

Phonics

Early reading is taught using synthetic phonics as the main approach. Children are systematically taught the 42 phonemes (sounds) using a multi-sensory approach. In F2 and Key stage 1 there are daily phonic sessions where the children are encouraged to blend the sounds for reading and segment the sounds for writing. The school uses the principles and phases of the government's 'Letters and Sounds' programme but uses the 'Jolly Phonics' resources to deliver this. Additionally, children are gradually taught the high frequency 'common exception' words – those which are not phonetically regular. By combining these elements, children have the tools and skills to be able to write independently at an early age and are given lots of opportunities to apply their phonic skills throughout a rich and varied curriculum.

When the children have mastered this 'Basic Code' (one way of writing each of the 42 sounds) we continue to teach some of the alternative graphemes used to represent the sounds (the 'Extended Code'). This forms the majority of phonic work in Years 1, 2 and beyond. Sound strips are used to enable the children to select the most appropriate grapheme using the 'best bet' strategy. We continue to teach the 'common exception' words and also introduce key spelling strategies. Phonics is assessed regularly to monitor progress towards the Year 1 Phonics Check in June.

