ALDERMAN RICHARD HALLAM PRIMARY SCHOOL

Phonics Policy

Policy Reviewed: September 2026

'Educating a community of life-long learners'

ALDERMAN RICHARD HALLAM PRIMARY SCHOOL

PHONICS POLICY

Overview

This policy outlines the requirements needed from Phonics teaching within Alderman Richard Hallam. It will also detail the expectations of lesson structures and terminology used with children from the Foundation Stage up through Key Stage 2. It is our aim that this policy will help to regulate and maintain consistency across the school and ensure the effective teaching of Phonics across Key Stages. It is the responsibility of all teaching staff to make sure this policy is implemented.

Aims

The aim of this policy is to have a consistently high standard of phonics teaching. At Alderman Richard Hallam Primary School we aim to:

- Deliver well-structured and systematic lessons that teach children the skills of reading and writing.
- Use creative and engaging techniques to embed the sounds learnt in Phonics lessons.
- Ensure children have access to appropriate Phonics prompts, whether working in Foundation Stage, Key Stage One or Key Stage Two.
- Develop fluency and competency in using the sounds for Reading and Writing and being able to transfer and adapt these skills for use independently.

Expectations of Teaching Phonics

Nursery

Nursery use Super Sounds by The Learning Lady, a fun, active, and engaging pre-phonics programme designed for preschool and nursery children. It prepares children exceptionally well for any future phonics programme by developing the essential early listening, speaking, and sound awareness skills needed for reading success.

Fully aligned with the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), Super Sounds provides a clear and systematic pre-phonics progression, helping children build key skills step by step through play-based learning. Sessions include repetition of familiar games and activities, allowing children to revisit and deepen their learning as they develop. Stories, songs, and rhymes are central to the programme, providing meaningful contexts that make learning enjoyable and memorable.

Children take part in Super Sounds sessions three times a week. The programme follows six progressive steps:

1. Let's learn to make, match and copy sounds through listening and attention activities.
2. Let's learn to make, match and copy lots of sounds with our voices and bodies.
3. Let's learn to break words into syllables by playing with rhythm.
4. Let's learn to break spoken words into chunks by hearing, copying and making rhymes.
5. Let's learn to hear the similarities and differences in spoken sounds at the start of words.
6. Let's learn to hear and say separate sounds in words, ready for making and reading words when school starts.

This structured approach ensures children develop strong foundations in communication, language, and phonological awareness, preparing them confidently for Phase 2 phonics.

Phonics Policy

Reception and Year 1

Reception and Year 1 are following the THE Partnership Phonics Programme, introduced last academic year in Reception and now being taught in Year 1. This will then be taught in Year 2 the following academic year.

The programme provides a structured route for children to meet or exceed the expected standard in the Y1 Phonics Screening Check and all National Curriculum expectations for word reading through decoding by the end of KS1.

As part of the programme, there are four key concepts that are taught to all pupils; these are:

1. Letters are symbols (spellings) that represent sounds.

2. A sound may be spelled by one, two, three or four letters: E.g. dog street night eight

3. The same sound can be spelled in more than one way: E.g. rain acorn cake day

4. Many spellings can represent more than one sound: E.g. head seat break

There are also three key skills that are taught to all pupils, these are:

1. Blending: the ability to push sounds together to build words.

2. Segmenting: the ability to pull apart the individual sounds in words.

3. Phoneme manipulation: the ability to insert sounds into and delete sounds out of words. This skill is necessary to test out alternatives for spellings that represent more than one sound.

Each lesson is built around direct teaching sessions with extensive teacher-child interaction. Throughout each session, children are expected to actively engage in the learning. Each lesson involves a multisensory approach. The lesson structure provides a consistent approach where children get to know what is coming next and minimal time is spent explaining new activities. The teaching and learning activities are interesting and engaging but firmly focused on intensifying the learning associated with the phonic goal.

Through the programme, Reception and Year 1 will be taught a discrete phonics session daily as a whole class. Intervention groups are put in place when the need is identified to ensure learners successfully access and move through the programme. During the apply section, the activities will be differentiated to ensure that all children are reaching their full potential within a challenging and supportive environment. Continuous provision and the outdoor learning environment in EYFS and Year 1 support children in closing the gap and consolidating their phonic knowledge. Phonics mats should be freely available in each area of learning and outdoors. To support pupils, the use of Makaton is to be used as an action to the picture corresponding to the sound.

