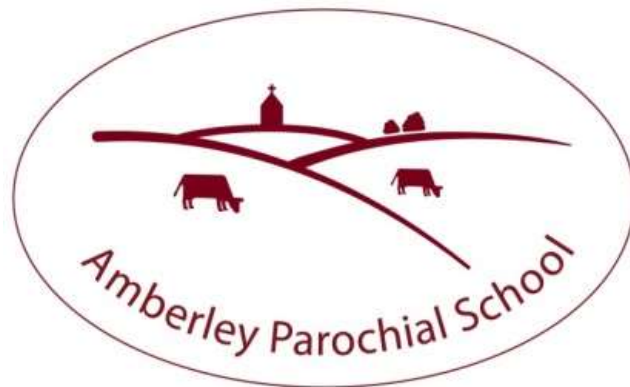


# Phonics at Amberley



***Becoming***

***reflective, independent and aspirational learners for life***

## Intent

Phonics at Amberley Parochial School is a key priority in our teaching. It develops learners' phonemic awareness teaching the relationship between sounds (phonemes) and their written representation (graphemes or letters). We ensure that our teaching promotes the use of phonics as the route to reading unknown words, before any subsequent comprehension strategies are applied. We do not encourage children to guess unknown words from clues such as pictures or context, we instead expect and teach them to apply phonic knowledge and skills.

## Implementation

Phonics is taught daily for 25 minutes as a discrete lesson in EYFS and Year 1 in small ability groups. Children learn to blend phonemes from left to right to decode the word. Spelling words requires the reverse action with children segmenting (breaking down) words into their individual sounds and recording the grapheme that they have learned is associated with the sound.

Amberley School use a bespoke Systematic Synthetics Phonics programme built around the 2007 Letters and Sounds document. The framework has been extended to include a full teaching plan identifying a clearly defined incremental sequence of sounds to be taught. Supporting this teaching sequence is a set of resources including commercially available flashcards and word cards together with other created resources to ensure our programme offers the most comprehensive learning opportunities and is ambitious in our teaching beyond the requirements of the statutory Phonic Screen Check. Each phase has its own 'sounds mat' showing the sounds progression enabling children to know where their learning is heading and giving opportunities to predict future lessons. Classes display simple or complex sounds charts to support children's learning. All children in the school use the same package of resources to support their phonic knowledge regardless of their class/year group and lessons follow the same format with a repetitive and predictable structure.

Each phonics lesson includes:

- Phoneme – grapheme correspondences following the defined incremental sequence.
- Explicit teaching and opportunities to practise the skill of blending phonemes all the way through a word in order to read it.
- Use of the skill of segmenting words into their individual phonemes and recording the associated grapheme in order to spell a word.
- Explicitly taught lower case letter formation using a simple mnemonic (during phase 2 of teaching). Children also have exposure to the associated capital letter and practise the formation of this in their handwriting lessons.
- Teaching of tricky words which are not phonetically regular so that these words can be rapidly recalled on sight.

The rigorous nature of our phonics teaching from the first days in EYFS is designed to ensure that children are able to keep up rather than catch up. The teaching sequences for

each phase shows clearly where we would expect children to be secure in their phonics journey. Regular formal assessments together with continuous assessment by each phonics teacher ensures early identification of any child at risk of falling below age-related expectations. These children will receive early and sustained support in addition to their daily phonics teaching through 'Narrowing the Gap'. Precise details of the intervention lessons for children identified will vary depending on the difficulties encountered. However, activities will use approaches and resources from the Amberley SSP providing fidelity and continuity to the programme. These assessments are carried out:

EYFS: December, Easter, July

Year One: October, December, Easter (Mock Screen checks carried out February, April, May, June)

Reading books at Amberley have been overhauled to ensure that children can fully decode a book in accordance with the phonemes/graphemes that they have been taught. Our books have been sourced from our existing stock of readers which have been reorganised to match our teaching sequences. Additional books have been purchased to expand the scheme and ensure a good mix of fiction and non-fiction together with a variety of interests. We continue to monitor publications for additional newly published readers to supplement our scheme further. Children are encouraged to read each book multiple times to ensure that they can decode accurately, understand the text and read fluently. For this to happen, the sounds contained within the children's books will typically be slightly behind their current phonics learning. However, opportunities to apply reading skills for their latest phoneme/grapheme learning is included in each phonics session and each reading lesson. We retain a small stock of books which are almost entirely decodable but perhaps contain one or two words for which they have not received any teaching. These books are called our 'challenge' books and are designed for a child to share with their parent rather than as an individual reader.

Whilst we all hope that the need for future lockdowns and school closures will not happen, Amberley has an established practice of teaching live phonics lessons via Microsoft Teams. Whilst videos of phonics lessons are available, these would only be used where live teaching is not possible as we believe our own practitioners provide the greatest fidelity to our programme.

### Impact

We have high expectations of the phases and sounds which we wish children to be secure in by the end of Autumn 2, Spring 2 and Summer 1 in order to ensure that children are ready for the statutory phonics screening check. (see teaching sequence in appendix)

Children are also assessed using Insight against the Development Matters and National Curriculum objectives, for reading, for each year group.

The impact of teaching is measured through these termly assessments of the children. These assessments are looked at by the English Lead (Phonics will look at phonic data) and all will hold discussions with class teachers, during Narrowing the Gap meetings to determine

any gaps and additional intervention that may be required. Any reading interventions are regularly reviewed to ensure that they have having an impact.