



# Timothy Hackworth Primary School

**‘Respectful and resilient; being the best that we can be.’**

## Phonics Policy

CRC Article 28: All children have the right to a good quality education.



Date policy approved/adopted:	<b>October 2023</b>
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Approved by:	<b>Governing Body</b>
Head Teacher signature:	<i>L. Boulton</i>
Governor Signature:	<i>P. Crook</i>

# **Phonics Policy**

**Date of Policy:** October 2023

**Review Date:** October 2024

**Subject Lead:** Miss H. Corney

**Governors for English:** Cllr. S. Townsend and Mrs. K. Wilson

This policy should be read in conjunction with our English, Spelling and Handwriting Policies. This policy should also be read in conjunction with our Respectful Relationships Policy. All policy and practice in Timothy Hackworth Primary School respects children's dignity.

## **Our Timothy Hackworth School Vision**

May our Rights Respecting School be a happy place for us all to learn; where every one of us is valued and safe in our Timothy Hackworth School Family. May we all be the best that we can be by making a positive difference to each other, our community in Shildon and the wider world in which we all live.

## **Mission Statement (written by children):**

We would like our school, which reflects British Values, to be at the heart of the community, sharing, supporting and learning together with everyone as equals. Our children have the right to high quality learning experiences to help them to be the best that they can be.

We encourage our children to be creative, unique, open-minded and independent individuals, respectful of themselves and of others in our school, our local community and the wider world. We aim to nurture our children on their journey through life so they can grow into safe, caring, democratic, responsible and tolerant adults who make a positive difference to British Society and to the world.

## **Values**

Ours is a happy school with high hopes and ambitions for all our children. We endeavour to work in partnership with parents and carers, ensuring that everything is done in the best interests of the children at all times.

All staff take their responsibility towards the children seriously and they strive to help each child reach their full potential as global citizens; physically, emotionally, socially and academically. We are fully committed to the [CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD](#).

To us, every child is unique and precious and we aspire to develop a positive attitude towards learning and excellent standards of behaviour. We are committed to the basic skills of English and Maths.

At all times, we aim to centre the teaching in an atmosphere of mutual and personal respect. A high quality education is [the right of every child](#) and at Timothy Hackworth Primary School we embrace this responsibility and strive to achieve it for all our pupils.

### **Equalities Information**

This policy should be read in conjunction with our school's 'Equalities Policy Statement', 'Equalities Objectives Summary' and 'Equalities Information and Objectives'.

We welcome our duties under the Equality Act 2010 to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations in relation to age (as appropriate), disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

### **Rationale**

All children have the right to access all elements of the curriculum, appropriate to their abilities and in conjunction with the school's persistent focus on high standards and expectations of all pupils.

At Timothy Hackworth Primary School, we aim to inspire all children to reach their full potential - academically, socially and emotionally. In Phonics, this means ensuring a curriculum that is fully inclusive of all children. High quality phonics teaching and learning should enable children to read, write and speak fluently, therefore allowing them to communicate their ideas and emotions to others. We strive to ensure that all children become successful, fluent readers by the end of Key Stage 1. We believe this is achievable through a combination of effective, high quality, discrete phonics teaching combined with a whole language approach that promotes 'a love of reading'.

High quality phonics is an important part of the word decoding skills required by children to develop higher level whole language and comprehension skills. This approach is in alignment with our belief that we first 'learn to read' and then 'read to learn'. In order to read and understand texts, children must learn to recognise and decode the words on the page. Good quality, consistent phonics teaching allows the child to be secure in the skills of word recognition and decoding, allowing children to read fluently. This will result in children being able to read for pleasure and will allow them to move onto developing higher order reading for meaning skills. These phonic skills need to be taught systematically. Being able to read is the most important skill that children will learn during their early schooling and has far-reaching implications for lifelong confidence and well-being.

## **Aims of Phonics**

- To teach children aural discrimination, phonemic awareness and rhyme to aid reading, writing and spelling development;
- To encourage the use of segmenting and blending so that decoding skills provide a sound foundation for reading, writing and spelling;
- To ensure the teaching of phonics is consistent across the school;
- To enable children to use phonic awareness across the curriculum;
- To ensure that children know the 44 phonemes within the English language;
- To teach children to recognise the graphemes within words and associate them with the appropriate phonemes when reading;
- To provide children with strategies to identify and decode 'harder to read and spell words';
- To ensure that the teaching of phonics is systematic and progressive throughout Foundation Stage, Key Stage 1 and for those children in Key Stage 2 needing interventions to support their phonetic knowledge and understanding.

