



Phonics at Danehill CE Primary School

We use the **Sounds~Write** phonics scheme to teach our pupils from EYFS to Year 2 how to read, write and spell. The Sounds-Write scheme is a highly structured and comprehensive programme, which focuses on the 44 sounds of the English language. Through discrete, daily phonics sessions, children are taught the variations of spellings for these sounds which are then applied to reading and writing.

The Initial Code

The children begin in Reception with the Initial Code, where they learn three skills: segmenting, blending and phoneme manipulation.

- Blending – the ability to push sounds together to build words (c-a-t = cat)
- Segmenting – the ability to pull apart the individual sounds in words (pig = p-i-g)
- Phoneme manipulation – the ability to insert sounds into words and delete sounds out of words. This skill is necessary to test out alternatives for spellings that represent more than one sound.

Initially, phonics lessons begin with building and reading CVC (consonant-vowel-consonant) words, introducing single letter sounds gradually. Once children are confident with all the single letter sounds, more complex word structures will be introduced, such as CCVC, CVCC, CCVCC and CCCVC.

By the end of Reception, children will learn the concept of two letters spelling one sound, such as /th/, /sh/, /ch/ and /ng/

The Extended Code

In Year 1, the children advance onto the Extended Code where they learn more complex phonic processes and are taught skills that support their conceptual knowledge. Conceptual knowledge teaches:

- Letters are symbols (spellings) that represent sounds.
- Each sound may be represented (spelled) by a 1, 2, 3 or 4-letter spelling.
- The same sound can be spelled in more than one way (**goat, slow, note, toe, over**).
- Many spellings represent more than one sound (**ea** in **read, bread** and **great**).

As children progress through Key Stage 1, they systematically learn how words are spelled in English. The variety of spellings are taught gradually, with Year 1 children learning 'initial spellings' and Year 2 building on this knowledge with 'more spellings.'

Our aim is to develop our pupils' phonic knowledge and skills to the highest standard, enabling them to express themselves confidently through writing and engage fully with the wider curriculum.

Reading Books

Applying, retrieving and consolidating phonic knowledge are important processes in learning to read and write.

In addition to the phonic lessons, children in Reception and Key Stage 1 are provided with a decodable reader to support their reading development. These books are designed for the children to practise their decoding skills alongside word recognition.

Listening to stories is a fundamental part of building literacy skills and knowledge. Alongside decodable phonic readers, the children will also bring home a library book of their choice each week.

How Can Parents Support children at home?

- Use letter sounds rather than letter names with your children at home. This will avoid confusion and will reinforce the learning in school.
- Avoid adding an extra vowel when pronouncing letter sounds eg 'buh' 'duh'
- When listening to your child read encourage them to have-a-go at unfamiliar words by encouraging them to: "Say the sounds and listen for the word".
- Visit the Sounds-Write website for further information, support and resources: <http://www.sounds-write.co.uk/>

A glossary to help you keep up!

The children will develop a good deal of technical language as they learn about phonics. Most adults have not learnt this themselves at school so here is a glossary to help you:

Phoneme – the sound spelled by a letter, or group of letters

Grapheme – the shape of a letter (symbol)

Digraph – two letters together that spell a single sound (e.g. 'ea')

Split digraph – where a digraph is separated by a consonant (e.g. **make**)

Trigraph – three letters together that spell a single sound (e.g. 'igh')

Suffix – a letter or a group of letters that are added to a word to make a new word (e.g. run – *running*, jump - *jumped*)

Phonics screening check

The phonics screening check is a statutory requirement for all Year 1 children. It takes place in the month of June. It is designed to give teachers and parents information about how a child is progressing in phonics. Children progress at different speeds and if your child does not make the expected threshold at the end of Year 1 they will re-sit the check the following summer term.

We report your child's results to you by the end of the summer term, as well as to the local authority.

