



Phonics at Hemington Primary School

Intent

At Hemington Primary School, we teach phonics using a linguistic programme called Sounds Write. Sounds Write is a highly structured, multi-sensory, incremental, and code-oriented, instructional approach to teaching children to read and spell.

The Sounds Write programme is successful in teaching children to read and spell because it starts with the sounds of our spoken language that the children know from a very young age. Then, using a systematic approach, it teaches them how these sounds are coded within our writing system.

Implementation

The Sounds Write structure and simplicity make it a programme accessible to all learners and helps them to make excellent progress with their reading and spelling. Children in EYFS and Key Stage One are taught phonics in daily small group lessons using the Sound Write methodology, structure and script. This ensures consistency across the key stage, enabling children to become familiar with the structure and expectations of each session. Trained staff plan lessons, based on sounds being taught alongside Sounds Write support materials. Planning includes visual, auditory, and kinaesthetic activities which are at all times combined simultaneously to promote learning. In addition to this multi sensory approach, the programme has pace and utilises an array of stimulating lessons and resources. Common exception words are introduced alongside phonics teaching.

The four key concepts children are taught are:

1. letters are symbols that represent sounds
2. sounds can be spelled using 1, 2, 3 or 4 letters
3. the same sound can be spelled in different ways
4. the same spelling can represent different sounds.

The three key skills children need to master are:

1. blending
2. segmenting
3. phoneme manipulation

Children in our Foundation Stage begin with the Initial Code where they practice all three key skills whilst learning the 1:1 sound-spelling correspondences and securing their understanding of key concept 1. This builds up confidence and phonic knowledge in a truly reversible



Phonics at Hemington Primary School

system, enabling them to decode and encode a wide range of words and sentences. At first, children learn to read and write simple one syllable words with a CVC structure. Complexity of word structure systematically builds up so that children apply their code knowledge to monosyllabic words with up to 6 sounds.² Once the Initial Code has been mastered, children continue to practice all 3 key skills whilst learning Extended Code which explores key concepts 2, 3 and 4. Learning of the Extended Code is a lifelong process – we all continue to develop our understanding of this code whenever we encounter new words. Whilst learning the Extended Code, children read and write monosyllabic and polysyllabic words at an age-appropriate level. Phonics teaching in Year 1 is organised to ensure that all children are given sufficient exposure to the letter-sound correspondences that they will meet in the Year 1 Phonics Screening Check. Children are also exposed to nonsense words in preparation for the check.

Children's progress and understanding are closely monitored by Sounds Write trained staff. Children are assessed regularly through ongoing formative assessment and summative assessment milestones, using Sounds-Write diagnostic tools. Any child falling behind will receive additional phonics intervention work.

Impact

The impact of the Sounds-Write teaching approach enables our children to be confident in their knowledge of the phonic code. They are able to segment and blend using all taught sounds. Our children will become confident readers and writers by the end of their time with us. The percentage of pupils reaching the required standard in the Year 1 Phonics Screening Check will be at least in line with the national average. By the end of Year 2, the children will be decoding and reading at standard nationally. Our youngest children in Reception will be able to orally blend and segment words for reading and spelling. The lessons are carefully structured and consistently applied across the school, with excellent training and materials to support the teachers. There will be no significant gaps in the progress of different groups of pupils due to rigorous assessment and focused intervention.