



Teaching Phonics at Berry Hill Primary School



This guide should be read in conjunction with:

- Unlocking Letters and Sounds Progression document and summary
- Unlocking Letters and Sounds Ambitious Expectations

Intent

Curriculum Drivers:

Our curriculum has been planned carefully with attention given to the learning culture of our school. Curriculum Drivers are the principles that guide the structure, development, and delivery of the children's learning. These drivers are fundamental to the whole school curriculum and are incorporated across all subjects and the wider experiences at Berry Hill Primary School.

We have decided the three most beneficial Key drivers for the success of our pupils are: curiosity, independence, and resilience. These three drivers will support our pupils to leave Berry Hill as valued individuals and aspirational learners with exceptional futures.

The Key Drivers at Berry Hill Primary are:

Curiosity	Resilience	Independence.
Children are:	Children become able to:	Children:
adventurous investigators enthusiastic willing to engage discoverers questioners in pursuit of knowledge interested inquisitive eager to learn	rise to the challenge have a go solve problems focus on the can do be optimistic connect ideas see mistakes as opportunities show determination be flexible risk takers	Are open-minded take responsibility welcome views of others communicate adapt their viewpoint show self-respect make decisions gain confidence will search for resolutions

Through the ambition of our reading curriculum, children leave Berry Hill Primary School as independent, competent readers, who enjoy reading and can use their skills to thrive and succeed in the outside world.

At Berry Hill Primary School we follow The **Unlocking Letters and Sounds** Programme. This helps children develop the skills and knowledge that will enable them to segment and blend effectively through structured teaching of phoneme grapheme correspondences and providing plentiful opportunities for application of these skills. Phonics lessons are taught with a whole class teaching approach, and **We have a keep up not catch-up approach to phonics.**

We follow the systematic progression in 'Unlocking Letters and sounds' throughout school. Phonics is our prime approach to reading and spelling in EYFS and KS1 alongside the introduction of common exception words. We teach the children that these are words they cannot decode yet but are very common words. They need to learn to read it and say it. Reading underpins the entire curriculum.

Implementation

Identifying barriers in phonics and making it accessible for all

Cognition and Learning:



Teaching Phonics at Berry Hill Primary School



- Range of multi-sensory approaches used to support skill-based learning; large font, sound tins, magnetic letters
- Review prior learning using rapid recaps/review learning during and at the end of lesson
- Consistent use of agreed resources so children can access things independently
- Learning to be displayed in the classroom
- Common exception words to be displayed
- Modelled writing to show correct spelling of words
- Children are given a demonstration of what is expected
- Pre teaching of phonemes
- Links to prior learning explicitly made
- Colour coded word walls in alphabetical order
- Berry Hill Alphabet displayed in the classroom
- Use supports for writing (cut up sentences, overusing high frequency words, sentence stems, oral rehearsal)
- Common exception word and phoneme mats placed on carpet/desks to aid learning
- Children should be active during lessons
- Plenty of opportunities to practise and apply taught phonemes with and without adult support
- Small group sessions to consolidate learning
- Short targeted interventions daily

Communication and interaction:

- Use pupils' names before giving instructions.
- Range of multi-sensory approaches used to support skill-based learning; large font, sound tins.
- Child specific target from SALT that can be targeted through phonics.
- Share correct pronunciation, phonemes, and common exception words with parents.
- Access to a quiet, distraction free environment if needed
- Ensure that preferred methods of communication, including sound tins and level of eye contact, are known to adults.
- Colorful semantics and widget resources are used explicitly to help children build sentence structure.

