

Phonics At Cliftonville Primary School

Number	DfE criteria for a successful synthetic systematic phonics programme	Our school approach
1	Constitute a complete SSP programme providing fidelity to its teaching framework for the duration of the programme.	We follow Letters and Sounds only – no other programme resources are used.
2	Present systematic, synthetic phonic work as the prime approach to decoding print. It should not encourage children to guess unknown words from clues such as pictures or context, rather than first applying phonic knowledge and skills. It should not include lists of high frequency words or any other words for children to learn as whole shapes 'by sight'.	Children are taught phonics as the route to learn to read. Phonetically decodable books purchased are chosen for having pictures that do not allow children to guess words too much.
3	Enable children to start learning phonic knowledge and skills early in reception, and provide a structured route for most children to meet or exceed the expected standard in the year one (Y1) Phonics Screening Check and all national curriculum expectations for word reading through decoding by the end of Key Stage 1.	Daily phonics lessons start by week 2 in Reception and continue until December of Year 2 (and beyond for those children who need it). We have a clear plan for where we want each group of children to be by the end of each term to enable us to meet our aim of national levels.

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4	Be designed for daily teaching sessions and teach the main grapheme-phoneme correspondences of English (the alphabetic principle) in a clearly defined, incremental sequence.	We follow the sound progression from the original 2007 Letters and Sounds booklet.																																																																																																																																			
5	Begin by introducing a defined group of grapheme-phoneme correspondences that enable children to read and spell many words early on.	We follow the sound progression from the original 2007 Letters and Sounds booklet. Children are able to read and spell words such as “sat”, “tap”, “pin” and “tin” within weeks of starting school.																																																																																																																																			
6	Progress from simple to more complex phonic knowledge and skills, cumulatively covering all the major grapheme-phoneme correspondences in English.	We follow the sound progression from the original 2007 Letters and Sounds booklet.																																																																																																																																			

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7	Teach children to read printed words by identifying and blending (synthesising) individual phonemes, from left to right all through the word.	Children are taught to segment and blend by identifying the phonemes in each word and marking with sound buttons and bars then blend then from left to right. This is supported by robot arms and clap to “sound talk” it and fingers underneath the letters and sweep from left to right.																																		
8	Teach children to apply the skill of segmenting spoken words into their constituent phonemes for spelling and that this is the reverse of blending phonemes to read words.	Children are taught to listen carefully to the component sounds in a word and their order and count them on fingers before then writing them. Dictation develops this skill.																																		
9	Provide opportunity for children to practise and apply known phoneme-grapheme correspondences for spelling through dictation of sounds, words and sentences.	Formal dictation of words begins for the more able children in Reception from Term 5. Dictation of words, captions or sentences happens in every lesson in Year 1 and 2.																																		
10	Ensure that children are taught to decode and spell common exception words appropriate to their level of	Children are taught common exception words in the order they appear in the Letters and Sounds guidance. The words are																																		

	progress in the programme. Programmes should teach children to read and then spell the most common exception words, noting the part of a word that makes it an exception word. These words should be introduced gradually.	introduced gradually with one or two a week depending on the ability of the children. <table><tr><td>Phase 1</td><td>N/A</td></tr><tr><td>Phase 2</td><td>the, to, I, go, no, into</td></tr><tr><td>Phase 3</td><td>he, she, we, me, be, was, my, you, they, her, all, are</td></tr><tr><td>Phase 4</td><td>said, so, have, like, some, come, were, there, little, one, do, when, out, what</td></tr><tr><td>Phase 5</td><td>oh, there, people, Mr, Mrs, looked, called, asked, would, should, could</td></tr><tr><td>Phase 6</td><td>Spelling patterns and rules</td></tr></table>	Phase 1	N/A	Phase 2	the, to, I, go, no, into	Phase 3	he, she, we, me, be, was, my, you, they, her, all, are	Phase 4	said, so, have, like, some, come, were, there, little, one, do, when, out, what	Phase 5	oh, there, people, Mr, Mrs, looked, called, asked, would, should, could	Phase 6	Spelling patterns and rules
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11	Provide resources that support the teaching of lower-case and capital letters correctly, with clear start and finish points. The programme should move children on by teaching them to write words made up of learned GPCs, followed by simple sentences composed from such words as well as any common exception words learned. At first, children should not be taught to join letters. Children may be taught to join the letters in digraphs, but this is optional. All resources designed for children to read should be in print.	Children are taught the correct formation of letters without “lead-ins” and these are displayed in the classroom and support materials sent home. All resources are in print. Teachers often model joining the letters in digraphs and trigraphs.												
12	Be built around direct teaching sessions, with extensive teacher-child interaction and involve a multi-sensory approach. The programme should include guidance on how direct teaching sessions can be adapted for online delivery (live or recorded). Direct teaching sessions should involve a routine so that teachers and children get to know what is coming next and minimum time is spent explaining new activities. Teaching and learning activities should be interesting and engaging but firmly focused on intensifying the learning associated with the phonic goal. Where computer-based resources are included, these should support or supplement direct teaching by the teacher, but	All lessons follow the same structure of revisit and review, teach, practise and apply. There are routines within these such as recapping sounds via flashcards or “Are you ready?”. Children are very used to the format of lessons and know what is coming next and transitions are managed well to maximise learning time and maintain good pace. Computer-based games such as those on PhonicsPlay are used sparingly and only when most effective. Nearly every lesson involves an opportunity for children to write as well as read. All flashcards, sound mats and friezes are consistent across the school and match the GPC progression. Lessons were successfully adapted for remote teaching via TEAMS during lockdown.												

