



Dunstable Ickniel Lower School



Our phonic programme and support materials

Dunstable Ickniel Lower School uses the Letters and Sounds programme to teach phonics. Teachers also draw on a variety of other resources from schemes such as Phonics Play and Jolly phonics. We have a variety of books from different reading schemes so that children can experience a plethora of texts and genre.

How we teach phonics

Reception teach phonics every day for 30 minutes to all pupils this consists of active and engaging activities to support their developing phonics knowledge.

Year 1 teach phonics every morning for 30 minutes where the children are all exposed to the new sounds as well as moving to their ability group, based on assessment. This is specifically tailored to meet their needs and is appropriately challenging so that they can achieve to their full potential. In the afternoon Year 1 teach phonics in their guided reading groups where they complete engaging phonics and spelling based activities.

In Year 2, children have spelling lessons 4 times a week which focus on phonics and SPAG (spelling, punctuation and grammar). The children who are not yet secure on their Phase 1- 5 phonics will be part of a structured phonics intervention during the second half of the spelling lesson.

The Year 1 Phonic Test

In June of each year, all children in Year 1 will take the statutory Phonics Test. This test is administered by the Class Teacher (or a teacher known to the children) and consists of a booklet showing 40 simple words. Some are real words, ranging from “jump” to “portrait”, and some are “non-words” (also sometimes called “alien words”) such as “vap” and “blure”. In the past two years the pass mark has been 32 out of 40, but it may change from year to year. Children who do not gain the required pass mark re-sit the test again in Year 2.

By teaching phonics in this way we aim for our children to:

- Match graphemes for all phonemes with increasing speed and accuracy
- Read accurately by blending sounds
- Decode words (both real and “nonsense”) accurately – thus giving them confidence to attempt more challenging words in their home reading.
- Read and re-read phonic appropriate books with increasing confidence, enabling them to discuss and express views about the texts they are reading.
- Develop a love and enjoyment for reading

Phonic glossary of useful terms

Your child may be using these terms at home and this glossary may be useful in helping you better understand them. Whilst the terms may look very demanding, the children are using them frequently in class and understand them. If you need further clarification, please speak to your class teacher who will be happy to explain. Your class teacher will also be able to advise you about computer games to support phonic teaching at home.



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Learn, Believe, Achieve



Key terminology:

grapheme — a letter or a group of letters representing one sound, e.g. sh, ch, igh, ough (as in 'though')

phoneme — the smallest single identifiable sound, e.g. the letters 'sh' represent just one sound, but 'sp' represents two (/s/ and /p/)

blend (vb) — to draw individual sounds together to pronounce a word, e.g. s-n-a-p, blended together, reads snap

cluster — two (or three) letters making two (or three) sounds, e.g. the first three letters of 'straight' are a consonant cluster

digraph — two letters making one sound, e.g. sh, ch, th, ph.

vowel digraphs comprise of two vowels which, together, make one sound, e.g. ai, oo, ow

split digraph — two letters, split, making one sound, e.g. a-e as in make or i-e in site

grapheme-phoneme correspondence (GPC) — the relationship between sounds and the letters which represent those sounds; also known as 'letter-sound correspondences'

mnemonic — a device for memorising and recalling something, such as a snake shaped like the letter 'S'

segment (vb) — to split up a word into its individual phonemes in order to spell it, e.g. the word 'cat' has three phonemes: /c/, /a/, /t/