



PHONICS at DULWICH WOOD

Curriculum

At Dulwich Wood, we place a strong emphasis on the teaching of phonics in the early years of reading and writing in order to give all children a solid foundation for learning.

Phonics is a way of teaching children how to read and write by developing their phonemic awareness—the ability to hear, identify, and manipulate different sounds used in the English language. Children learn the correspondence between these sounds and the spelling patterns (graphemes) that represent them. As not all words in the English language comply to the rules of phonics, we also explore the ‘tricky’ parts in the common exception words.

We follow the Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised expectations of progress:

- Children in Reception are taught to read and spell words using Phase 2 and 3 Grapheme Phoneme Correspondences (GPCs), and words with adjacent consonants (Phase 4) with fluency and accuracy.
- Children in Year 1 review Phase 3 and 4 and are taught to read and spell words using Phase 5 GPCs with fluency and accuracy.

Intent

We endeavour to ensure that by the end of their primary education, all our children become fluent, confident and enthusiastic life-long readers and writers. This is why we teach phonics and early reading through the Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised, which is a complete systematic synthetic phonics programme.

We start teaching phonics early in Reception and follow Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised progression, to ensure children build on their growing knowledge of the alphabetic code, mastering phonics to read and spell as they move through the school.

This provides our children with the skills to tackle any unfamiliar words as they read. We model the application of the alphabetic code through phonics in shared reading and writing, both inside and outside 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.



Implementation

Daily phonics lessons in Reception and Year 1

We teach phonics for 30 minutes a day. In Reception, we build from 10-minute lessons, with additional daily oral blending games, to the full-length lesson as quickly as possible. Each Friday, we review the week's teaching to help children become fluent readers.

Children make a strong start in Reception: teaching begins in Week 4 of the Autumn term.

In Year 1, children will continue on the Little Wandle progression with daily phonics lessons, again with a review day on Friday to secure their understanding of the newly taught GPCs for the week.

Daily Keep-up lessons ensure every child learns to read

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 has the opportunity to secure their learning.

For any children in Year 2 who are not fully fluent at reading or have not passed the Phonics Screening Check, teachers will use the Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised assessments to identify the gaps in their phonic knowledge and teach to these using the Keep-up resources – at pace. This is to ensure that these children are able to catch up, so the gap between themselves and their peers does not widen.

Impact

Assessment is used to monitor progress and to identify any child needing additional support as soon as they need it.

Assessment for learning is used:

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

Summative assessment is used:

- every six weeks to assess progress, to identify gaps in learning that need to be addressed, to identify any children needing additional support and to plan the Keep-up support that they need.
- by SLT and the Reading Lead to scrutinise the Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised assessment tracker, so that any additional support from teachers can be put into place in order to narrow attainment gaps between different groups of children.

Statutory assessment

Children in Year 1 sit the Phonics Screening Check. Any child that does not pass the check receives additional phonics 'keep-up' interventions in order to re-sit the PSC in Year 2.