



Phonics & Early Reading policy

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Drove Primary School

Phonics Policy

At Drove Primary we have adopted Rocket Phonics as our systematic synthetic phonics programme to teach phonics in Reception and Year 1. Rocket Phonics lessons follow a Review, Teach, Practice and Apply structure completed as a whole class. Our phonics lessons are taught daily for 30 minutes. Teaching uses a combination of digital and printed resources, along with a fully matched series of decodable reading books. At the heart of the programme, are the digital-only 'Big Books'. The books consist of language-rich stories to teach all the target letter-sounds in context. Through detailed termly assessments, we track pupils to identify and respond to their individual learning needs. The Phonics Screening Check is administered in June of Year 1 with a re-check in Year 2, if required. Our curriculum enables all children to acquire knowledge, develop their vocabulary and have the tools to communicate their ideas and learning effectively, both orally and in writing.

Phonics Intent

At Drove Primary School, our 4 Golden Threads underpin our curriculum intent to provide our children with;

- explicitly taught letters and sounds correspondents (graphemes and phonemes,) to be able to successfully blend and segment individual sounds together to read and spell
- the knowledge and skills needed to become fluent readers and writers
- language rich experiences to develop a love of reading for both pleasure and information
- to build and apply their phonemic skills through early reading into Key Stage 2 so that they are reading at age-related expectations and beyond

Our phonics programme aims to empower all children to acquire the skills and knowledge they need to use the English language confidently, appropriately and accurately to the best of their ability. Our lessons are carefully planned and sequenced in units to build on prior learning.

Rocket Phonics Lesson Structure

Rocket Phonics teaches one letter-sound correspondence over two days. The first day focuses on blending skills and the second day focuses on segmenting skills. Reading and writing are interlinked so there will naturally be overlap, but by separating the skills and spreading them across two days the teacher has greater clarity over which skill is being taught, practised or applied. The children have more time and more opportunity to learn, practise and apply the skills using the new letter-sound correspondences before moving on. The two-day pattern is repeated twice through the week, leaving the fifth day as an opportunity for further consolidation, assessment, enrichment activities or as a focus lesson on common exception words (for which lesson plans and Pupil Practice Booklet lessons are provided).

Day 1: Blending focus Revisit and review – Use flashcards to revisit and review previously taught sounds. Teach – Use the IWB Big Book to teach the new letter-sound correspondence. Practise and apply – Children practise decoding using the Big Book decodable word lozenges, then using the first Pupil Practice Booklet lesson page. Apply – Use Target Practice reading books for shared, guided and/or individual reading. Further application and consolidation – Children read independently using Rocket Phonics reading books.

Day 2: Segmenting focus Revisit and review – Use air writing to revisit and review previously taught sounds. Teach – Use your flipchart or whiteboard to model and teach letter formation and segmenting.

Practise and apply – Children practise segmenting and letter formation using mini whiteboards, then using the second Pupil Practice Booklet lesson page. Apply – Children transfer skills to English and wider curriculum lessons.

Days 3 and 4: Blending focus and segmenting focus The above sequence in Days 1 and 2 is repeated with the new letter-sound correspondence.

Day 5: Flexible day A flexible day that can be tailored to your children's needs. Consolidation – Revisit learning using flashcards, Big Book spreads and games. Focus on common exception words – Use the Pupil Practice Booklet common exception word lesson to teach, practice, apply and consolidate (lesson plans provided for each week). Assessment – Check, observe and make notes on children's progress. Enrichment – Play games such as letter-sound or word bingo or use activities. Use Target Practice reading books for whole class shared, or group guided reading sessions

Assessment of Phonics

To maintain accurate tracking in Reception and Year 1 we carry out termly assessments to track pupil knowledge and retention and identify any cohort strengths and weaknesses to inform planning and next steps. In addition to this, in Year 1 we carry out termly mock phonics screeners to expose the children to the format of the test and use analysis models to inform our planning. Any children in the school who are not on track are assessed using the baseline assessments which support the teacher to identify where to start within the programme.

Handwriting

It is important for pupils to be able to write clearly and develop a fluent and legible handwriting style. From EYFS to year 1, presentation should be neat, with children taught and encouraged to use print which leads in to cursive during year 2, once they have finished the phonics SSP.

We aim for pupils to be able to:

- Form letters correctly
- Use upper and lower case letters appropriately
- Begin to use a joined style during Year 2
- Use a correct and comfortable pencil/pen grip
- Foundation Stage to use appropriate tools for their writing according to their developmental stage
- Key Stage 1 to use a pencil

Working walls

At Drove we have a consistent approach to our working walls. The working wall should:

- focus on the sound taught that week so that children are not overloaded cognitively
- have some modelled words and a written sentence from the segmenting day on the working wall
- cumulative sounds may be displayed in Reception and Y1 (they should not become wall paper, and changed throughout the year)
- poster charts displayed in all classrooms

Learning aids

At Drove we recognise that children throughout the school will need support for spelling and therefore to allow equity and consistency for all we would expect as a minimum in classes

- sound mats are available for children in Reception, Y1 and Y2
- desktop alphabetic code charts are accessible for pupils on their tables in KS2

Learners that need additional support

At Drove our bottom 20% sit at a table in Year 1, and from the Summer term in Reception. Teaching Assistants mirror the teaching that is happening with the class teacher. This enables misconceptions to be addressed more easily and to ensure there is full participation and pupil engagement.

Key groups of pupils are identified for catch up interventions and these take place with the class teachers in small groups and/or as part of our school led tutoring programme after school delivered by teachers.