The teaching of Phonics is a component to a teaching reading approach. Children also receive reading teaching through Guided Reading, Whole class reading and one-to-one reading. For more information please see the EYFS Policy and Reading Policy.

Year 2:

Year 2 are continuing to follow the format of Letters and Sounds using resources created and adapted by the Phonics lead using 'Mr. Mc, Flying with Phonics'. Phonics should be taught daily and these sessions will be split into the sections below and should focus on teaching one sound either per week, over a few days or per day, depending on the competency of the children. As part of this programme, all sounds in phase 2, 3 and 5 have a corresponding picture which is consistent between the flashcards and sound mats. All sounds have an action which should be used consistently. Descriptions of the actions to be used and videos modeling them are available to support with consistency. All single phonemes have a song to support the learning of the sounds. All digraphs and trigraphs in all phases will have a rhyme to support the learning of these sounds. It is expected that all rhymes are on the flashcards and should be used within flipcharts. Furthermore a consistent approach to forming letters should be used by using the same letter formation rhymes. Actions, songs and pictures are inspired by Mr. Mc. Flying with phonics but some have been adapted and new ones have been created as needed by the phonics lead.

The order of teaching new phonemes will continue to follow the recommended order by Letters and Sounds. As a school, we will continue to use the structure of review, teach, apply and practice within our lessons. This should be explicit within Phonics Planning.

<u>Review</u>

The review section of each Phonics lesson is vital in ensuring that children are refreshing their memory of the sounds they have already learnt. This can be done through the use of flash cards or songs, but must be a recap of either one sound they have already learnt, or multiple sounds.

During the Review section, the following may also be recapped:

- Tricky words – reading and writing.
- Letter names
- Picture linked to the sound.
- Techniques for decoding.
- Sound buttons.

It is expected that as part of the review section of the lesson, there will time to practice oral segmenting and blending. Teachers and support staff to use the language of 'I robot … you say' and then 'I say … you robot'.

<u>Teach</u>

The Teach section is where new learning should be taking place. In this section a new sound should be introduced, or a learnt sound in a new context.

The sound can be introduced in a number of ways, but should be spoken, written and read to enable children to develop their knowledge of the sound in all contexts. We encourage staff to teach Phonics in dynamic and engaging ways, in-line with the rest of the Curriculum.

During the teach section, the sound could be:

- Written on whiteboards/in books.
- Written using fingers in the air/on hands/on a friend's back.
- Spoken to a friend, looking at the shape of the lips and tongues.
- Said in a series of different words using the key sound.
- Read from the IWB.
- Hidden around the room.

Practice

The practice section should involve the sound being used in words, being written or read, to encourage children to see the sound within a word. Children can practise using the 'Three Step' technique (1. Detect, 2. Segment, 3. Blend) to help them apply their knowledge of sounds into the reading of a word.

During the practice section, teachers could do the following activities:

- Matching words to pictures.
- Buried treasure.
- Making words from phonemes.
- Speed reading.
- Phonics Play games.
- Silly soup.

Apply

The apply section of a phonics lesson should focus on applying the words in a different context, such as within a sentence or mixed with other phonemes. The sentence could either be read or written but the primary focus should be on recalling the sound of the day and using it in the correct place in the sentence.

The apply section could include:

- Silly sentences/questions.
- Making their own sentences.
- Sentence building blocks.
- Chopped up sentences/scrambled sentences.

Key Stage 2

For Key Stage 2, Phonics lessons can be incorporated into timetables if needed with the cohort based upon previous assessments and can also be used as an intervention for SEND, EAL and NtE children to help them learn how to read and write phonetically. The introduction of Dyslexia Gold this academic year will also provide an intervention for pupils who are not making expected progress with the school's phonics programmes.

All phonics lessons from Reception should be taught as whole class sessions with any additional adults supporting pupils on the carpet. They could have a group on the carpet next to them to support their learning but all pupils must have access to the main teaching input. Any interventions for phonics should be additional to the main phonics lesson. Nursery will be using small key worker phonics sessions.

