



Phonics

Phonics is a way of teaching children to read and write by showing them how symbols (letters) can be used to represent sounds. The mastery of these fundamental, technical skills ensures that children are equipped with the expertise required to become confident, fluent readers and writers. These skills open the door to learning.

Our Intent

At Milecastle, we know that in order to provide our children with the best possible start in becoming confident, fluent, life-long lovers of reading, it is vital that we prioritise the essential skills and concepts associated with the teaching of phonics. We want pupils to show resilience and perseverance when reading and spelling unfamiliar words, confidently applying the phonic skills they have been taught and showing determination when faced with more challenging words. It is our intention that all pupils will receive the high quality teaching required to reach automaticity and fluency in their application of these essential phonic skills.

Implementation

We follow the Sounds-Write programme which is a high quality synthetic phonics programme. It is taught in many countries around the world and is one of the DfE approved schemes. Sounds-Write begins with the sounds in speech and teaches children how these sounds can be represented by a code, i.e. the alphabet. All staff are trained in Sounds-Write, and it is taught from the very beginning of Reception until the end of Year 6. We understand that learning is most effective when cognitive load is kept to a minimum and when sufficient time is allocated to rehearsing previously taught content. In this way, and by ensuring a consistent, systematic approach throughout school, we ensure that our pupils achieve mastery of these crucial phonic skills and become confident, independent readers and writers who have the skills required to access the rest of the curriculum.

How is phonics organised across school?

The Sounds-Write programme begins with the Initial Code which is taught throughout Reception. This is followed by the Extended Code which is taught throughout years one and two. Each stage of the programme consists of a set of scripted lessons. Alongside the Extended Code, Polysyllabic lessons are taught to teach longer, more complex words. These

lessons continue throughout Key Stage Two, teaching the reading and spelling of longer, more complex words.

The four key concepts children are taught are:

1. Letters are symbols that represent sounds
2. Sounds can be spelled using 1, 2, 3 or 4 letters
3. The same sound can be spelled in different ways
4. The same spelling can represent different sounds

The three key skills children will become proficient in are:

1. Blending
2. Segmenting
3. Phoneme manipulation

Phonics in EYFS

The teaching of phonics begins in the second full week of Reception and builds up so that children receive a thirty minute phonics lesson every day. Reception children are taught the Initial Code where they practise all 3 key skills, learn the 1:1 sound-spelling correspondences and secure their understanding of key concept 1. This provides children with the knowledge and skills required to decode and encode a wide range of words and sentences. At first, children learn to read and write simple one syllable words with a CVC structure. Complexity of word structure systematically builds up so that by the end of Reception, children can read and write words of up to six phonemes. Alongside the teaching of Sounds-Write, children are provided with high quality, decodable texts which match exactly to the phonics programme. This ensures that children only ever read books containing GPCs already familiar to them. These books are re-read several times in order to develop fluency and automaticity.

Phonics in Key Stage 1

Once the Initial Code has been mastered, children continue to practise all 3 key skills whilst learning the Extended Code throughout Key Stage One. Here, key concepts 2, 3 and 4 are gradually introduced and embedded. Whilst learning the Extended Code, children read and write monosyllabic and polysyllabic words of increasing complexity. Children in Key Stage One continue to receive a daily, 30 minute long phonic session. As with the Initial Code, reading books match the Sounds-Write programme exactly, are phonetically controlled so that they are completely decodable and contain only common exception words previously taught.

Phonics in Key Stage 2

By the end of Key Stage One, the vast majority of pupils are fluent readers who have achieved mastery in the key concepts and skills of Sounds-Write. For those children who

still require phonics teaching, Sounds-Write is taught as an intervention by fully-trained teaching assistants.

However, learning of the Extended Code is a lifelong process, the knowledge and skills of which are applied each time we encounter a new word. For this reason, Sounds-Write is applied up to the end of Key Stage Two. From Year 3 onwards, pupils receive three 30 minute Sounds-Write sessions per week. These sessions continue to build on the Extended Code through the teaching of progressively more complex polysyllabic words, including words listed in the National Curriculum. Lessons also begin to teach etymology and morphology, further developing pupils' understanding of the meanings of words and their origins.

How do we plan for phonics?