## **Entitlement**

This Phonics Policy relates to all pupils attending Timothy Hackworth Primary School. All children have the right to access all elements of the National Curriculum, appropriate to their abilities in tandem with the school's continual focus on high standards and expectations of all pupils.

## **Intent, Implementation and Impact**

### **Intent**

As we are a Gold Level Rights Respecting School, our whole curriculum is shaped by our vision which aims to enable all children, regardless of background or ability and additional needs, to flourish and to become the very best that they can be.

We value reading as a key life skill and we are dedicated to enabling our pupils to become lifelong readers. We give all children the opportunity to enter the magical worlds that books open up to them. We promote reading for pleasure as part of our reading curriculum. Children are encouraged to develop their own love of genres and authors, whilst reviewing their books objectively. This enhances a deep love of literature across a range of cultures and styles.

We are passionate about ensuring that all children become confident and enthusiastic readers. We believe that phonics provides the foundations of learning, allowing children to progress and to become fluent readers.

The systematic teaching of phonics has a high priority throughout Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1. We acknowledge that children need to be taught the key skills in segmenting and

blending and to be equipped with the knowledge that enables them to successfully complete the Phonics Check at the end of Year 1. We also value and encourage the pupils to read for enjoyment and recognise that this starts with the foundations of acquiring letter sounds. We strive to ensure our pupils have the opportunity to demonstrate resilience, resourcefulness, reflectiveness and reciprocity and have the ambition to be successful learners.

### **Implementation**

Essential Letters and Sounds (ELS) is our chosen phonics programme. The aim of ELS is to get all children to read well, quickly. ELS is a systematic synthetic phonics programme and was validated by the Department for Education in June 2021.

ELS is a whole class teaching model. This means that every single pupil has the same opportunities when learning to read. Learning to read well, early, is a priority for every child. Children who may find it harder to learn how to read are given extra support from their teacher every day. We ensure that all children learn to read well and keep up, rather than having to catch-up.

All members of staff are trained to teach ELS to ensure that we have an expert team of reading teachers led by our Phonics Lead. As a staff team, we regularly meet to review our practice and to practise teaching together. This ensures that all children receive high quality teaching every day. Our classrooms are well resourced to ensure that every child has the resources required to learn to read well.

### **Two Year Olds**

Two-Year-Old children experience a range of language and phonological awareness activities through a differentiated approach within the setting on a daily basis. Practitioners focus upon the Prime areas of Communication and Language, Physical Development, and Personal, Social and Emotional Development: these are the foundations of Literacy, including phonics. Planned activities, resources and interactions with adults focus upon developing children's speech, language, and communication skills, including auditory discrimination, receptive language and listening and attention.

### **Nursery**

Nursery follow Phase 1 which focuses upon the skills of tuning into sounds (auditory discrimination), listening and remembering sounds (auditory memory and sequencing), and talking about sounds (developing vocabulary and language comprehension). The learning in Phase 1 is mainly adult-led, although children have opportunities to further develop skills through a wide variety of experiences, including through supportive play and in the continuous provision. By the time children leave Nursery they have experienced all Aspects of Phase 1.

*Aspect 1: Environmental Sounds*

General sound discrimination – environmental sounds.

To develop children's listening skills and awareness of sounds in the environment.

*Aspect 2: General Sound Discrimination – Instrumental Sounds*

To experience and develop awareness of sounds made with instruments and noise-makers.

*Aspect 3: General Sound Discrimination – Body Percussion*

To develop an awareness of sounds and rhythms.

*Aspect 4: Rhythm and Rhyme*

To experience and appreciate rhythm and rhyme, and to develop an awareness of rhythm and rhyme in speech.

*Aspect 5: Alliteration*

To develop an understanding of alliteration.

*Aspect 6: Voice Sounds*

To distinguish between the differences in vocal sounds, including oral blending and segmenting.

*Aspect 7: Oral Blending and Segmenting*

To develop oral blending and segmenting of sounds in words.

There is no expectation for children in Phase 1 to be introduced to letters (graphemes), however, practitioners do respond to children's interests and comments about letters and words in print and strive to create a print rich environment of displays, signs, books and labels.

