

High Down Infant School

Phonics and Reading in Year One - Information for parents

As you know from Reception, we teach 'phonics first' as the main reading strategy for children tackling unfamiliar words. From September 2022 we are following the Unlocking Letters and Sounds (ULS) programme, validated by the DfE. There is more information about this on the English curriculum page of the school website:

<https://highdownschools.co.uk/our-school/curriculum/english-2/>

This includes the detailed information of what sounds children are taught when. (Phonics Progression overview).



We teach phonics daily with additional support provided for those children who need a little more practice.

Reading Books

In line with the latest research evidence and government guidance, we also use reading books which are fully decodable using children's current phonic knowledge. Our reading books are grouped according to the teaching phase of Letters and Sounds, rather than the traditional colour bands. This continues until children are decoding fluently (without having to overtly sound out words), usually at some point during Year One. At this stage they move onto coloured Book Bands, although phonics continues to be taught for both reading and writing.

Please note that if you have had an older child/ children go through the school, that this is different from the previous progression through the book bands.



We use fully decodable books from a range of genres/ schemes including Hero Academy, Project X, Word Sparks and OUP Traditional Tales. In general, children should read each book they bring home two or three times, once for decoding, once for comprehension and once for fluency and expression, sometimes called 'prosody.'

Developing Children's Love of Reading

Children benefit enormously from being read to by an adult, and the texts they can access this way are far richer than those most Year One children can access given their current phonic knowledge. For this reason, children are encouraged to choose a sharing book to take home, once a week. At most times, your child will have two books in his/her book bag, one decodable and one for you to read and talk about together.

Phonics Screening check – What is it?

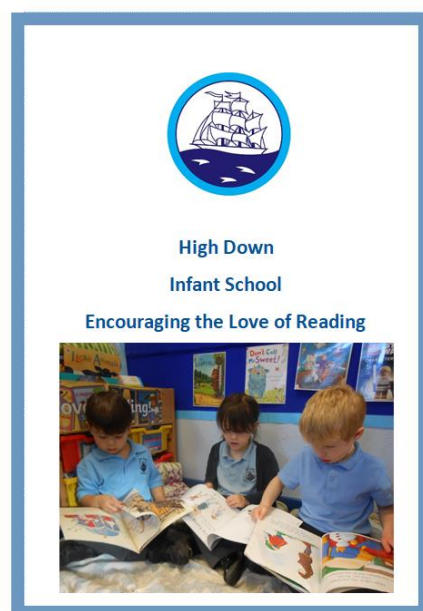
- National screening check to assess a child's knowledge of 'grapheme-phoneme correspondences' e.g. they know that 'sh' (the grapheme) makes the sound (phoneme) 'sh' as in ship).
- It also tests their ability to blend sounds to read a word (e.g. sh-i -p = ship)
- Carried out in June (the two weeks beginning 12th June 2023).
- The children will have to read 40 words: 20 real words and 20 'alien' (made-up) words. This will check that they have actually mastered the skill of blending, as opposed to reading the words purely from memory.
- The class teacher conducts the check with each child in their class on a 1:1 basis. The children are VERY used to phonics practice as they do this on a daily basis. **It is absolutely nothing to worry about!**

How you can help your child at home

- Practise recognising the 'graphemes' in and out of words e.g. do they know the sound that 'aw' makes; 'oi' makes etc.
- Help them to spot the 'digraph' (two letters together making one sound). They are often tempted to separate each letter eg c oi n. A fun way of doing this is to take a page from a comic, magazine or even newspaper and use a highlighter pen to find all the digraphs/ trigraphs (*three* letters making one sound e.g. 'ear').
- Encourage your children to 'sound out' and blend new words in reading books. If they get stuck, suggest 'if it doesn't work one way, try another'. This is particularly useful when we are learning alternative pronunciations e.g. 'ow' as in 'cow' and 'ow' as in 'window'.
- Read each decodable book at least three times.
- Keep reading a wide range of other books! See this leaflet on the English curriculum page of the school website for ideas: [Love of reading](#)
- Help your child complete the homework booklets, coming home in Term 2.

We hope you find this information useful and continue to have fun with phonics and reading with your children!

The Year One Team.



Letters and Sounds Phonics Progression

Starting In Reception, children are taught single sounds e.g. b, d then digraphs (e.g. sh, ai) and trigraphs (ear, air).

Phase 2

s a t p l n m d g o c k c k e u r h b f ff l ll s ss

Phase 3

J v w x y z zz qu ch sh th ng ai ee igh oa oo (long and short) ar or ur ow oi ear air ure er

Phase 4

No new sounds taught – focus on blending words with 4 or more sounds e.g. went, crab, spring

Phase 5

Alternative spellings of known sounds; ay ou ie ea oy ir ue aw wh ph ew oe au

Split digraphs: a-e, e-e, i-e, o-e, u-e

Alternative pronunciations e.g. c in city, ow in window, g in magic, o in gold, i in find, y in sky or in jolly