Sensory and Physical:

- Ensure correct seating in relation to board, whiteboard, considering levels of vision in each eye
- Take advice from specialist teams i.e. ATS about font size and style
- Consider the lighting – artificial and natural – which one may be better?
- Avoid shiny surfaces and resources that may reflect light.
- Wide lines to accommodate all sized handwriting
- Break down activities into small chunks to make it accessible
- Ensure a range of sensory resources are available (shaving foam, rice, paint etc.) so children can use different implements to practise formulating letters (paintbrushes, fingers, sticks etc.)
- Resources clearly labelled and kept in the same place

Social, Emotional and Mental Health:

- Provide lots of opportunities for kinesthetic learning e.g., practical activities, experiential learning, multi-sensory resources
- 'Catch' the pupil being good and emphasize positives in front of other pupils and staff
- Use of timers if children are struggling to focus
- Ensure children are active during lessons to help those who need a movement break.
- Use pupil's name and ensure you have their attention before giving instructions
- Make expectations for behaviour explicit by giving clear targets, explanations, and modelling
- Communicate positive achievements – no matter how small – with home and encourage home to do the same



Phonics in Reception (Beech):

- All children receive a whole class taught, daily phonics session.
- When teaching children to read and write the application of phonics should be explicitly modelled
- Term 1 (week 1) Phase 1 assessments and activities as the children settle.
- Term 1 (week 2 - *Children in full time*) Phase 2 begins. Interventions to be put in place immediately if children are not keeping up.
- Phase 2 assessment to be completed during week 3 of the programme to ensure that children are keeping up with the phonemes taught.
- Informal assessments happen all the time.
- Opportunities to review taught content during continuous provision and breaks in day: lining up, play time, washing hands, on the way to lunch, challenges in the classroom etc.
- Term 2, 3 and 4 – Phase 3 and phase 3 mastery.
- Phase 3 assessment to be completed at the end of term 4, all children should be secure or interventions in place.
- Term 5 and 6- Phase 4 and Phase 4 mastery.
- Phase 4 assessment to be completed at the end of term 6, all children expected to be secure. Interventions in place for those who are not.
- Opportunities for the children to further develop these skills should be provided in the continuous play provision, for both reading and writing. Children should have access to the Unlocking Letters and Sounds resources that will help them to apply their phonics knowledge i.e. Grapheme mats, wall friezes.
- Children should have access to the Unlocking Letters and Sounds resources that will help them to apply their phonics knowledge i.e. Grapheme mats, wall friezes

Planning

- Planning follows the revisit, teach, practise, apply approach, as explained in Unlocking Letters and Sounds. Opportunities for children to practise and apply both blending for reading and segmenting for writing happen in every session.
- Planning can be found on the Unlocking Letters and Sounds website.
- Unlocking Letters and Sounds hub provides a lesson plan and a detailed walk through for each session. Lessons are broken down to help with pace and to make the content clear for Teachers.

Assessment

- Phase Two assessed Autumn Term Wk Three to ensure all children are keeping up with taught phonemes.
- Phase Two Assessment to be completed at end of Term One (Autumn)
- Phase Three Assessment to be completed at the end of Phase Three during Term Three (Spring) and End of Term Four (Spring)
- Phase Four Assessment to be completed at the end of Phase Four during Term Five (Summer) Mastery during Term Six (Summer)



Teaching Phonics at Berry Hill Primary School



- Insight to be updated at the end of Term One, Term Four and Term Six (The end of each Phonics Phase)
- Children to be assessed using the whole class excel spreadsheet. Assessments to be completed and checked against the ULS on track grid.

Phonics in Year One (Elm):

- All children should have a daily discrete session.
- When teaching children to read and write the application of phonics should be explicitly modelled.
- Term 1 is phase 4 Revision and National Curriculum requirements
- Term 2 is Phase 5 a) and Term 3 is Phase 5 a Mastery
- Term 4 is Phase 5 b)
- Term 5 and 6 is phase 5 c
- Opportunities for the children to further develop these skills through application should be provided in all aspects of the curriculum.
- Informal assessments happen all the time.
- Opportunities to review taught content during continuous provision and breaks in day: lining up, play time, washing hands, on the way to lunch, challenges in the classroom etc.
- Assessment to be completed at the end of every term to make sure children are keeping up with the taught content.
- Children should have access to the Unlocking Letters and Sounds resources that will help them to apply their phonics knowledge i.e. Grapheme mats, wall friezes

Planning

- Planning follows the revisit, teach, practise, apply approach, as explained in Unlocking Letters and Sounds. Opportunities for children to practise and apply both blending for reading and segmenting for writing happen in every session.
- Planning can be found on the Unlocking Letters and Sounds website.
- Unlocking Letters and Sounds hub provides a lesson plan and a detailed walk through for each session. Lessons are broken down to help with pace and to make the content clear for Teachers.

