

Coates Way JMI and Nursery School

Phonics Policy



Spring 2021

Policy Number: 70

Overview:

At Coates Way we recognise the importance of phonics in learning to read and write. It is an integral part of the curriculum across the Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1, continuing into Key Stage 2 as necessary. From Reception to Year 2, phonics is taught on a daily basis in discrete lessons lasting approximately 20 minutes. Children are mostly taught according to the phonics phase they are working in, confirmed regularly by assessments. There are also additional planned intervention groups for children needing extra practise and support.

Phonics at Coates Way is taught from the very beginning, starting in Nursery where children receive Phase One phonics activities as part of their daily routine, continuing throughout the Early Years and Key Stage One and into Key Stage Two if needed. Our lessons aim to be interactive, stimulating and age appropriate and include the teaching of graphemes and phonemes, blending for reading, segmenting for spelling and writing as well as handwriting.

Teaching:

Staff use a uniform approach using the Letters and Sounds document which separates phonics into phases 1-6 and supplement this with Jolly Phonics materials. Jolly Phonics has been chosen as it is a widely recognised multi-sensory synthetic phonics resource with proven results and is enjoyed by our children. The content of the phonics teaching is set by our LCP planning document which includes clear expectations for children's progress and maps out incremental progression in phonic knowledge and skills.

This document is followed systematically to ensure that children have the skills to meet the requirements of the Phonics Screening Check in Year 1. Phonics lessons are taught using a structured, set format (see Appendix i) to ensure that there is plenty of practice and repetition of the grapheme phoneme correspondences. This allows learning to be maximised within lessons as skills are taught and repeated in order to ensure knowledge is retained. Lessons follow a predictable pattern so that children know what to expect.

Assessment:

Children are assessed regularly using a learning record of assessment for each child. Record keeping is an integral part of each assessment to identify progress or difficulty. We keep track using the Letters and Sounds Learning Record which is compatible with the synthetic phonics teaching programme Letters and Sounds phases 1-6.

Additional support:

Children who are at risk of falling behind may need extra practice to consolidate and master the content of the programme. Options for support may include 1 to 1 or small group interventions. When alternative provision has been fully explored other reading strategies may be implemented to support individual children.

Reading:

At Coates Way we use a combination of reading schemes including Oxford Reading Tree, Floppy's phonics, Songbirds and Dandelion Readers. Children will read from books carefully matched to sounds which they have been taught. We make exceptions for any children who are exceeding expectations and who are able to fast track to higher reading levels.

Handwriting:

At first, children will not be taught to join letters or to start every letter with a 'lead-in', because these practices may cause unnecessary difficulty for beginners. However, children will be taught simple exit strokes for letters that end 'on the line' (a, d, h, i, k, l, m, n, t, u). Eventually, children will be taught to join the letters in digraphs when appropriate as their fine motor skills develop and letter formation allows.

Equal opportunities and inclusion:

We comply with the Equality Act 2010 for pupils with disabilities or health conditions we will adapt activities to suit their individual needs. Where appropriate, this may mean providing specialised resources, differentiating activities, offering a parallel or separate activity, or setting a challenge appropriate to their skill level.

Resources:

Jolly Phonics - Picture Flash Cards, Letter Sounds Flash Cards, Wall Frieze, Discovery Education videos and games

Appendix i:

Lesson format:

In Nursery Phase 1 is taught through a combination of listening and attention games, using a variety of means for example music, listening walks, songs etc.

In Reception, Year 1 and Year 2, phonics lessons follow the same format:

- Revise: the children revise previous learning.
- Teach: new phonemes or high frequency or tricky words are taught.
- Practice: the children practise the new learning by reading and/or writing the words.
- Apply: the children apply their new learning by reading or writing sentences.

This policy will be reviewed in Spring 2022