Phonics and Early Reading at Claycots

Claycots Primary School

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Phonics & Reading Leader

Mrs Deepak is the Phonics & Reading leader at Claycots



Intent

At Claycots, we believe reading is key to every child's learning. We aim to ensure all pupils can access the curriculum, choose books with confidence, and communicate effectively.

Reading is at the heart of our curriculum, supporting both enjoyment and the development of essential skills.

Our intent for Phonics and Early Reading is that all pupils:

- Keep pace with the school's phonics programme.
- Read fluently and with understanding by the end of Key Stage 1.
- Receive effective support when needed.
- Read widely for pleasure and information.
- Build strong vocabulary and language skills

How we teach phonics & Early Reading

At Claycots, we teach the ALS Phonics scheme. This is a DfE approved scheme which follows comprehensive lesson plans that teach children to listen, read, write and apply phonemes in reading and writing. Based on the principles of Letters and Sounds, it offers training, guidance and resources to support schools in the delivery of a successful and complete SSP programme. Tried and tested teaching sequences and mantras are used daily to ensure children have a clear structure to their learning, developing their ability and confidence to decode successfully, building towards becoming independent readers.

As noted by the DfE, a strength of the ALS Phonics scheme is the guidance provided for supporting the lowest 20% of pupils and the training provision.

We use a quality first approach to daily teaching of phonics through a whole class teaching input. All Phonics teaching is systematic, engaging, lively and interactive.

Where pupils are identified as needing extra support (including in KS2), targeted intervention programs (including High Frequency words) are delivered by fully trained members of staff. In Nursey phonics is taught daily using a group approach. Throughout Reception and KS1, pupils are given home reading books which closely match their decoding & comprehension abilities to allow them to further practice these skills.

Reading books

The decodable books that ALS Phonics: Letters and Sounds recommends are Pearson Bug Club Phonics books. The Bug Club Phonics books referred to within the programme are taken from the DfE validated Bug Club Phonics Systematic Synthetic Phonics Programme produced by Pearson Education Limited.

At Claycots, children read a decodable book in guided reading matched to the GPCs that they have been taught. Children take home books that include the GPC that they have been taught and have learnt. We also recognise that children should be exposed to a range of stories and texts during shared reading and story sessions to develop and extend their vocabulary and promote a love of reading.

Once children are confidently able to blend sounds to read new words automatically, children begin to read a wider range of texts independently.

How we measure progress

Assessment – All children are baseline assessed at the beginning of the academic year. They are then assessed at the end of every block of learning within a phonics phase. Some children will receive extra daily intervention support outside of the phonics lessons.

High Frequency Words – High frequency words are taught outside of the phonics lessons. Children are given ‘flashcards’ to take home to learn to read and spell. Some of the sight words are decodable although the children are encouraged to ‘see the word and say the word’. This is to encourage fluency in their reading. High frequency word assessments are completed to check for recall.

Shared Reading – this is a whole class lesson to teach the strategies used for reading and to develop vocabulary. The strategies are taught using ‘mantras’ that the children have learnt in their phonics lessons. They apply their phonic knowledge during the lessons as well as developing other strategies for reading. Lessons emphasis speaking and listening and talk partners are used in most lessons.

Guided Reading – the children work in groups of up to 6. The children each have a book and are encouraged to apply the skills they have learnt in shared reading and during phonics lessons. They read individually by themselves and the teacher listens to them, asking questions about the strategies that they are using. After the children have read, they are asked questions which they answer by finding evidence in the text. Inference questions are also asked. Children who are not reading with an adult during Guided Reading lessons work on adapted tasks that are carefully designed to enable them to consolidate or apply their reading skills.

Sequence of learning

In line with the National Curriculum, we teach each phase of phonics using the suggested sequence shown here.

Moving children from one phase to the next is dependent on assessment milestones. We aim to ensure that sufficient time is spent on each phase to ensure breadth and depth of understanding so that children can demonstrate that they can apply their knowledge before moving on.

[Progression-and-pace-for-phonics-teaching-suggested-timeline-2022.pdf (alsphonics.co.uk)]

[Programme-sets-blocks-overview-2022-2.pdf (alsphonics.co.uk)]

Term	*Nursery/Foundation 1– Phase 1	Reception/ Foundation Stage 2 – Phase 2, 3 and 4	Year 1 – Consolidate previous phase and Phase 5
Autumn 1	Environmental Sounds, Instrumental Sounds, Voice Sounds, Body Percussion, Rhythm	Assess children on aspects of Phase 1: Environmental Sounds/ Instrumental Sounds, Voice Sounds/Body Percussion, Rhythm/Rhyme, Alliteration Oral Blending and Segmenting Begin Phase 2 as soon as possible	Phase 3 and 4 at start of term Begin Phase 5
Autumn 2		Phase 2 and Phase 3 (j to ng)	Phase 5
Spring 1	Environmental Sounds/ Instrumental Sounds, Voice Sounds, Body Percussion, Rhythm, Alliteration	Phase 3 long vowels	Phase 5
Spring 2		Phase 3	Phase 5
Summer 1	Environmental Sounds/ Instrumental Sounds, Voice Sounds/Body Percussion, Rhythm/Rhyme, Alliteration - begin Oral Blending and Segmenting	Embed Phase 3 long vowels and consolidate in reading and writing Phase 4	Phase 5
Summer 2		Phase 4	Phonic Screening Check Phase 5 - embed, consolidate and develop breadth and depth

Pupil voice

Phonics helps us to read when we see a word. We don't have to ask our Mummy and Daddy, we can read it by ourselves.
Reception child

When you grow up, learning will be easier if you can read well.
Year 2 child

I like reading lessons because I like answering questions.
Year 1 child

When we get older we can get a good job if we know how to read well
Year 1 child

Phonics is important so that we can learn how to spell sounds. It helps us to read words.
Year 2 child

I like phonics and reading lessons because I can help to teach my little sister.
Year 2 child

I like phonics because I like learning sounds. I like to practice at home as well. Phonics helps me with reading and writing.
Year 1 child

I think phonics is important because it can help you to write words.
Year 1 child

Useful links

ALS-Phonics-Letters-and-Sounds-Teacher-Guidance-2022.pdf

Teaching-Tricky-or-High-Frequency-Words-2022-2.pdf

Bug Club Phonics Progression Chart Oct 21 (alsphonics.co.uk)

Introduction-and-Guidance-Recommended-Decodable-Reading-books-Nov-2022.pdf (alsphonics.co.uk)

Progression-tricky-words-and-books-2022-1.pdf (alsphonics.co.uk)