Phonics Screening Check

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What is phonics?



- Reading is fundamental to education and proficiency in reading, writing and spoken language is vital for our children's success.
- Phonics is an effective way of teaching children to read.
- Understanding that the letters on the page represent the sounds in spoken words, underpins successful word reading and spelling.
- Through phonics, children are taught how to:
  - recognise the sounds that each individual letter makes;
  - 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.

What is the Phonic Screening Check?

- The Phonics Screening Check is a mandatory assessment that is designed to give teachers information on how your child is progressing in phonics.

- It helps to identify whether your child needs additional support at this stage so that they do not fall behind in this vital early reading skill.



What is the Phonic Screening Check?



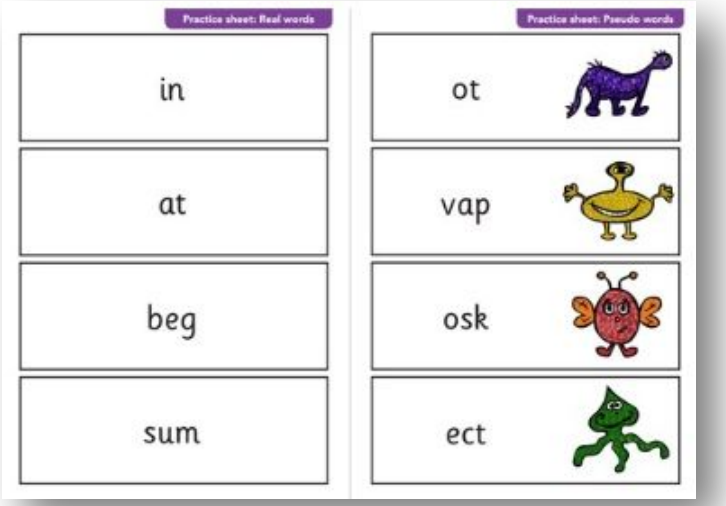
- Children in year 1 throughout the country will all be taking part in a phonics screening check during the same week in June.
- Children in year 2 will also take the check if they did not achieve the required result when in year 1, or they have not taken the test before.
- The phonics screening check is designed to confirm whether individual children have learnt phonic decoding and blending skills to an appropriate standard.

What happens during the screening?

- The screening paper contains 40 words.
- The list of words the children read is a combination of 20 real words and 20 pseudo words (nonsense or ‘alien’ words).
- Each child will sit one-to-one and read each word aloud to a teacher.
- The screening will take approximately 10 minutes per child, although all children are different and will complete the check at their own pace.

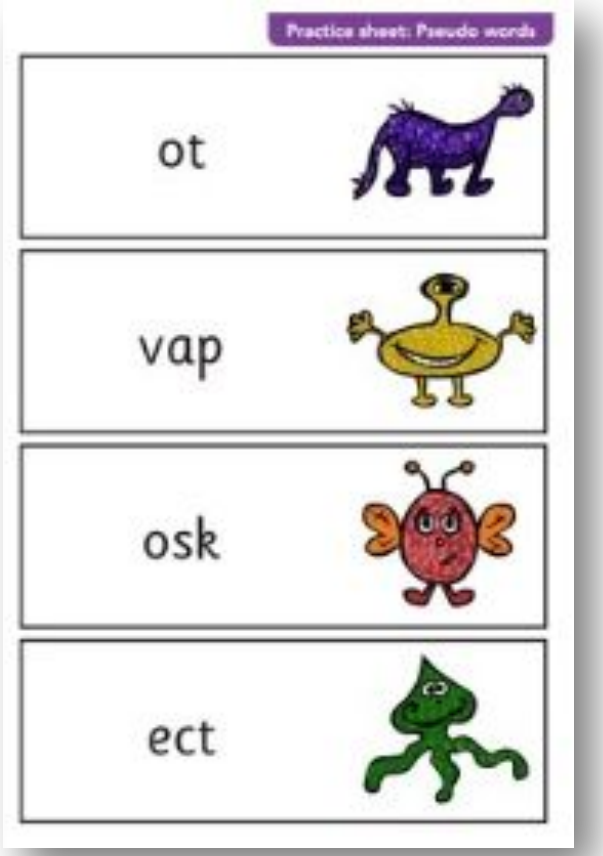
Section 1			
Word	Correct	Incorrect	Comment
sut			
yad			
dop			
uct			
meck			
shig			
joil			
chort			
blem			
drell			
fusp			
quisk			
shop			
yell			
peel			
check			
plug			
sweep			
soft			
yards			

Section 2			
Word	Correct	Incorrect	Comment
vaw			
meast			
waib			
zome			
brend			
throst			
stret			
spraw			
few			
fried			
beak			
cute			
crust			
trails			
strip			
scraps			
label			
vanish			
blossom			
thankful			



Pseudo words (nonsense or ‘alien’ words)

- The pseudo words will be shown to your child with a picture of an alien. This provides the children with a context for the pseudo word which is independent from any existing vocabulary they may have.
- Pseudo words are included because they will be new to all pupils; they do not favour children with a good vocabulary knowledge or visual memory of words.
- The children are aware that an alien is telling them that the word is NOT real, and they must simply decode the word and not try to make sense of it.