The Sounds-Write programme is highly structured ensuring that concepts, knowledge and skills are continually embedded and built upon. Teachers follow the progression documents carefully to ensure even coverage.

Progression documents

INITIAL CODE	
Unit	Content
1	Introduce the spellings a i m s t
2	Introduce the spellings n o p
3	Introduce the spellings b c g h
4	Introduce the spellings d e f v
5	Introduce the spellings k l r u
6	Introduce the spellings j w z
7	Introduce the spellings x y and two-letter spellings (digraphs) ff ll ss zz
8	Words with sound structure VCC and CVCC
9	Words with sound structure CCVC
10	Words with structure CCCVC, CCVCC and CVCCC
11	Introduce the two-letter spellings (digraphs) ch sh th ck ng wh , and <q><u> for /k/ /w/

EXTENDED CODE

1	First spellings of sound /ae/ - ai ay ea a-e
2	First spellings of sound /ee/ - ee ea y e
3	Spelling <ea> representing /ae/ & /ee/
4	First spellings of sound /oe/ - o oa ow oe o-e
5	Spelling <o> representing /o/ & /oe/
6	First spellings of sound /er/ - er ir or ur
7	First spellings of sound /e/ - e ea ai
8	First spellings of sound /ow/ - ou ow
9	Spelling <ow> representing /oe/ & /ow/
10	First spellings of sound _m /oo/ _n - oo ew ue u-e o
11	Sound /ie/ by spellings i igh ie i-e y
12	Sound _b /oo/ _k by spellings oo u oul
13	Spelling <oo> representing _m /oo/ _n & _b /oo/ _k
14	Sound /u/ by spellings u o ou
15	Spelling <ou> representing /ow/ /u/ _m /oo/ _n
16	Sound /s/ by spellings s sc se ss c ce
17	Spelling <s> representing /s/ & /z/
18	Sound /l/ by spellings l le ll el al il
19	First spellings of sound /or/ - or aw a au ar
20	Sound /air/ by spellings air are ear eir ere (<ayer > as in 'prayer' and <ayor > as in 'mayor')
21	Sound /ue/ by spellings ue u-e u ew eu
22	Spelling <ew> representing _m /oo/ _n & /ue/
23	Sound /oy/ by spellings oi oy
24	Sound /ar/ by spellings ar a al au