## **Reception**

In Reception, children continue to build on their listening skills and are introduced to Phase 2, which marks the start of systematic phonics learning. They have discrete, daily phonics sessions following the Essential Letters and Sounds programme. They revise previous learning, are taught new graphemes/phonemes, then practise and apply what they have learnt. The continuous provision matches the pupil's current knowledge and understanding, whilst ensuring they are suitably challenged.

The purpose of this phase is to teach at least 19 letters and children continue to practise oral blending and begin to blend and segment with letters. Many children should be able to read and spell some VC and CVC words. During this phase they are introduced to reading two-syllable words and simple captions. They will also learn to read some harder to read and spell words. Sound Books are sent home weekly so that children can further practise their new letters and sounds, harder to read and spell words and key words. Children also take an Oxford Reading Tree book home from our reading scheme. This book is matched to their phonic ability.

Following Phase 2, children enter Phase 3 where they are taught another 25 graphemes, most of them comprising of two letters (e.g. oa), so that children can represent an increasing number of phonemes with their corresponding graphemes. Children also continue to practise CVC blending and segmentation in this phase and will apply their knowledge of blending and segmenting to the reading and spelling of simple two-syllable words and captions that have been dictated. They will also learn letter names during this phase, learn to read some more harder to read and spell words, and begin to learn to spell some of these words.

The Essential Letters and Sounds programme expectations are that children will have completed Phase 4 by the end of Reception and have had an introduction to Phase 5 for reading. The purpose of Phase 4 is to consolidate children's knowledge of graphemes in reading and spelling words containing adjacent consonants and polysyllabic words. The coverage of Phase 5 taught in Reception will introduce a further 20 new GPC with alternative graphemes for known phonemes.

## **Year 1**

In Year 1, there are a number of review weeks of Phase 3, 4 and the coverage so far of Phase 5. The children will then move onto the remaining objectives for phase 5.

Children in Year 1 have access to high quality daily phonics sessions which continue to follow the Essential Letters and Sounds programme. Through this programme, the children learn new graphemes and alternative pronunciations for these and where relevant, for the graphemes they already know. They apply what they have learned in phonics workbooks containing blending for reading, segmenting for spelling, sentence writing and reading and spelling of harder to read and spell words.

The ELS programme has a wide range of decodable texts linked to the sounds taught each week. In guided reading sessions, children are given further opportunity to practise sounds previously taught. Children read texts matching their current phonics knowledge. During

these guided reading sessions, children also revisit known GPCs and harder to read and spell words.

Children practise recognising 'Alien' or pseudo words in readiness for the Phonic Screening Check later in Year 1 and to give them the confidence to read words. In addition to the book they are reading at school, children also take an Oxford Reading Tree book home for further practise of their phonic skills.

ELS is designed on the principle that children should 'keep up' rather than 'catch up'. Interventions are delivered within the lesson by the teacher and any child who is struggling with the new knowledge can be immediately targeted with appropriate support. Where further support is required, 1:1 intervention is used where needed. These interventions are short, specific and effective.

## **Year 2**

Children who require further phonics support access ELS lessons for targeted GPCs. These children also access the ELS 1:1 interventions, as well as daily reading of decodable texts matched to ELS.

## **Key Stage 2**

Children in Key Stage 2 who have not reached a proficient level in phoneme-grapheme correspondence application, are given access to a daily phonics sessions using the suggested resources from the ELS programme.

## **Impact**

Through the teaching of systematic phonics, children will become fluent, thereby proficient in phonics by the end of Key Stage One. This way, children can focus on developing their reading fluency, stamina and comprehension as they move through the school.

Phonics Screening Check results at the end of Year 1 will demonstrate the phonic ability of the children in Year 1.

## **More Able and Talented Learners**

The Phonics Subject Lead will promote the following key strategies for maximising progress and enabling learners to meet their full potential:

- The use - by all - of open ended questioning where a learner's first response may then be further developed and so encourage deeper thinking;
- Valuing a growth mindset that encourages learners to risk failure. Instead, viewing it as a crucial part of the learning process that avoids the pitfalls of playing it safe and success meaning only doing things they can get completely right or find easy;



- Encouraging the provision of open-ended opportunities for learners to take more ownership of the direction or form that their learning takes;
- Praising high levels of effort, progress and attainment whilst making sure that a focus on the next steps is a valued part of the ongoing learning process.

### **Special Educational Needs and Disabilities**

The SENDCO will support identified SEND pupils, their parents and staff, to ensure information on individual children with Special Educational Needs supports their teaching and learning. Our school meets the needs of children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities with a curriculum that allows for appropriate differentiation. This may be by outcome, task, resources, support, interest or ability groupings as appropriate. Opportunities will be planned for children with SEND to work on their targets for phonics.

