



## **Mount Hawke Academy**

### **Phonics Policy**

#### **Aims**

The processes by which children comprehend spoken language are the same as those by which they comprehend the words on the page; the difference being that the first relies upon hearing the words and the second upon seeing the words in written form. Obviously, in order to comprehend written texts children must first learn to recognise, that is decode, the words on the page.

High-quality phonic teaching secures the crucial skills of word recognition that, once mastered, enable children to read fluently and automatically thus freeing them to concentrate on the meaning of the text.

Children at Mount Hawke Academy will secure automatic decoding skills and progress from 'learning to read' to 'reading to learn' for purpose and pleasure. The ultimate goal of learning to read is comprehension.

To achieve this, practitioners and teachers are clear about which activities are designed to teach children to acquire word recognition skills, and which will help children develop high-level comprehension skills.

#### **Principles of high-quality phonic work at Mount Hawke Academy**

The Rose Report makes it clear that 'high-quality phonic work' should be taught systematically and discretely as the prime approach used in the teaching of early reading.

Beginner readers should be taught:

- grapheme–phoneme correspondences in a clearly defined, incremental sequence
- to apply the highly important skill of blending (synthesising) phonemes in the order in which they occur, all through a word to read it
- to apply the skills of segmenting words into their constituent phonemes to spell
- that blending and segmenting are reversible processes.

High-quality phonic work will be most effective when:

- it is part of a broad and rich curriculum that engages children in a range of activities and experiences to develop their speaking and listening skills and phonological awareness
- it is multi sensory, encompassing simultaneous visual, auditory and kinaesthetic activities to enliven core learning
- it is time-limited, such that the great majority of children should be confident readers by the end of Key Stage 1
- it is systematic, that is to say, it follows a carefully planned programme with fidelity, reinforcing and building on previous learning to secure children's progress
- it is taught discretely and daily at a brisk pace
- there are opportunities to reinforce and apply acquired phonic knowledge and skills across the curriculum and in such activities as shared and guided reading
- children's progress in developing and applying their phonic knowledge is carefully assessed and monitored.

**Letters and Sounds** (outlined in '*Letters and Sounds: Principles and Practice of High Quality Phonics*) *Primary National Strategy 2007*)

Letters and Sounds is designed to help practitioners and teachers to teach children how the alphabet works for reading and spelling. Systematic, high quality phonics teaching is essential and is needed for children to achieve the goal of reading.

Letters and Sounds is designed as a time limited programme of phonics work aimed at securing fluent word recognition skills for reading by the end of Key Stage 1 and as an intervention in Key Stage Two. However, the teaching and learning of spelling, which children generally find harder than reading, will continue.

Mount Hawke Academy has implemented the programme whereby six structured phases are followed to accompany the 2014 Primary National Curriculum's pace and progression. However, in Letters and Sounds the phases are deliberately porous so that no children are held back or unduly pressured to move on before they are equipped to do so. Therefore, in Foundation and Key Stage One children are placed in high quality, phased phonics groups.

**Organisation of Phonics**

Phonics at Mount Hawke Academy is taught as a discrete lesson each week throughout the Foundation Stage and Key Stage One. In Key Stage Two it is used as an intervention for those who have not succeeded phase six in Year Two. A wide variety of resources are used, including Phonics Play, Rapid Phonics and Letters and Sounds, all matched to the English National Curriculum (2014).

**Foundation Stage**

The children in Foundation Stage (Class R Mousehole) have discrete phonics teaching input daily by teachers and practitioners. The sessions last between fifteen to twenty minutes. In Foundation Stage there are also constant and enhanced activities within the environment for the children to access during independent learning. The activities have learning outcomes specifically planned from the Letters and Sounds Document.

**Key Stage One**

The children in Key Stage One are placed in phased groups. They meet on a daily basis for twenty minutes. The Key Stage One classrooms have displays for the children to 'apply' their knowledge from the taught sessions within literacy sessions.

**Key Stage Two**

The children in other years have phonics sessions as an intervention, delivered by teaching assistants and teachers.

**Classroom Environment**

In Foundation and Key Stage One, teachers are constantly developing the classroom environment to have an age appropriate display concentrating on both sounds and key words.

**Links with the National Curriculum**

Within the core English sessions, teachers plan and deliver the objectives outlined in the English National Curriculum (2014) during daily English and guided reading sessions. Predominantly strand five and six link closely with the Letters and Sounds document and enable the children to learn new skills and 'apply' skills taught through phonics sessions.

### **Cross Curricular Links**

In Mount Hawke Academy, we recognise the impact good phonics teaching can have on children learning to read and write, and we see it as part of a rich English curriculum. Children are exposed to a wide variety of books and texts to encourage their love of reading. During English sessions we encourage children to apply their phonic knowledge to read and write. In Early Years children are given the opportunity to develop their mark making into early writing through setting exciting contexts for writing for a purpose using their phonic knowledge.

### **Equal Opportunities**

All children are given equal access to the phonics curriculum. Inclusion, including provision for gifted and talented, EAL and SEN phonic lessons are streamed so that the task is directly matched to children's phonic level. Regular assessment is used to ensure that children are in the correct phonics groups. Streaming also allows for children that benefit from learning in smaller groups to be accommodated for. Gifted and talented children are identified and work in a smaller group at the same ability and allowed to progress at a faster pace than the rest of the class. Children with SEN either work in a group but with a Teaching Assistant to provide additional support, or they work individually on their phonic targets, depending on their needs. Children who do not pass the Year One phonics screening check in Year One have the opportunity to repeat the check when they are in Year 2. We acknowledge that for most children regular Synthetic Phonics lessons are the best way to learn, but some children require a different approach. For those children we run a Rapid Phonics programme, where children work in a smaller group and they learn through cumulative and repetitive patterns.

### **Assessment and Monitoring**

The Foundation Stage and Key Stage One use tracking grids broken up into each phase with specific learning targets that the teachers plan, teach and assess from. Other supporting materials are used in order to track the children's specific skills to determine their level and to ensure that they are making rapid progress.

This policy will be reviewed annually.