Assessment

- Phase Four Assessment to be completed at end of Term One (Autumn)
- Phase Five a assessed Wk Three of Term Two to ensure all children are keeping up with taught phonemes.
- Phase Five a Assessment to be completed at the end of Term Two (Autumn)
- Phase Five a Assessment to be completed at the end of Term Three (Spring)
- Phase Five b Assessment to be completed at the end of Term Four (Spring)
- Phase Five c Assessment to be completed at the end of Term Six (Summer)
- Children to be assessed using the whole class excel spreadsheet. Assessments to be completed and checked against the ULS on track grid.

Phonics in Year Two (Maple):

- All children should have a daily discrete session.



Teaching Phonics at Berry Hill Primary School



- Phonics in Year Two will focus on Phase Five Mastery for the first two terms (Autumn). From Term Three onwards, phonics in Year Two becomes focused on the spelling content of the National Curriculum using No Nonsense Spelling Programme
- Opportunities for the children to further develop these skills should be provided in all aspects of the curriculum.
- When teaching children, the application of these skills should be explicitly modelled.
- Opportunities for the children to further develop these skills through application should be provided in all aspects of the curriculum.
- Children should have access to the Unlocking Letters and Sounds resources that will help them to apply their phonics knowledge i.e Grapheme mats, wall friezes

Planning

- Planning follows the revisit, teach, practise, apply approach, as explained in Unlocking Letters and Sounds. Opportunities for children to practise and apply both blending for reading and segmenting for writing happen in every session.
- Planning can be found on the Unlocking Letters and Sounds website.
- Unlocking Letters and Sounds hub provides a lesson plan and a detailed walk through for each session. Lessons are broken down to help with pace and to make the content clear for Teachers.

Assessment

- Phonic assessment can be used to identify the application of the rules being taught. Alongside this reading assessments are used to assess the understanding of what is being decoded.
- Phase Five Mastery Assessment to be completed at the end of Term Two (Autumn)
- Children to be assessed using the whole class spreadsheet. Children to be assessed using the whole class excel spreadsheet. Assessments to be completed and checked against the ULS on track grid.

Phonics Expectation in KS2

- All teachers must be aware of children's prior phonics knowledge and build upon this for spelling.
- Revisit rules taught in ULS and NNS may be necessary for consolidation e.g., adding suffixes and prefixes.
- Complete phonics assessments at the start of the academic year to get a clear picture of where your children are.
- All year groups have wall friezes/GPC charts displayed for children to access if they are still working at a phonetic level.

Unlocking Letters and Sounds Assessment Process

- Daily Phonics Lessons with high quality formative assessment
- Summative assessment 2/3 weeks after children have been taught a phoneme or CEW
- Children assessed individually on End of Phase assessments. This is recorded on a class assessment sheet.

Formative Assessment



Teaching Phonics at Berry Hill Primary School



Formative assessment is incorporated into every lesson or intervention group for staff delivering Unlocking Letters and Sounds. It is important that all staff understand **Where the learner is going, where the learner is** and how **the learner will get there**.

Where the learner is going – All staff must have a clear understanding of the steps in learning children will take in each lesson and how each lesson is part of this Journey. This is then shared with the children. It is important children understand what they are learning in lesson/session and can link this to prior learning.

Where the learner is – You need to know where your children are working in order to elicit classroom discussions, tasks and activities that will provide evidence of their learning. Some strategies to support with this include:

- Whole class response
- Cold calling
- I say, you say
- My turn, your turn
- Paired Work
- Notice children who are slower at responding or depend on others.