	not replace it. At each step, children should have sufficient time to practise reading and writing with the grapheme-phoneme correspondences they have been taught, cumulatively. Resources provided as part of the programme such as should match the GPCs and progressions in the programme.	
13	Provide resources to enable teachers to deliver the programme effectively including sufficient decodable reading material to ensure that, as children move through the early stages of acquiring phonic knowledge and skills, they can practise by reading texts closely matched to their level of phonic attainment, that do not require them to use alternative strategies to read unknown words. The texts and books children are asked to read independently should be fully decodable for them at every stage of the programme. If a complete programme relies on guidance on the teaching of phonics from one publisher and decodable books from another, the programme publisher must demonstrate how these decodable books match the phonic progression of the programme.	Significant investment has been made into replacing old book banded books with fully phonetically decodable books which gradually introduce common exception words from a number of publishers (Letters and Sounds, Big Cat, Bug Club, Rising Stars Reading Planet, Oxford Hero Academy) to ensure a variety of engaging fiction and non-fiction books. All books have been organised and labelled according to the GPC progression from Letters and Sounds (one colour sticker for the phase and another colour sticker for the set or groups of sets).
14	Include guidance and resources to ensure children practise and apply the core phonics they have been taught. A phonics programme should not include teaching and learning activities that are over elaborate, difficult to manage, take children too long to complete or will likely make children focus on something other than reading or writing e.g. letters in sand.	Lessons are focused and follow a key structure ensuring children practise and apply what they have learnt.
15	Enable children's progress to be assessed and highlight the ways in which the programme meets the needs of those who are at risk of falling behind, including the lowest	Reception and KS1 children are assessed using a phonics screen 3 times a year to monitor progress. A Letters and Sounds assessment (from the English Hub) is used as appropriate to assess individual

	attaining 20% of children. Full guidance should include clear expectations for children's progress. If the programme is high quality, systematic and synthetic it will, by design, map incremental progression in phonic knowledge and skills. It should therefore enable teachers to conduct frequent and on-going assessment to track and record children's progress and to identify those children at, below or above expected levels, so that appropriate support can be provided. Children who are at risk of falling behind need extra practice to consolidate and master the content of the programme. Programmes should provide guidance on how to support these children so that they keep up with their peers. Options for support could include 1 to 1 tutoring. They should not suggest or provide a different SSP programme for these children.	children's understand and gaps and is also used at least once a year (at the end of the year) to provide a more detailed understanding for planning and allocation of sets. It is also used to assess casual admissions. Pupil Progress Interviews happen termly where SLT and the year group discuss children's progress focusing on those who are at risk of falling behind or are behind. These children are quickly identified and support is put in place for them. Interventions are sometimes group but are usually short burst 1:1. KS2 children who are not yet at the national level (32) continue to receive phonics teaching using Letters and Sounds and are assessed regularly to guide planning and teaching.
16	Provide full guidance for teachers to support the effective delivery of the programme and appropriate, programme-specific training either directly, through appointed agents or remotely; with assurances that there is sufficient capacity to do so and that those delivering this training will have appropriately high levels of expertise and relevant experience. High-quality training is an essential element of an SSP programme and is key to ensuring it is effectively implemented with fidelity and consistency within settings. A comprehensive programme of training must ensure continuous professional development of all those leading or delivering phonics.	All staff (SLT, teachers, TAs, student teachers and volunteers) have received Letters and Sounds training via the English Hub (created with Wandle and Little Sutton). People who are less confident or experienced are given the opportunity to watch others teach. The English Lead and UPS staff member leading on Early Reading support and coach staff as appropriate including through modelling. Regular QA means leadership are aware of the level and consistency of teaching. Performance management means staff can formally request any additional support or training but can also approach the English Lead whenever they feel they need to.

