



Phonics Policy	
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Date reviewed	
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Governor/Committee (where applicable)	David O'Connell

## Our Vision:

**Jesus said: 'I have come that they may have life and have it to the full.'**

Promoting *life-long learning*

Developing *life-giving relationships*

Exploring *life-enhancing faith*

Inspiring *life-enriching aspiration*

At Hanley St. Luke's C of E Aided Primary School we are committed to the delivery of excellence in the teaching of Phonics. We aim to develop each child so that they are able to read with fluency as well as develop a love of reading that will stay with them all of their lives.

The use of phonics is one of the many skills required to be able to be a reader and writer. We aim to teach high quality phonics to ensure the children have the best start possible in reading and writing. The learning of phonics is the beginning of children's body of knowledge, skills and understanding that are an essential part of learning to read. In order to read and understand texts children must learn to recognise/decode the words on the page. Good quality phonics teaching allows the child to be secure in the skills of word recognition and decoding which allows 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.

## What is phonics?

- This is the knowledge of how alphabetic sounds work and how these sounds are combined to correspond to the spoken word.
- It includes the skills of *blending* for reading and *segmentation* for spelling. Blending is the skill of building words by merging phonemes together – this is used when reading words. Segmentation is breaking down a word into its component phonemes – this is used when spelling words
- A phoneme is the smallest unit of sound in a word. It is generally accepted that there are 44 different phonemes in the English language. In phonics the children are taught each of these phonemes and the alternative graphemes (different ways of writing) these phonemes.
- A *grapheme* is the written symbol of a phoneme
- Some phonemes are written with two letters – these are called digraphs. Some phonemes are written with three letters – these are called trigraphs.
- *Split digraphs* are two letters that make one sound, but the letters are not adjacent in a word (they are split by another letter).
- *High frequency words (or tricky words)* are words which children are unable to read using their phonic knowledge. These are taught as a whole word.

## Implementation

At Hanley St. Luke's we use 'Sound!Start Phonics for Letters and Sounds', a complete synthetic, systematic phonics programme. We believe it is essential that both reading and spelling are taught with precision and clarity and that children have sufficient

opportunity to practice the knowledge and skills needed for both. For this reason, reading and spelling are taught separately within the Sound!Start Phonics for Letters and Sounds programme, with each lesson having a clear phonic goal and outcome based on either a reading or a spelling objective. In the early stages of the programme, when the focus is on GPC knowledge and word level work, the lessons alternate between a reading and spelling focus.

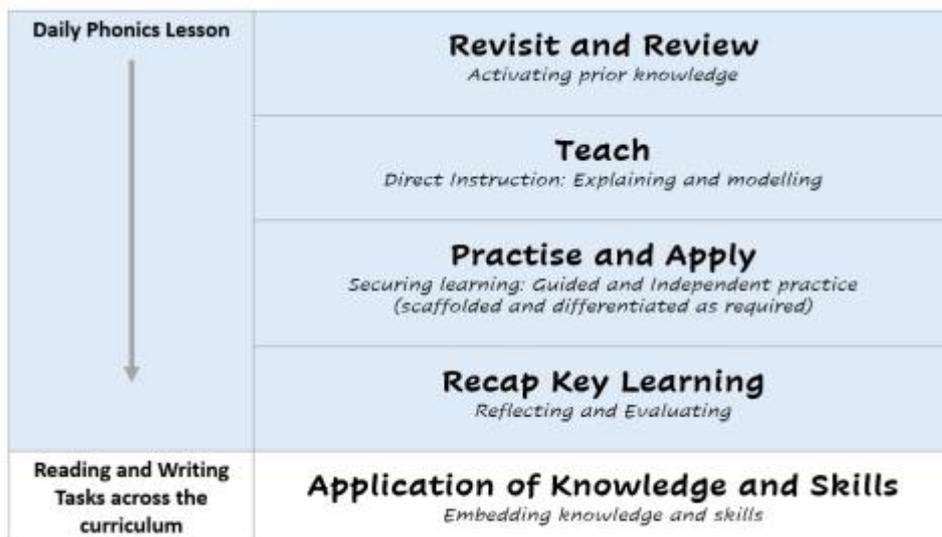
<b>Weekly Teaching Structure</b>
Reading Focus (word level)
Spelling Focus (word level)
Reading Focus (word level)
Spelling Focus (sentence level)
Tricky Word Focus

