

Norton C of E Primary School, Unlocking etter and Sounds Policy 2023

Our Vision

At Norton School we are determined that every child will learn to read confidently and independently by the end of KS1. As a school we aim to instil a love of reading, to provide systematic phonics teaching that enables children to read rapidly and to give children opportunities to apply what they have learned across the curriculum.

Our Approach

We follow the Unlocking Letters and Sounds principles and practice of high quality phonics. The six phases of the Unlocking Letters and Sounds document provides a structure for class teachers to follow and plan for children's progress. Teachers carefully adapt their planning to meet the needs of children within their phonics group. Teacher's assessment of individual children will inform the rate at which children are able to progress through the phrases and will adapt their pace accordingly. High-quality phonics teaching secures the crucial skills of word recognition that, once mastered, enable children to read fluently and automatically. Once children are fluent readers, they are able to concentrate on the meaning of the text. Children need to acquire secure and automatic decoding skills and progress from 'learning to read' to 'reading to learn' for purpose and pleasure. The ultimate goal of learning to read is comprehension.

Research

The Rose Review was an independent review of the teaching of early reading.

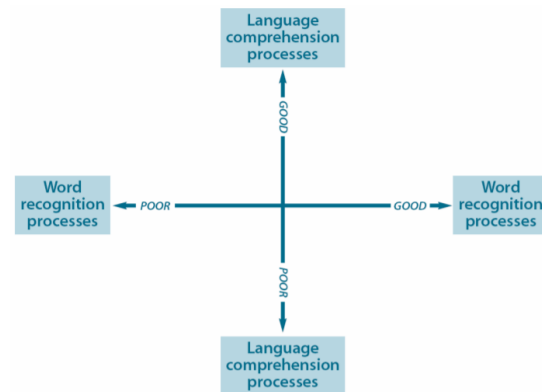
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It highlighted that high-quality phonics work should be taught systematically and discretely as the prime approach used in the teaching of early reading. The review report provided clear recommendations of what constitutes high-quality phonics work; The 'simple view of reading'.

The Rose Report makes a number of recommendations for the teaching of early reading. It makes clear that there are two dimensions to reading: 1. Word Recognition 2.

Language Comprehension High-quality phonics teaching secures the crucial skills of word recognition that, once mastered, enable children to read fluently and automatically. Once children are fluent readers, they are able to concentrate on the meaning of the text. Children need to acquire secure and automatic decoding skills and progress from 'learning to read' to 'reading to learn' for purpose and pleasure. The ultimate goal of learning to read is comprehension.'

Figure 1: The simple view of reading



[Unlocking Letters and Sounds](#)

- Letters and Sounds is designed to teach children how the alphabet works for reading and spelling.
- There are 6 phonics phases which the children work through at their own pace. Starting with Phase 1 in Norton Little Learners.
- Systematic, high quality phonics teaching is essential and is needed for children to achieve the goal of reading.
- Letters and Sounds is designed as a time-limited programme of phonics. It works on securing fluent word recognition skills for reading by the end of Key Stage One.

[Extending learning and Parental involvement](#)

- We actively send home phonics information to families so that they are aware of the sounds and words that their child is learning.
- At the start of Reception parents attend a phonics evening to learn how best to support their child's phonics.
- At the start of Year 1 and Year 2 parents receive information on what phase their child will be starting to learn and how they can help them at home.

- Parents will receive an information booklet about the phonics screening process at the start of Y1.

Lessons and planning

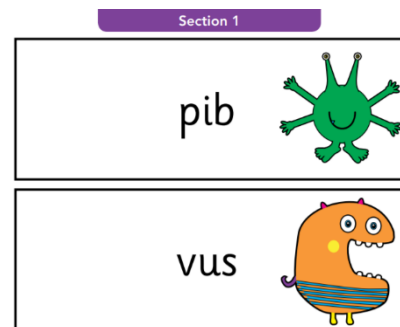
- The best phonics teaching is characterised by a planned structure: Revisit and Review, Teach, Practise, Apply, Assessment
- Children are ability grouped for phonics lessons to ensure that the learning is differentiated to meet their needs and optimised learning can occur.
- Class teachers will have ultimate responsibility for planning and assessment of the children in their class and tracking the progress of their children.
- At Norton Letters and Sounds lessons are taught daily for 20-25.

Assessments

In all year groups assessments are carried out three times a year (September, March, July) to assess the children's knowledge before moving on to the next phase.

In Year 1 mock phonics screen checks are administrated four times a year (November, January, March, May) to highlight any children who are in need of additional support.

From this extra intervention is then given to those who require it.



Letters and Sounds breakdown

Phase One - Activities are divided into seven aspects, including environmental sounds, instrumental sounds, body sounds, rhythm and rhyme, alliteration, voice sounds and finally oral blending and segmenting.

Phase Two - Learning 19 letters of the alphabet and one sound for each. Blending sounds together to make words. Segmenting words into their separate sounds. Beginning to read simple captions.

Phase Three - The remaining 7 letters of the alphabet, one sound for each. Graphemes such as ch, oo, th representing the remaining phonemes not covered by single letters. Reading captions, sentences and questions. On completion of this phase, children will have learnt the "simple code", i.e. one grapheme for each phoneme in the English language.

Phase Four - No new grapheme-phoneme correspondences are taught in this phase. Children learn to blend and segment longer words with adjacent consonants, e.g. swim, clap, jump

Phase Five - Now we move on to the "complex code". Children learn more graphemes for the phonemes which they already know, plus different ways of pronouncing the graphemes they already know.

Phase Six - Working on spelling, including prefixes and suffixes, doubling and dropping letters etc