

Phonics

At Cuddington and Dinton phonics is taught daily to all children in Reception and Key Stage One (year 1 and 2). We use the Letters and Sounds programme to teach children the letters of the alphabet and their corresponding sounds. We sometimes use songs and actions from 'Jolly Phonics' to help embed the kinaesthetic approach.

What is phonics?

Phonics is a way of teaching children to read quickly and skilfully. They are taught how to:

- * Recognise the sounds that individual letters make
- * Identify the sounds that different combinations of letters make-such as 'sh' or 'oo'
- * Blend these sounds together from left to right to make a word

Children can then use this knowledge to decode new words that they hear or see. This is the first important step in learning to read. The children are taught to read words by blending, which means pushing all the sounds together to make a word. The children are taught to spell words by segmenting, which means sounding out words and writing down the sounds they can hear.

By the end of Foundation class children are expected to be secure in Phase Three phonics. By the end of Year One children are expected to be secure in Phase Five phonics. When finishing Key Stage One, most children at Cuddington and Dinton should be secure in Phase Six phonics. This final phase moves away from learning sounds and focuses on spelling rules and patterns. Teaching of phonics will continue into Year 3 if children are not secure with their phonic knowledge.

Why phonics?

“Research shows that when phonics is taught in a structured way, starting with the easiest sounds and progressing through to the most complex, it is the most effective way of teaching young children to read. It is particularly helpful for children aged 5 to 7 years.

Almost all children who receive good teaching of phonics will learn the skills that they need to tackle new words. They can then go on to read any kind of text fluently and confidently, and read for enjoyment.” (Learning to read through phonics, Department for Education)

How is phonics taught at Cuddington and Dinton?

Phonics is taught for twenty minutes daily. Children in years 1 and 2 are set into smaller phonics groups, matching the phase of phonics they ready to learn. This allows higher teaching ratios in the smaller groups and children focusing on their specific learning needs. Foundation class are ready to set for phonics from the Spring term; this is reviewed on an individual basis. Children who are ready will then be moved into the phased phonics groupings to ensure taught sessions match their phonic ability. Phonics is used and encouraged within all areas of learning and supported through the use of learning resources within the classroom.

How and when is phonics assessed?

Children in Foundation, year 1 and 2 are baselined at the beginning of the year and set accordingly, as detailed above. Teacher judgement is relied upon to ensure children are taught in

the correct phase that matches their phonic ability. At the end of every half term children are re-assessed and moved accordingly.

At the end of year 1 all children take a 'Phonics Screening' test, which involves reading 40 real and nonsense words. A child's ability to segment, blend and read the word is assessed. We call the nonsense words 'Alien words'; children are familiar with this concept through rigorous practice. Please [click here](#) to see an example of a previous years' test.

How is phonics planned?

Phonics is planned through a 4-part lesson – review, teach, practise and apply.

Below are some links to information and websites that you may find useful to help you support your child in their early reading and writing skills.

- Articulation of Phonemes: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BqhXUW_v-1s
- Phonics Play: <https://new.phonicsplay.co.uk/>
- Letters and Sounds: <http://www.letters-and-sounds.com/>
- ICT games, Forest Phonics:
<http://ictgames.com/forestPhonics/forestPhonicsOnline/index.html>
- ICT games, Dinosaur Eggs: http://www.ictgames.com/dinosaurEggs_phonics/
- ICT games: <http://www.ictgames.com/literacy.html>
- DfE Learning to read through phonics: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/learning-to-read-through-phonics-information-for-parents>
- DfE Teaching higher level phonics: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/teaching-the-higher-levels-of-phonics>