When teachers notice a child is not keeping up with the phonics teaching, they must immediately put support in place to close the gap. This can be done quickly and effectively to make sure children **Keep up not catch up**.

- Sit the child in the teacher's eye line during whole class sessions (spotlight method)
- Use opportunities throughout the day for additional practice e.g. flashcards of unknown phonemes/CEW
- Direct, targeted, short 1:1 session

How to get there - Re-draft or re-do: edit and improve. **Rehearse or repeat** practice again and again to master skills. **Revisit and respond** practise by answering related questions. **Relearn and re-test:** make sure children have learnt what they have previously been taught.

Summative Assessment:

Summative assessment takes place 2-3 weeks after the children have been taught a phoneme or CEW and at the end of phase.

There are assessment weeks built into the progression of Unlocking Letters and Sounds. This gives teachers time to complete summative assessments of their class and record on the class assessment record. From these teachers can identify class, group, and individual gaps in children's learning.

Summative assessments for phases 2–5 is 1:1 assessment that include:

- Checking children's learning of taught phonemes and grapheme-phoneme correspondence
- Checking children can blend these phonemes
- Checking children's learning of taught CEW. The class assessment sheet supports teachers to quickly identify gaps in learning for individuals, groups and whole classes. From this assessment record teachers can immediately put in place interventions to fill the gaps. These need to be specific and delivered immediately so children **Keep up not catch up**.

Assessments should be completed on a whole class tracker, beginning 2-3 weeks after the teaching of phonemes begins to ensure children are keeping up. This is done again at the end of the



Teaching Phonics at Berry Hill Primary School



phase. Please use the ULS 'on track' document to see whether children's data % means they are on track or not. This % will inform your insight data.

The lowest 20% will need an individual assessment record, as shown below. This should be carried out weekly to ensure children are making progress against the gaps in knowledge.

The interventions in the Ambitious Expectations document should be used in addition to whole class teaching in order for children to keep up. Conscious effort for extra support in provision, play or breaks in the day.

Teachers use phoneme flashcards to assess children and highlight which phonemes the children know. Teachers present children with word cards and highlight the words children correctly read.

This is a break down on how to deliver the assessment when informing your whole class tracker:

Assessment tasks:

- Grapheme–phoneme correspondences task
- Blending to read task
- Reading common exception word reading task
- Oral blending task
- Oral segmentation task

Children in Year One also complete mock Phonics Screening Checks during the school assessment weeks to help them build up familiarity with the format of the Phonics Screen Check and to help teachers highlight where the children may need further support. Children in Years Two, Three and Four who did not reach the benchmark of 32 when taking the test in Year One or when retaking in Year Three also complete a mock Phonics Screening Checks during the school assessment weeks.

Grapheme-phoneme correspondence:

Purpose: To assess knowledge of grapheme–phoneme correspondences

Resources: Grapheme cards/ Phase assessment sheet and class Group assessment sheet.

Procedure: 1. Display the grapheme card/ grapheme on the phase assessment sheet. 2. Record each correct GPC on the class assessment sheet

Blending to read:

Purpose: To assess ability to blend taught GPCs

Resources: Word cards and class assessment sheet

Procedure: 1. Display the word card/ word on the phase assessment sheet. 2. Ask the child to blend and read each word (children can add sound buttons if this supports their blending) 3. Record each correct word on the group assessment sheet

Common Exception Word reading:

Purpose: To assess ability to read taught CEWs

Resources: CEW cards and class assessment sheet

Procedure: 1. Display the word card 2. Ask the child to read each word

3. Record each correct word on the class assessment sheet

Oral blending:

Purpose: To assess oral blending



Teaching Phonics at Berry Hill Primary School



Resources: Sheet displaying all the pictures of the words to be blended

Procedure: 1. Use the practice items to explain the task to the child as follows: We are going to practise our oral blending. I want you to listen carefully and tell me the word I am trying to say. Let us practise. The word is c -a -t. What am I saying? 2. If the child needs more prompting, say: It is a word you know. Listen again. 3. Proceed with the assessment items. 4. Offer each word in turn, leaving just less than a one-second interval between phonemes and record the child's first response. 5. Discontinue after three consecutive errors. 6. Rather than ask the child to say the word, you could ask the child to point to the correct picture

Oral segmentation:

Oral segmentation of words into three phonemes and four phonemes.