Every registered SEND pupil in school accesses a SEND Support Plan which identifies individual targets. The expectation is that SEND pupils will progress at the same rate as non-SEND pupils due to carefully planned provision. Expectations of all pupils, including those of SEND pupils, will be high. SEND pupils will be expected to be the best that they can be.

### **Assessment**

The phonic knowledge of all pupils will be assessed every half term and recorded using the 'Timothy Hackworth Primary School Phonic Progress Tracking Sheet' document.

Phonic screens are ongoing throughout each term and identify gaps in phonic knowledge. These are submitted and monitored on a termly basis.

Assessment in Phonics is only a part of the school policy on assessment as a whole. There is ongoing assessment for learning (AFL) or formative assessment, of all children ensuring that the development of concepts, skills and attitudes is measured through everyday teaching. This will, of course, include a variety of contexts. Teachers need to make judgements about children's ability. These judgements must be supported by evidence which can be understood by other teachers, by parents and by the children themselves. Evidence of ability will be demonstrated by children in the course of their phonics learning.

At the end of Year 1 children participate in the Phonics Screening Check. Those children who do not succeed in the Phonics Screening Check are highlighted for further intervention and targeted support before completing the Screening Check again at the end of Year 2. For children who do not succeed in Year 2, provision is made for them to receive intervention and targeted support in Key Stage 2.

Previous versions of Phonics Screening Checks are implemented every half term to monitor progress and identify gaps in phonic knowledge.

Where appropriate, children receive additional phonics support on an intervention basis.

## **Monitoring and Evaluation**

The monitoring of Phonics teaching and learning in our school will take place through:

- analysis of data and tracking systems;
- observations and learning walks by the Phonics Lead and SLT where appropriate;
- discussion during curriculum development staff meetings in order to further develop provision and practice, respond to queries, check progress, review resources etc.;
- informal discussions between staff and the Phonics Lead;
- scrutiny of books, displays and any other evidence of achievement by the Phonics Lead and SLT;
- pupil interviews conducted by the Phonics Lead;
- checking children's standards of work against agreed criteria.

Assessment data is robustly and rigorously analysed in detail on a termly basis by the Senior Leadership Team, including the Phonics Lead, and outcomes shared with staff.

Pupil Progress Meetings are held with staff to identify pupils who may require further intervention and support. Pupil Progress Meetings provide opportunities for Senior Leaders and class teachers to work together to identify individuals or groups of pupils who are at risk of not making expected or better progress and supporting those pupils, by implementing strategies and interventions that reflect their individual needs.

## **Continuing Professional Development**

The Phonics Lead continues to attend relevant CPD in order to ensure that they and wider staff are aware of the latest information and curriculum developments in Phonics. Staff are also provided with regular, planned, internal and external CPD opportunities where relevant and as appropriate.

## **Display and Resources**

Our school 'Climate for Learning in Classrooms' document outlines the resources and display requirements for each classroom, which includes reference to specific Phonics displays to support pupils' learning.

## **Parents and Carers**

We recognise that parents make a significant difference to children's progress in phonics and we encourage this partnership through regular meetings and updates with parents from the outset of pupils joining our school.

## **Reading at Home**

Pupils at Timothy Hackworth Primary School are encouraged to read at home on a daily basis. Pupils are provided with a decodable reading book, which is sent home along with their Reading Record. These books are closely matched to their phonic ability. Parents are encouraged to read with their child and sign/comment in the Reading Record. We send

home a reading book which matches the phonics phase with which the children are confident in order to develop fluency and reading stamina.

### **Our Governing Body**

There are two identified Governors for English who provide support and challenge. They are kept up to date with developments through meetings, through the Head Teacher's Report to Governors, subsequent discussions during Full Governing Body Meetings and Curriculum and Standards Committee Meetings. The Governing Body will be provided with regular updates regarding the implementation and monitoring of this policy. The Curriculum and Standards Committee will ratify and review the policy.

### **Conclusion**

At Timothy Hackworth Primary School, a whole range of experiences and opportunities will be provided for all pupils across a broad and balanced curriculum which reflects school, local, national and global perspectives. The curriculum offer is routinely reviewed to monitor its Intent, Implementation and Impact. All children have the right to a high quality education; our Phonics Policy is designed to ensure that all pupils have access to this right.