

# TICKHILL ESTFELD PRIMARY SCHOOL

## PHONICS AND EARLY READING POLICY

### RATIONALE / INTENT

At Tickhill Estfeld Primary School we are committed to the delivery of excellence in the teaching of Phonics. We aim to nurture each child so that they are able to read with fluency and understanding as well as developing a love of reading that will stay with them all their lives. Being able to read is the most important skill children will learn during their early schooling and has far reaching implications for life-long confidence and well-being. The teaching of systematic, synthetic phonics is recognised as the most effective way to teach children to read and spell words. From the earliest stages children's speaking and listening skills are developed to ensure their phonics learning gets off to the best possible start.

### Phonics and Spelling

At Tickhill Estfeld Primary School, we believe that all our children can become fluent readers and writers. This is why we teach phonics through Floppy's Phonics. Floppy's Phonics is a rigorous, systematic synthetic phonics programme that provides a comprehensive and multi-sensory approach to support teaching and learning in school and at home. We begin teaching phonics in Reception from the second week children start with us, considering their individual phonics journey up that point. We ensure children build on their growing knowledge of the alphabetic code, mastering to read and spell with phonics as they move through school.

As a result, all our children are able to tackle any unfamiliar words as they read. We also model the application of the alphabetic code through phonics in shared reading and writing, both inside and outside of the phonics lesson and across the curriculum. We have a strong focus on language development for our children because we know that speaking and listening are crucial skills for reading and writing in all subjects.

By the time children leave us, they read confidently for meaning and regularly enjoy reading for pleasure. Our readers are equipped with the tools to tackle unfamiliar vocabulary. We encourage our children to see themselves as readers for both pleasure and purpose.

Because we believe teaching every child to read is so important, we have a Phonics and Early Reading Lead and an English Lead who work closely together to drive the early reading programme in our school. These leaders work continuously to monitor and support all staff in school delivering phonics teaching, so everyone teaches with fidelity to the Floppy's Phonics programme.

## AIMS/ IMPLEMENTATION

We use Floppy's Phonics to deliver daily engaging phonics lessons. In phonics, we teach children that the alphabetic code represents a different sound, that these can be used in a variety of combinations and are put together to make words. The children learn to recognise all of the different sounds and combinations that they might see when they are reading or writing. Alongside the alphabetic code children learn a series of 'Helpful Words' in line with the Floppy's Phonics Programme. Our phonics teaching starts in Reception and follows a very specific sequence that allows our children to build on their previous phonic knowledge and master specific phonic strategies as they move through school. Every teacher in our school has been trained to teach phonics and early reading, so we have the same expectations of progress. We all use the same language, routines and resources to teach children to read so that we lower children's cognitive load.

Phonics Pathways aligned to the Floppy's Phonics programme for Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 can be found on the school website. These show the sequence of the grapheme phoneme correspondences and alphabetic code that children will be taught throughout each year.

In Reception and Key Stage 1 you will see a dedicated Phonics display highlighting the current alphabetic code children are learning alongside others they have previously learnt. Children are encouraged to use the display as a reference to help support their independent learning.

### Reception

Children follow the progression within the Floppy's Phonics programme. Phonics is taught daily following a two-session approach; two distinct sessions so that the children can enjoy the benefits of collective whole class teaching, followed by opportunities where they are able to fully concentrate on their own learning. These two direct sessions allow for revision and revisiting of sounds previously learnt, teaching of a focus sound and alphabetic code, opportunities to practise and apply this learning. Each week, there is also a consolidation lesson to revise previous learning through reading practise. Phonics teaching starts by week 2 in Reception to ensure children make a strong start and by the end of Reception children will have been taught the alphabetic code up to the end of Oxford Level 3.

Session 1 is approximately a 30 mins (this is usually less at the beginning of the year and children build up to this) teacher led session focusing on the introduction of sounds and graphemes, as well as modelling and practising the skills of blending, segmenting and handwriting, using flashcards, a frieze and activities on the interactive whiteboard.

Session 2 provides a revise and apply routine where the children can focus on their own learning at their own level. This session comprises an adult led session and then children complete a task or activity sheet relating to their learning.

In addition to the teacher led sessions, purposeful, planned activities are available to support incidental learning whilst the children access continuous provision. These activities support the Floppy's Phonics programme and encourage children to consolidate their learning. A teaching member of staff is available to support children throughout these tasks.

## Year 1

Children follow the progression within the Floppy's Phonics programme. Phonics is taught daily following a two-session approach; two distinct sessions so that the children can enjoy the benefits of collective whole class teaching, followed by opportunities where they are able to fully concentrate on their own learning. These two direct sessions allow for revision and revisiting of sounds previously learnt, teaching of a focus sound and alphabetic code, opportunities to practise and apply this learning. Each week, there is also a consolidation lesson to revise previous learning through reading practise. Phonics teaching starts by week 2 in Year 1 and revises the Oxford level 1, 2, and 3 to ensure children have retained previous learning. By the end of Year 1 children will have been taught the alphabetic code up to the end of Oxford Level 5 which includes alternative alphabetic codes for previously known phonemes.

Session 1 is approximately a 30 mins teacher led session focusing on the introduction of sounds and graphemes, as well as modelling and practising the skills of blending, segmenting and handwriting, using flashcards, a frieze and activities on the interactive whiteboard.

Session 2 provides a revise and apply routine where the children can focus on their own learning at their own level. This session comprises an adult led session and then children complete a task or activity sheet relating to their learning.

