



Fundamentals of effective Systematic Synthetic Phonics practice

A high-quality systematic synthetic phonics programme of proven effectiveness is followed with rigour and fidelity and children are taught consistently to use phonics as the route to reading unknown words.

Teaching to include:

- grapheme/phoneme (letter/sound) correspondences (the alphabetic principle) in a clearly defined, incremental sequence;
- a defined initial group of consonants and vowels, enabling children, early on, to read and spell many simple CVC words.
- highly important skill of blending (synthesising) phonemes, in order, all through a word to read it;
- the application of the skills of segmenting words into their constituent phonemes to spell; and that blending and segmenting are reversible processes.
- the introduction of a defined initial group of consonants and vowels, enabling children, early on, to read and spell many simple CVC words.
- The knowledge that phonemes should be blended, in order, from left to right, 'all through the word' for reading
- demonstrations of how words can be segmented into their constituent phonemes for spelling and that this is the reverse of blending
- Multi-sensory activities. They should be interesting and engaging but firmly focused on intensifying the learning associated with its phonic goal.

The programme.

- The programme is begun almost immediately children enter Reception; with the expectation that they will be fluent readers having secured word recognition skills by the end of key stage one.
- The pace of the programme is maintained.
- Enough time and priority are given to fully implement the programme; teaching of the programme is not necessarily limited to former NLS '20 minutes'.
- Teaching extends beyond 'dedicated time' and is applied and reinforced when appropriate throughout day.
- The programme is carried through until at least the point where children can read almost all words fluently.
- There is no mix-and-match of programmes.
- The programme should not neglect engaging and helpful approaches to the more challenging levels where children have to distinguish between less common grapheme and phoneme variants.
- Children should not be expected to use strategies such as whole-word recognition and/or cues from context, grammar, or pictures.



All staff involved are fully trained in teaching the programme.

- Training providers are accredited experts in the programme.
- Senior management are included in the training.
- All grades of teaching assistant are included if they are involved in supporting reading in any way.
- Ongoing refresher training is periodically provided.
- Training is provided for all new staff.

Children practise early reading with fully decodable books that:

- are matched to phonic knowledge and which do not require use of alternative strategies.' (National Curriculum)
- are closely matched to programme used (often integral)
- are fully decodable at child's current level and do not simply practise phoneme(s) most recently taught
- are not mixed with non-decodable books for independent reading practice
- include a controlled, small number of 'tricky words' the decoding of which has been specifically taught
- are continued in progressive sequence until a child can confidently decode words involving most common grapheme representations of all phonemes.

A dedicated phonics lead teacher ensures quality, consistency and continuity of teaching

- This is a teacher with expertise in and direct experience of teaching phonics.
- Responsibilities include monitoring, mentoring and modelling (Could also involve oversight of peer observation and co-development).
- They are given enough dedicated time to fulfil role.
- In consequence quality, consistency and continuity of teaching are all of high quality.

Effective provision is made for all abilities

- Grouping is appropriate for the school and effective in ensuring success for all abilities
- TAs are deployed and used to optimum effectiveness.
- Progress is continually assessed using a simple but effective system.
- Regular progress meetings are held.
- There is particularly close monitoring of children making slowest progress.
- Children in danger of falling behind, or who are working under expected levels (lower 20%), are swiftly identified and enough additional support provided to enable them to keep up.



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- Children experiencing significant difficulty are provided with intensive, individual support to reach required standard.
- The Y1 Phonics Screening Check is understood and valued as an assessment tool.
- There is no excessive preparation for the Y1 PSC.
- No pressure is put on children before, during or after the Y1 PSC.
- All 'catch-up' retains an SSP focus.

A 'can-do' attitude permeates everything with full expectation that all children will attain or exceed expected standards

- Teacher and school expectations are positive and high for all children regardless of background.
- There is confidence that teaching the programme will ensure success.
- Children are continually praised and encouraged.
- Small-steps success is built in and celebrated.

Development of word-reading ability is fully balanced by the development of vocabulary, comprehension and a love of books

- A wide range of high-quality books are read to, and shared with, children daily.
- There is frequent discussion of books.
- Children explore books through role-play, art, movement, etc.
- Teachers have extensive knowledge of children's books.
- Teachers practise reading aloud and can do so with enthusiasm and in engaging ways.
- Books have high profile around classrooms and school.
- The development of comprehension is not confused with using guessing strategies for word-reading.

Every effort is made to help parents and carers understand and support the school approach

- They are helped to know how best to support children in learning sounds.
- Appropriate reading at home is strongly promoted; behaviours are modelled.
- Teachers ensure that they understand how to work appropriately (and differently) with decodable books and with shared 'real' books.