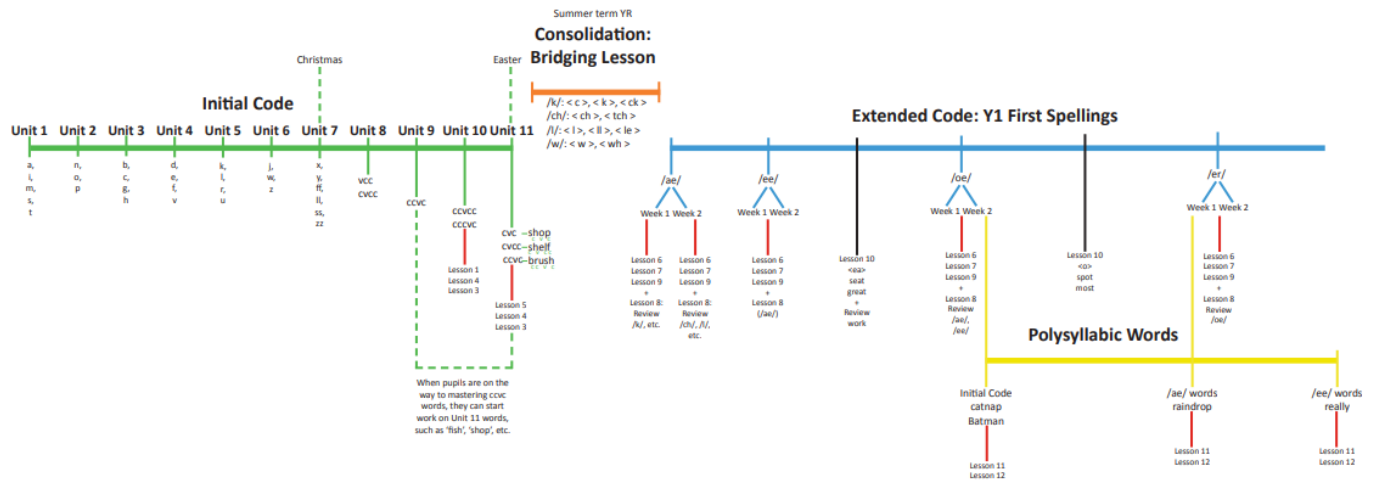
EXTENDED CODE continued

25	Sound /o/ by spellings o a
26	Spelling <a> representing /a/ /o/ /ae/ & /ar/
27	More spellings of sound /ae/ - a ei ey eigh
28	Sound /d/ by spellings d dd ed
29	More spellings of sound /ee/ - ey ie i
30	Sound /i/ by spellings i ui e y
31	Spelling <y> representing /y/ /i/ /ie/ & /ee/
32	More spellings of sound /oe/ - ou ough
33	Sound /n/ by spellings n nn gn kn
34	More spellings of sound /er/ - ar ear our
35	Sound /v/ by spellings v ve vv
36	Sound _m /oo/ _n by spellings ui ou ough u u-e
37	Sound /j/ by spellings j g ge gg dge
38	Sound /g/ by spellings g gg gh gu
39	Spellings <g> and <gg> representing /j/ & /g/
40	Sound /f/ by spellings f ff gh ph
41	Spelling <gh> representing /f/ & /g/
42	Sound /m/ by spellings m mm mb mn
43	More spellings of sound /or/ - ore oar our augh ough
44	Sound /h/ by spellings h wh
45	Sound /k/ by spellings c k ck ch cc
46	Sound /r/ by spellings r rr wr rh
47	Sound /t/ by spellings t tt te bt
48	Sound /z/ by spellings z zz ze s ss se
49	Sound /eer/ by spellings eer ere ear

POLYSYLLABIC WORDS

1	Two-syllable words (a) Compound, Initial Code only, e.g. Batman (b) Non-compound, Initial Code only (c) Non-compound, Initial & Extended Code
2	Three-syllable words
3	Four-syllable words
4	Five-syllable words
5	Common suffixes

Sounds-Write Timeline UK



What does phonics look like in the classroom?

Phonics is taught to whole classes in order to ensure that no child misses out on crucial phonics teaching and in order to prevent any gaps from forming. Pupils requiring additional support will receive this throughout the lesson from a TA or the class teacher. Each Sounds-Write session consists of a mixture of three different lessons from the programme. 50% of the lesson concentrates on teaching new content, 40% rehearses and consolidates previously taught content and 10% is spent on applying knowledge and skills by reading in text or writing through dictation exercises. Teachers follow the Sounds-Write scripts with fidelity and therefore the same terminology, language and gestures can be seen being used throughout the school. This consistency of approach reduces cognitive load and allows pupils to focus on the content of the lesson. The format of lessons ensures that all pupils are actively engaged at every stage with all pupils being required to participate. Teachers using formative assessment expertly to identify any children who may need further practice and to inform future planning.

How is phonics evidenced?

The majority of phonics work is carried out on mini whiteboards. This is to ensure the link between reading and writing is immediate and to aid learning being transferred into the long-term memory. It also ensures that teachers are able to see immediately any children who have made errors so that error corrections can be used. At times, teachers may take photographs of pupils' work in order to upload these to Seesaw if it is felt that a particular piece of work highlights achievement or progress. Also, some dictations carried out during phonics lessons may be recorded in books.

Impact

The impact of phonics teaching is measured through daily, formative assessment. This means that any misconceptions can be addressed and any children requiring further support can be identified immediately. At various points, teachers may decide to use diagnostic assessments from the Sounds-Write programme to determine a child's current phonics level or to identify any particular weaknesses. This could be for a pupil who has been newly admitted to the school, after a school holiday or for an individual or group of pupils who appear to need support in keeping up. At the beginning of each half term, teachers in Reception and Key Stage One administer phonics assessments to pupils to ascertain how much previously taught content has been transferred into the long-term memory, any content which needs to be revisited and any pupils who require interventions. As a result, pupils across all phases make very good progress in their phonic development and by the end of Key Stage One, most children can read widely and fluently and are able to apply their phonic skills when reading and writing in all areas of the curriculum. Pupils in Key Stage Two are able to confidently apply their knowledge of polysyllabic words, morphology and etymology when faced with new vocabulary in their reading or writing.