Phonics Screening

The Phonics Screening takes place each year in June for Y1. Children are asked to read 40 words that are phonetically decodable using sounds from Phase 2, 3 and 5. The check tests children's ability to recognise sounds from each of the phases and apply them into reading a word.

You can find more guidance about the Phonics Screening Check at https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/phonics-screening-check-sample-materials-and-training-video

Progression

F1: Phase 1
F2: Phase 2, Phase 3 and Phase 4
Year 1: Phase 3 and 4 recap and teaching of Phase 5 with application
Year 2: Phase 5 recap and Phase 6 – Grammar. Interventions for those who did not pass the Year 1 phonics screening check.

Inclusion

All pupils should be included within phonics lessons. Adaptive teaching strategies should be evident in planning. The use of practical activities, pictures, actions, songs and rhymes should be used to support EAL and SEND pupils. The use of support staff should be used within lessons to support pupils. Any phonics interventions should take place outside of phonics lessons. If the teaching of phonics is not accessible to a pupil, the use of precision teaching should be introduced.

Pupils who excel at phonics should be encouraged to work on the application element of phonics and also have the use of grammar introduced into their phonics sessions.

In KS2, if pupils have not been able to pass the phonics screening check, they will be receiving phonics interventions. If pupils are not making progress with the use of phonics interventions, the use of precision teaching or engaging in the intervention 'Dyslexia Gold' could be introduced.

Pupils NtE should be provided with small group phonics sessions within their year group or phase.

Assessment

Nursery:
Within the programme, each stage comes with learning intentions. Staff in the Nurseries have these learning intentions as part of their skills checklist. Assessments are made within the phonics lessons and during continuous provision and are more play-based and observational. Teachers will upload the assessments made onto Arbor.

Reception and Year 1:

Throughout the programme, formative and summative assessment is built-in to monitor progress within each phase to inform next steps within the programme. Reading focus lessons and dictation focus lessons are included throughout the programme. These lessons provide opportunities for retrieval practice. They are designed for children to work independently and will provide assessment information for teachers as children move through each set and phase of the programme. At the end of the phase, each child will complete an assessment sheet one-to-one, with an adult. The assessment involves reading GPCs, words (decodable and tricky words), and sentences; and spelling words and writing a dictated sentence or sentences. Assessments will be added onto Arbor as part of formative ongoing assessments.

Year 2:

Pupils will be assessed using assessment grids provided by the phonics lead to see what sounds the pupils recognise and also their ability to apply the skills of segmenting and blending. These assessments should be used to inform groupings and subsequent planning. Assessments should be ongoing and should be updated on Arbor as part of formative assessments.

Monitoring and Review

Monitoring and reviewing takes place on a regular basis to ensure Phonics is as effective as possible. This includes:

- A focused phonics action plan that is regularly reviewed and adapted to meet the needs of the school.
- Phonics Learning Walks and detailed feedback to ensure the progression of phonics teaching.
- Phonics planning audits.
- Phonics training for members of staff.
- Monitoring interventions that are put into place for pupils in Key Stage 2 who failed to pass the Phonics Screening Check by the end of Key Stage 1 and if these are being effective.
- Monitoring the use of phonics interventions for pupils with EAL or NtE and how effective they are being.

School Closure

In the event of a school closure, Teachers will continue to provide planning and engaging learning for pupils using Class Dojo. Through Class Dojo, Teachers will convert their lessons to make them accessible from home as well as setting work to be completed. Pupils will then follow the lesson and complete the required work and submit this using their Class Dojo account. Pupils who do not have access to the Internet at home will be provided with high-quality work books to continue their study of the National Curriculum. Creative and expressive art, through the form of videos and pictures, will be encouraged. Children will be encouraged to use resources around the house as well as outside to creatively express and achieve their learning objectives.

Upon school reopening following a school closure, year groups will provide a Recovery Curriculum which is tailored to the needs of the pupils in their classes. This will firstly focus on the social, emotional and behavioural needs of the class followed by an assessment of the pupils' academic needs. This will then

inform planning so that all pupils can catch up any lost learning. The previous year's objectives will be reviewed to see if the children have covered them in enough detail. If not, they will be taught in their current year group. Objectives that were unable to be covered at home (for example due to lack of resources) will also be continued and taught when the school reopens.

Date for review: September 2027