This approach enables children to gain confidence at GPC and word level and begin to develop automatic recognition of a small number of high frequency words, in preparation for caption / sentence level work. At this point there is a slight change to the structure of teaching across the week as follows:

<b>Weekly Teaching Structure</b>
Reading Focus (word level)
Reading Focus (sentence level)
Spelling Focus (word level)
Spelling Focus (sentence level)
Tricky Word Focus

**Daily lesson structure**

We teach phonics knowledge and skills through high-quality daily phonics lesson from the third week in the Reception year, throughout Y1, Y2 and beyond as required. Lessons are timetabled for 25 – 30 minutes. However additional opportunities to practice the knowledge and skills needed for reading are built into the daily timetable e.g. additional practice for reading flashcards (GPC recognition) and additional blending practice (oral blending/word building/ word reading).



**Diagram 1: The Structure of a phonics lesson can be seen above**

Application of phonics knowledge and skill at text level is included within the teaching sequence even though it will generally be taught at a separate time e.g. during a Guided Reading lesson or within a teacher-led writing / English lesson task. This emphasises the purpose of these lessons (application of the knowledge and skills taught and practised during and beyond the daily phonics lesson) and highlights the importance of ensuring consistency throughout the entire sequence.

## **Reception**

Children have two daily phonics lessons.

- Lesson 1- Learning a letter lesson (one GPC per day)
- Lesson 2- Main phonics lesson (revisit & review, practise & apply, recap/plenary)

Adults work with two groups per day straight after the direct teaching input within the “Revisit and Review” and “Teach” parts of the main phonics lesson focusing initially on word building tasks and then introducing the first Core Practice and Apply Task. This enables most children to participate independently in all parts of the main daily phonics lesson from the second half of the autumn term, allowing adults to prioritise interaction with the most vulnerable learners. “Practise and Apply” tasks are timetabled as small-group adult-led tasks.

## **KS1**

Children have a daily 25/30 minutes phonics lesson following the revisit/review, teach, practise and apply, recap structure (See Diagram 1). Every “practise and apply” activity is differentiated so that children are suitably challenged. Teachers and teaching assistants are present in all phonics lessons so that they offer support to children and prioritise interactions with the most vulnerable learners.

## **KS2**

It is recognised that phonics teaching and learning does not finish at the end of Key Stage 1. Children identified in phonics assessments that are still working on the phases as outlined in Sound!Start program are provided with a tailored intervention alongside the age related expectation for the year group.

## **Targeted reinforcement of class teaching**

For some children who need more support, we provide targeted reinforcement of class teaching, planned but incidental at strategic times in the day to ensure that they do not fall behind.

## **Assessment**

At Hanley St. Luke’s C of E Aided Primary School we assess phonics using the Sound!Start Phonics for Letters and Sounds assessment package. We assess reading every half term and spelling every term. These assessments are added to a whole school tracker where class teachers and the subject lead can carefully monitor progress. We use the tracker to identify the children in need of additional support and to pinpoint the priority area of need which will be the focus of the intervention sessions.

## **National Phonic Screening**

All pupils in Year 1 will have a national phonics screening check, which is carried out in June each year. Any pupil who does not attain the required standard will repeat the screening in Year 2. This is to ensure that all pupils have a secure foundation upon which to build their reading skills.

## **Intervention**

We carry out targeted, small step interventions for children finding it difficult to keep up with the pace of the programme. We believe it is important that these interventions are carried out daily, at the same time across reception and KS1. They are always delivered 1:1, by a trained member of staff and are carefully planned and resourced.