

# A guide for parents

## Year One Phonics Screening Check

### What is phonics?

Children begin to learn phonics in Early Years (EYFS). Once children begin learning phonemes (sounds) these are used to read and spell words. Children can then see the purpose of learning these phonemes. For this reason the first initial phonemes are taught 's', 'a', 't', 'p', 'i', 'n'. These can immediately be blended for reading to make simple CVC words (consonant, vowel, consonant) e.g. sat, pin. Children then develop segmenting for writing skills; breaking words into phonemes to spell it out.

### What is the Phonics Screening Check?

Children in Year One throughout the country will be taking part in a phonics screening check during the same week in June. Children in Year Two will also take the check if they did not achieve the required test result when in Year One or if they have not taken the test before.

The Head teacher should decide whether it is appropriate for each of their pupils to take the phonics screening check. The phonics screening check is designed to confirm whether individual children have learnt sufficient phonic decoding and blending skills.

### What happens during the test?

The test will contain 40 words. Each child sits one to one and reads each word aloud to their teacher. The test will take approximately 10 minutes per child, although all children are different and will complete the check at their own pace. The list of words the children read is a combination of 20 real words and 20 pseudo words (nonsense / alien words).

### Pseudo words (Nonsense / Alien words)

The pseudo words will be shown to your child with a picture of an alien. This provides the children with a context for the pseudo word which is independent from any existing vocabulary they have. Pseudo words are included because they will be new to all pupils; they do not favour children with good vocabulary knowledge or visual memory of words.



### Reporting to parents

By the end of summer term schools must report results of the check to parents. They will also confirm if the child has met the standard threshold. Children who do not achieve the expected level will retake the test when they are in Year Two.

### How are the results used?

Results from the check will be used by schools to analyse their own performance and for Ofsted to use their inspections.

### How can I help at home?

- Play lots of sound and listening games with your child.
- Read as much as possible to and with your child.
- Encourage and praise- get them to have a 'good guess'.
- If your child is struggling to decode a word, help them by encouraging them to say each phoneme in the word from left to right.
- Blend the sounds by pointing to each letter e.g. /c/ in cat or the letter group. /ng/ in sing. Next move your finger under the whole word as you say it.
- Discuss the meaning of words if your child does not know what they have read.

### Helpful websites

[PhonicsPlay - Resources](#) (There are three free games to access at Phase 5 level).

[Teach Your Monster to Read: Free Phonics & Reading Game](#)

