them.
- Play online phonics games.

### Online Games

Phonics Bug: All children should have their own login to access the site.

Phonics Play : <https://www.phonicsplay.co.uk/> (Free games are available on this website)

Letters and Sounds : <https://www.letters-and-sounds.com> (Free games are available on this website)