When is the Phonic Screening Check?

- The 2027 Phonics Screening Check or Phonics Screening Test will happen the week commencing Monday 14th June 2027.
- Primary schools will receive the test materials the week before, but we (teachers) will not see them until this date.
- The screening process will last the whole week, and your child will be screened at some point during that week.
- The whole process is incredibly low-key, with the children having been exposed to practise screeners several times throughout the school year.

Reporting to parents

- By the end of the summer term all schools must report each child's results to their parents. They will also confirm if the child has met the standard threshold.
- Children who do not achieve the expected level will retake the test when they are in year 2.

How are the results used?

- Results from the check will be used by schools to analyse their own performance and for Ofsted to use in inspections.

How can I help my child at home?

Regular practise of both the phonics sounds and reading real and nonsense words is the best way to help prepare a child for the phonics screening.

Please check out the ideas below for some ways to support your child at home:

- Play lots of sound and listening games with your child.
- Read as much as possible to and with your child.
- Encourage and praise – get them to have a ‘good guess’.
- If your child is struggling to decode a word, help them by encouraging them to say each sound in the word from left to right.
- Blend the sounds by pointing to each one, e.g. /c/ in cat, /p/ in pat, /ng/ in sing, /ee/ in been. Next move your finger under the whole word as you say it.
- Discuss the meaning of words if your child does not know what they have read.

How can I help my child at home?

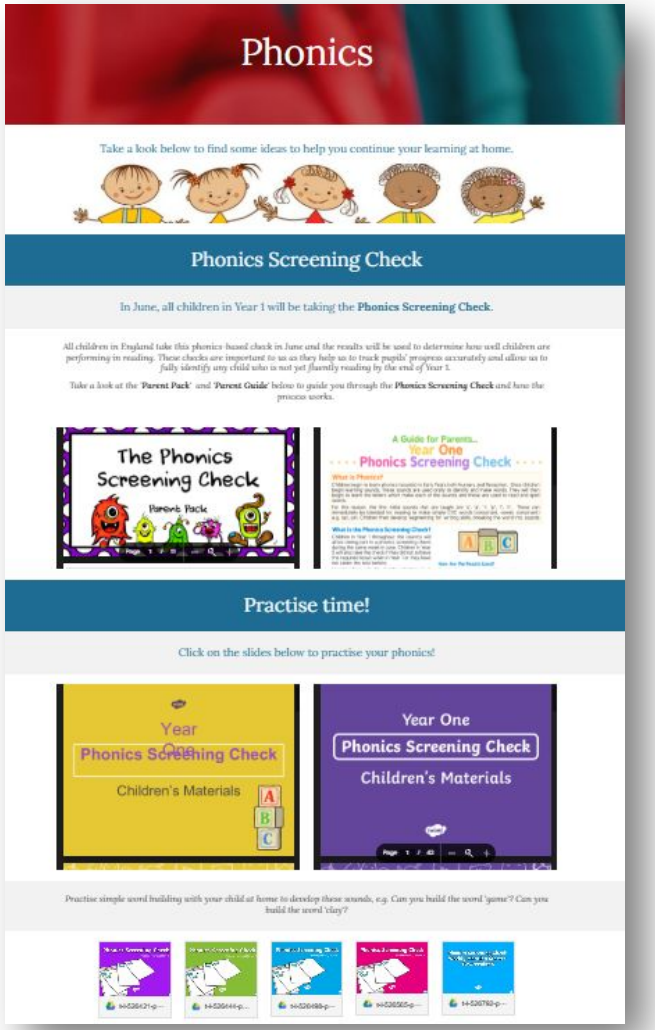
Links to fun games to play at home:

- Spooky sounds is a fun game good for practising targeted phonics sounds.
- A bingo game good for children reading words with targeted sounds in them.
- A fun word generator to create words for children to read focusing on targeted sounds.
- A great online word search game to help children read words with varieties of sounds.
- A good range of free games for phase 4 phonics*.
- A good range of free games for phase 5 phonics*.
- Phonics play is a very useful website. Under the 'resources' tab on this website there are lots of fun games to play. Particularly useful are the 'flash card speed trial' to help with learning individual sounds, and the 'buried treasure', 'dragon’s den' or 'picnic on Pluto' games for practising reading real and nonsense words.

How can I help my child at home?

- There are also lots of resources available on the HPP website.
- You can access these by clicking on the ‘Learning’ tab and following the links to the phonics page.





Questions?


2025 national curriculum assessments
Key stage 1
Phonics screening check
Pupils' materials