

# Mexborough St John The Baptist C of E Primary School

Sedgefield Way, Mexborough, South Yorkshire, S64 0BE.



*We love and value all of God's children, creating an inclusive environment that helps all to flourish.*



## 2 Minute Read – Approach to Phonics

At Mexborough St John the Baptist we are dedicated to giving children the best start to reading through the teaching of systematic synthetic phonics; we follow Little Wandle Letters and Sounds. Phonics approaches aim to quickly develop pupils' word recognition and spelling through developing pupils' ability to hear, identify and manipulate phonemes (the smallest unit of spoken language), and to teach them the relationship between phonemes and the graphemes (written letters or combinations of letters) that represent them.

### How we teach phonics at MSJ

#### **In F1 the teaching of phonics is implemented by:**

- Daily phonics teaching
- Following of the 'foundations for phonics' Little Wandle programme.
- Lots of oral blending, phonic games and rhyme time.
- Teaching of GPCs (grapheme / phoneme correspondence).
- Developing book behaviours, listening to stories and developing early comprehension skills (by answering questions about the stories that have been read to them).
- Use of memorable pictures, rhymes and mnemonics to retain sounds.

#### **In F2 and Year One the teaching of phonics is implemented by:**

- Daily phonics teaching
- Reading practise three times a week focussing on fluency, prosody and comprehension skills in order to apply what they have learned.
- Learning GPCs and tricky words.
- 'Grow the code'; in Year 1, children learn alternative GPCs until they have learned most graphemes to make each sound (e.g. 'ai' and 'ay' both make the same sound but 'ai' is usually in the middle of a word and 'ay' usually comes at the end of a word).

#### **In Year Two the teaching of phonics is implemented by:**

- Daily phonics and grammar teaching, following Little Wandle's spelling scheme.
- 'Complete the code'; children learn to complete all GPCs and every grapheme.
- Tailored phonics interventions for anyone still working on phases 2-5.
- Rapid catch-up interventions for identified children.



### **In Key Stage Two the teaching of phonics is implemented by:**

- Tailored interventions for children who are still working through the scheme.

### **For SEN children the teaching of phonics is implemented by:**

- SEN children who are able follow the same phonics sessions as their whole class.
- If needed, tailored interventions may be put in place.
- Some children will follow the Little Wandle SEN programme, taking a slower pace with a more condensed list of GPCs to learn.

### **What does a phonics lesson look like?**

Most phonics lessons will follow the same structure:

1. Speedy sounds – children will look at graphemes they know already to recap previous learning.
2. Read words with sounds they should already know to recap and build fluency.
3. Read 'tricky words' that they should already know.
4. Introduction of a new grapheme.
5. Oral blending of words including the new GPC.
6. Reading new words to apply the new sound.
7. Reading a sentence to build fluency and apply new GPCs in context.
8. Learn a new tricky word.
9. Spelling: usually two words with the new GPC and their new tricky word.

Lots of these sections of the lesson will include 'shuffle time' as well as opportunities to read both independently and together as a group. Children will be taught to segment (sound out / break down) and blend (put all the sounds back together to read the word). They will be taught to use segmenting fingers, to read silently and aloud as well as to identify GPCs on their own and within words.

### **Phonics screening check**

The phonics screening check is a standardised test taken by all Year One children in the summer term. This test consists of 40 real and 'alien' (made up) words which test their phonic knowledge and ability to apply sounds learned from phase 1 through to phase 5. Should children not pass the test in Year One, they will have the opportunity to retake in Year Two. This is always administered by a person who is familiar and comfortable with the children, usually the class teacher, on a one to one basis. It is not seen as a 'test' by the children, rather it will be referred to as a 'phonics quiz' in a low pressured environment. We are extremely proud of our 90% pass rate since implementing Little Wandle and hope to continue on the positive phonics journey.

### **Support for parents**

Parents and carers are invited termly to observe and join in with phonics and reading lessons in F2 and Year One with information sessions afterwards in order for you to gain a better understanding of what phonics looks like for your children. We hope that this will enable you to support children most effectively at home and have a better idea of how your children learn. You will find more information regarding the scheme on parent tab on the Little Wandle website.



## **Home reading**

Children will bring home a book suited to their phonic ability; we hope that children will read with parents at home at least three times per week in order to practise their phonics skills and build fluency. Children will also be assigned an e-book that they can access online; this will be the same book that they have read three times at school so should have some confidence in reading this text.

