



18.3.22

Dear Parents and Carers,

**Information on the phonics screening check for Year 1 Children – June 2022**

**What is the Phonics Screening Check?**

The Year 1 phonics screening check is a statutory assessment that all schools must administer. The phonics screening check is taken individually by all children in Year 1 in June. It is designed to give teachers and parent's information on how your child is progressing in phonics.

**What is in the Phonics Screening Check?**

The Phonics Screening check consists of 40 words that assess phonics skills and knowledge learned throughout Reception and Year 1. There is a combination of 20 real words and 20 'pseudo-words' (nonsense words/'alien' words). Children complete the check on a 1:1 basis with their class teacher. There is no time limit but children normally complete the check in one sitting (around 5-10 minutes).

It is not a stressful situation: your child's class teacher will be well-equipped to listen and understand your child's level of skills. There will be a few practice words first to make sure your child understands the activity and feels comfortable.

**What are nonsense/pseudo words and why are they included?**

These are words that are phonically decodable but are not actual words with an associated meaning e.g. brip, snorb. Pseudo words are included in the check specifically to assess whether your child can decode a word using phonics skills and not their word memory.

The pseudo words will be shown to your child with a picture of an alien and they will be asked to tell their teacher what sort of alien it is by reading the word. This not only makes the check a bit more fun, but provides the children with a context for the nonsense word which is independent from any existing vocabulary they may have. Crucially, it does not provide any clues, so your child just has to be able to decode these words.





### **Is there a pass mark?**

Since first introducing the phonics screening check, the government has set the 'pass rate' at 32 marks (out of 40). If children do not reach the required standard, then we will offer additional, tailored support to ensure that your child can catch up. Children progress at different speeds so not reaching the threshold score does not necessarily mean there is a serious problem.

### **How do we support children in school?**

Since the start of the autumn term, we have been following a comprehensive whole class phonic programme that has built on the children's learning in Reception. We also carry out assessments in the autumn and spring term to identify any children who may require some additional small group phonics teaching.

### **How can you support your child at home?**

We will be completing the phonics screener in June so it is important that over the Easter break, and in the weeks leading up to the check, at home you:

- Recap the phonics sounds that the children have been learning.
- Provide lots of opportunities for children to practise blending and segmenting sounds through reading books or flash cards.
- Play lots of sound and listening games with your child.
- Make use of any personalised resources that may be sent home to target the sounds that your child needs to focus on.

Please also continue to check the school's home support website where there is additional information and links to useful websites and resources to use with your child at home.

If your child is struggling to decode a word, it is important to 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. Discuss the meaning of words if your child does not know what they have read.





**What happens to the results?**

We will report your child's results in the summer term end of year report. If you have any questions, do talk to your child's class teacher. We will use this information to help inform our teaching and support children to continue to develop their phonics skills for reading and writing. Children will have either have met the expected standard or not met the expected standard in which case they will have the opportunity to retake in Year 2 in June 2023.

Yours Sincerely,

Claire Tester  
Head of School

