



# Phonics at Spire Junior School

## Curriculum Statement



### Intent of the Phonics Curriculum

At Spire Junior School, we are passionate about ensuring all children become confident and enthusiastic readers and writers. We believe that phonics provides the foundations of learning to make the development into fluent reading and writing easier. Through daily, systematic and consistent high quality phonics teaching, children learn to segment words to support their spelling ability and blend sounds to read words. To allow our children to develop a strong phonic awareness and effective blending and decoding skills, we have chosen to use a synthetic phonics programme called Letters and Sounds. Letters and Sounds is a method of learning centred around letter sounds and phonics, blending sounds together to read and spell words and applying these skills across the curriculum. Using Read Write Inc. the children learn to read fluently so that they can put all their energy into comprehending what they read. We passionately believe that teaching children to read and write independently is one of the core purposes of a primary school enabling them to access a broad and exciting curriculum and ensuring they flourish as learners throughout their time at our school. These fundamental skills not only hold the keys to the rest of the curriculum but also have a huge impact on children's self-esteem and future life chances.

### Implementation of the Phonics Curriculum

At Spire Junior School we use the Department of Education approved document 'Letters and Sounds' for our teaching of phonics. This allows our phonics teaching and learning to be progressive from the fundamentals taught during Key Stage 1.

During EYFS, pupils will have been introduced to Phase One phonics, which concentrates on developing their speaking and listening skills and lays the foundations for the phonic work which starts in Phase Two. As children continue to build on their listening skills and are introduced to Phase Two which marks the start of systematic phonics work. They will have had discrete, daily phonics sessions where they revise previous learning, are taught new graphemes/phonemes, practise together and apply what they have learnt. Through Letters and Sounds, the children are taught the 44 phonemes that make up all the sounds required for reading and spelling. These phonemes include those made by just



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one letter and those that are made by two or more. Children work through the different phases and as they grow in confidence and experience, they are introduced to alternative ways of representing the same sound.

When the children start at Spire Junior School, we assess those children who did not pass the phonics screening to ensure we can meet their individual needs. Children are assessed at each phase and against the sounds within those phases. From this they receive specific daily sessions that matches children's current knowledge and understanding whilst ensuring the children are suitably challenged. This support caters to their individual requirements, phonetically decodable books matched to their phonics knowledge that focuses on the phase/sound that they are learning and games to play to support them. This daily support is maintained throughout school, in all classes. Teachers regularly assess children's phonics knowledge using the phonics assessment grid. These regular assessments inform planning and allow teachers to identify any gaps in learning

Books are chosen from our reading schemes - Oxford Reading Tree, Project X, Word Sparks, Snapdragons, Hero Academy, Tree Tops and Big Cat.

In Year 3, the children who require phonic support are taught the essential skills needed for reading. Phonics is taught daily to all children who did not pass their Key Stage 1 phonics screening. Phonics teaching is systematic, engaging, lively and interactive. Each phonics lesson includes the following elements:

- Revise - overlearn the previous graphemes and words
- Teach - introduce a new grapheme/words
- Practise - develop GPCs (grapheme phoneme correspondences)/read and spell new words
- Apply - use new graphemes/words in games and activities to secure knowledge
- Assess - monitor progress within each phase to inform planning



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Staff systematically teach learners the relationship between sounds and the written spelling patterns, or graphemes, which represent them. Staff ensure Phonics is an integrated part of all learning. Daily phonics in Year 3 is taught through phase group input, differentiated activities for each group linked to the graphemes learning.

### Impact of the Phonics Curriculum

Data from 20/21 highlights the impact daily phonics/spelling had on the attainment in spellings of pupils over an academic year

| Academic Year    | Entry      | Autumn     | Spring                   | Summer     |
|------------------|------------|------------|--------------------------|------------|
| <b>2020-2021</b> | <b>32%</b> | <b>49%</b> | <b>no data (COVID19)</b> | <b>61%</b> |
| boys             | 40%        | 48%        |                          | 68%        |
| girls            | 27%        | 52%        |                          | 54%        |
| pupil premium    | 21%        | 34%        |                          | 52%        |
| <b>2021-2022</b> | <b>29%</b> | <b>54%</b> |                          |            |
| boys             | 32%        | 47%        |                          |            |
| girls            | 26%        | 60%        |                          |            |
| pupil premium    | 18%        | 45%        |                          |            |

Through the teaching of systematic phonics, our aim is for children to become fluent readers. Pupils will be confident in their phonic knowledge, pupils will be able to blend and segment words confidently, pupils pass the Phonics Screening Test, pupils learn to love reading through fun but challenging phonic activities and a culture where a secure knowledge of phonic sounds enables reading for pleasure as part of our reading curriculum. This way, children can focus on developing their fluency and comprehension as they move through the school.