Purpose: To assess oral segmentation

Resources:

Procedure: 1. Use the practice items to explain the task to the child: I'm going to say a word and I want you to say all the sounds in the word, just like I did in the last game. Let's practise. The word is 'cat'. This is how we segment cat, c-a-t. You do it. The word is 'zip', Segment the word -z-i-p. How do you segment mum? 2. Provide the correct response if the child responds incorrectly. 3. Proceed with the assessment words. 4. Offer each word in turn and record the child's first response. 5. Discontinue after three consecutive errors.

Interventions across the school:

Assessment for learning should be used throughout the programme and children who have been identified as struggling with a particular phoneme picked up throughout the day for intervention and additional practice.

For children who require additional intervention, teachers select from those in the Unlocking Letters and Sounds Ambitious Expectations Document. These interventions are;

Oral Blending

You will need four picture cards. Show the child one picture. Orally segment the picture, but do not say the word, (you do it) child repeats. (I do it). Repeat at a faster pace and blend to say the word, (you do it). Child repeats. Repeat this process with all four pictures. Sound-talk the picture, child to point to the picture. When the child points they need to sound-talk the picture and blend to say the word.

Mix It Up

Choose a focus grapheme that the child knows well. Choose two words that feature that grapheme. The unlocking Letters and Sounds handbook contains a list of suggested words for each grapheme.

Make a word using grapheme flashcards. Point to each grapheme and say the phoneme. Then sweep your finger from left to right under the flashcards and say the whole word. The child repeats step 3 with their flashcards. The adult models mixing up the flashcards, then puts them into the correct order, saying the phoneme for each grapheme. Then they sweep their finger under the cards and say the word. Repeat with different words. Then say 'Now we will read these words fluently' go back over the words practised and read them fluently.



Spot it

Identify a grapheme which the child is not secure with. Show the grapheme on a flashcard. Say the phoneme as your finger traces over the letter or letters. If it's a digraph or trigraph, tell the child the name for each letter. Then repeat the phoneme. The child says the phoneme three times when shown the flashcard. Put the grapheme in with a small collection of known graphemes. Ask 'Can you spot the new grapheme?' Show each flashcard in turn and wait for the child to say the sound. If the child correctly identifies the grapheme, shuffle the cards and repeat. If the child does not recognize the grapheme, tell them the phoneme. Ask the child to repeat it three times and place it closer to the front of the pack.

Precision Grid

Write down the focus grapheme at least two times per row in random places on the grapheme chart. Add in three graphemes that the child knows fluently into other spaces on the chart. Show the unknown grapheme (flashcard). Emphasize the shape using your finger by running it over the grapheme and saying the sound as you go along. Ask the child to repeat. Show the unknown grapheme (on the chart) and say the phoneme (I do it). Ask the child to repeat this (you do it), at least three times with the adult pointing to the grapheme in the same place first, then in different places on the chart. Adults point to all the graphemes in order and child to say the phoneme. If the child does not recognize the grapheme, tell them the sound, ask the child to repeat and continue. Repeat, building on fluency. Now, use flashcards to assess the child's ability to read the taught grapheme.

Grid in the Unlocking Letters and Sounds 'Ambitious Expectations' booklet to photocopy.

Digraph and Trigraph spotter

Select a digraph or trigraph that the child is confident to identify when shown a flashcard. Show the child the flashcard and ask them, 'what's the sound?' Repeat this three times. Have a word containing the problem digraph or trigraph on a card. Explain that you will place sound buttons on the word and then sound-talk the word. Remember that the digraph or trigraph will need a line under each letter. The child repeats this with their own word card. Sound talks the word whilst pointing at the sound buttons and then saying the word. The child sound-talks the word and says the word. Repeat with three more words. Then show the child the three-word cards and ask them to read words fluently.