In addition to the teacher led sessions, purposeful, planned activities are available to support incidental learning whilst the children access continuous provision. These activities support the Floppy's Phonics programme and encourage children to consolidate their learning. A teaching member of staff is available to support children throughout these tasks.

Children in Year 1 are also provided with the opportunity to enhance their reading comprehension skills further through a weekly guided reading session. The texts used in guided reading are part of the phonetically matched and aligned system used in school and support children in developing their vocabulary, inference, predicting, sequencing and retrieval skills. These sessions take place during the consolidation process of learning.

## Year 2

Children in year 2 recap any gaps in their phonics knowledge in the autumn term. Year 2 use the Floppy's Phonics resources to support spelling work and using the alphabetic code to recognise spelling patterns.

## Floppy's Friends - Intervention group

During phonics lessons a member of staff known to the children will support children in their learning. Alongside quality first teaching, any child who needs additional practice has daily keep-up support, taught by a fully trained adult. Keep-up lessons match the structure of class teaching, and use the same procedures, resources and mantras, but in smaller steps with more repetition, so that every child secures their learning.

The group takes place on the same day as the lesson and will recap any aspect of the work children are struggling with that day. Children will then get the opportunity to focus on that alphabetic code again and complete activities to support their learning.

If any child in Year 2 to Year 6 has gaps in their phonic knowledge when reading or writing, is not fully fluent at reading or has not passed the Phonics Screening Check they will also access a Floppy's Friends group. These short, sharp lessons last 20 minutes and take place at least three times a week.

### Vocabulary and Language development

*"The limits of my language are the limits of my mind.  
All I know is what I have words for."  
Ludwig Wittgenstein (1933)*

At Tickhill Estfeld we are acutely aware of the importance of vocabulary and language acquisition for young children and more importantly, how the lack of learning and understanding new vocabulary can impact children significantly.

The Oxford Language (2018) report 'Why Closing the Word Gap Matters' found that the word gap significantly impacts achievement for children. The National Curriculum also states that children should have access to a wide range of vocabulary throughout each year group.

With this in mind, we ensure that phonics lessons throughout school focus on providing children with exposure to a range of vocabulary carefully chosen to support learning. Time is allocated in each lesson for children to explore any new or challenging vocabulary and discuss its meaning. Children are also encouraged to use new and existing vocabulary in context.

### Reading Practise

At Tickhill Estfeld Primary School, all children are given opportunities to develop their reading skills throughout all areas of the curriculum.

Alongside this, every child has an individual reading book that they can take home to share with an adult.

In Reception and Key Stage 1 these books are carefully matched to a child's need depending on their phonics development.

Our reading scheme is matched to the Floppy's Phonics levels and has a range of fiction and non-fiction, fully decodable books alongside books which aim to develop children's comprehension skills. Children in Reception begin their reading journey with wordless books and adults at home are supported to participate in engaging 'book talk' with their child.

The books at the beginning of each stage in Level 1- Level 5 are partner texts and again, support parents in engaging in 'book talk' with their child.

Children will continue to read books from the book scheme beyond level 5. Staff in school aim to hear each child read individually each week and children are encouraged to read independently or to an adult at home every night.

Children have a reading record where messages regarding a child's reading journey can be shared between home and school. As the children progress through the school, they are encouraged to write their own comments and keep a list of the books/authors that they have read.

Any child needing additional support in reading will be assigned a Book Buddy within school, they will meet once a week to share their book with a more able reader.

These children are also heard read more frequently by adults in school.

## Reading for pleasure

As a school we pride ourselves on our text rich curriculum, we value reading for pleasure highly and work hard as a school to grow our reading for pleasure pedagogy.

- We read to children every day. We choose these books carefully as we want children to experience a wide range of books, including books that reflect the children at Tickhill Estfeld Primary School and our local community as well as books that open windows into other worlds and cultures.
- Every classroom has an inviting book corner that encourages a love for reading. We curate these books and talk about them to entice children to read a wide range of books. Key books are on display in each class to show links to other areas of learning in the curriculum.
- Reception and Year 1 children have access to the reading corner every day in their independent learning time and the books are continually refreshed.
- We participate in events and visits to our local library when these are available and relevant to our children. We promote wider reading engagement with Doncaster Library and other Library services.
- The school library is made available for classes to use weekly. Children across the school have regular opportunities to engage with a wide range of reading for pleasure events (author visits and workshops, national events etc).

## IMPACT

Through the teaching of systematic phonics, our aim is for children to become confident and enthusiastic readers, who are motivated and resilient to learn, reflect on what they have read and can share cooperatively with others their independent ideas about what they have read.

This learning is supported by our whole school reading programme detailed 'Reading at Estfeld'

### Assessment

Assessment is used to monitor progress and to identify any child needing additional support as soon as they need it. Floppy's Phonics assessments are used from level 1 - level 5.

#### **Assessment for learning is used:**

- daily within class to identify children needing keep-up support
- weekly in the consolidation lesson to assess gaps, address these immediately and secure fluency of GPCs, words and spellings.

#### **Summative assessment is used:**

- throughout the year to assess progress, to identify gaps in learning that need to be addressed, to identify any children needing additional support and to plan the support that they need.
- by the Phonics and Early Reading Lead and the English Lead to narrow attainment gaps between different groups of children and so that any additional support for teachers can be put into place.

### Statutory Assessment

Children in Year 1 sit the Phonics Screening Check. Any child not passing the check re-sits it in Year 2.