For children who require additional support, conversations with the SENCO and Inclusion team should be taking place if the child is not keeping up. You may need to choose from the following if recommended:

- Additional phonics group – targeted support at phoneme/grapheme correspondence and identification of correct grapheme to match heard phoneme.
- Application of phonics group – targeted support for the application of phonics tailored to meet the child's identified need, could be focused on blending, segmenting, or both.

Reading underpins the curriculum, and children must be secure with their phonics to progress with it. Please ensure you are promoting this across the curriculum. Please ensure you are making time for story time every day. Making time for book talk with children is important.

Knowledge Organisers

Knowledge Organisers will be made by the class teachers for English units each half term. These Knowledge Organisers will be checked by the English and Early Reading Leads to ensure fidelity to the Programmes of Study and the texts across the school. At the beginning of each term, the Knowledge Organisers will be introduced and discussed, so that children are aware of their 'sticky' learning and key vocabulary. Teachers will then refer to the organisers throughout the learning



Teaching Phonics at Berry Hill Primary School



pathway and make explicit links to them. At the end of each lesson, children in KS1 will tick/tally the learning objective covered. KS2 will (short) date the lesson objective.

Knowledge Organisers in English (for KS1 and KS2) will include –

- Key learning objectives
- Key English-linked vocabulary (KS1 with definitions, KS2 to add definitions as the unit progresses) Any additional vocabulary to support will be added as annotations.
- Previous knowledge (from any subject that may support this unit of learning)
- Sticky knowledge (lesson objectives) in the order they will be taught (these will then be ticked/dated each lesson)
- An age-appropriate image, specific to the area studied that term.

Rapid Recall

Rapid Recall will be evident within the ULS Overview and Planning. It takes place daily within lessons and interventions and includes;

- Recall of GPCs previously taught.
- Blending words which contain previously taught GPCs
- Phonics Terminology taken from the ULS Programme
- Key questions asked during the lesson.

Home Learning

All children should take home one phonetically decodable book/reading book so they can read confidently to their adults at home. These books should cover phonemes the children are secure with so they can read with pace and confidence at home.

All children should be taking home a library book once a week for the adults at home to read to them/talk to them. Book talk is so important for developing reading skills and vocabulary.

Children are given word boxes for sets of common exception words that can go home. Children are expected to be practising these at home with their parents and applying them in their reading both at school and at home. We want to encourage parents to communicate with us any words children are struggling with so we can provide support and share their child's achievements when reading at home.

Teachers use incentives to encourage reading at home. These can include prizes, raffle tickets, dojo points, stickers, certificates etc.

Parent workshops are a wonderful opportunity to share some of the games regularly played in phonics to encourage children to practise and apply their phonics skills at home.

Impact

Assessment and reaching end goals

To make accurate assessments within reading we use phonic assessments in the Unlocking Letters and Sounds Progression. This enables the teacher to see which phonemes the children know and if they are applying it by blending to read. ULS 'on track' sheet will show whether children's % indicates they are on track or not. Interventions and informal assessments should always be happening to keep children up.

Cultural Capital



Teaching Phonics at Berry Hill Primary School



We introduce our children to the skills they need to become successful readers. These skills will enable children to access a range of material to develop their cultural capital, through independent interests and curriculum-based learning.

British Values within Reading

Children at Berry Hill Primary School celebrate diversity and demonstrate the following values whilst learning to read by:

Respect

- Learning that their phonic behaviors affect their learning and the learning of others.
- Understanding that we all learn at different rates and it is important to support each other

Tolerance

- Showing respect for others when undertaking phonics activities and reading materials.
- Providing opportunities for pupils of all backgrounds to achieve in phonics.

Recommended further reading

'The Reading Framework. Teaching the foundations of literacy' DfE July 2021

'Improving Literacy in Key Stage 1. Eight recommendations to support the literacy of 5–7-year-olds' EEF September 20