

Phonics at Brent Knoll

At Brent Knoll, in accordance with the current Government Validation Notice and review of Phonics provision, we have decided to adopt the ‘Twinkl Phonics’ scheme which was validated by the DfE in early 2022.

Twinkl Phonics is separated into 6 ‘levels’ that are implemented from pre-school, across key stage one and into key stage two as necessary.

Level 1

Twinkl Phonics’ Level 1 is separated into 7 aspects of learning which are embedded within the children’s provision at pre-school. Level 1 (see appendix) is made up of:

- Aspect 1- General sound discrimination- Environmental sounds
- Aspect 2- General sound discrimination- Instrumental sounds
- Aspect 3- Body percussion
- Aspect 4- Rhythm and rhyme
- Aspect 5- Alliteration
- Aspect 6- Voice sounds
- Aspect 7- Oral blending and segmenting (this aspect is explored for the entire summer term to ensure the children are school ready).

In addition to the week’s learning being embedded into continuous provision, the pre-school children have regular phonics input from their allocated key worker. These sessions enable the adults to reinforce learning through play and identify any gaps that can be addressed through carefully planned activities.

Level 2-6

Phonics sessions from level 2- 6 are delivered in discrete phonics sessions across the week. Each lesson follows 4 clear stages.

- Revisit – recap on previously taught sounds and tricky words
- Teach – teach a new sound or word
- Practise – provide opportunities to practise saying and reading the sound through games and activities for children.
- Apply – apply the new skill to read and write words, captions and sentences.

Additional daily phonics activities, based on the children’s individual needs, are planned in reception and year 1 as part of the morning routine and continuous provision.

Reading Books

'Letters and Sounds' books are still currently being used to support children's work in class. The focus sounds reflect that week's learning. In addition to the phonetically decodable books, banded books are sent home to develop children's fluency and comprehension. Adults read with children to ensure that the book band reflects their phonics stage and offers the correct level of challenge. 'Twinkl Phonics' does offer a range of books that can be used in conjunction with the scheme; the value of this investment will be reviewed in 2023 along with the impact of the scheme.

Classroom environment and supports across the environment

Classroom phonics displays should be meaningful to the children and be used as part of their learning. Any wording being used as part of a display should be size 40 'Primary Saxon Infant' to ensure all learners are able to access the content. From September, all classrooms will have sound mats that show progression; they will reflect the children's phonics stage and show images that correlate to the PowerPoints being used in their discrete sessions. These mats will support independent learning and enable the children to translate their understanding across the curriculum.

- Unicorn class: Level 2 and 3 sound mat
- Griffin class: Level 3 and 5 sound mat
- Phoenix class: Level 3, 5, 6 and Key Stage 2 sound mat.
- Kitsune and Pegasus class: Key Stage 2 sound mat.

Subject Knowledge

Adults consistently use technical vocabulary (see appendix) both in phonics, reading and writing sessions. Furthermore, sounds and letter names should be interchanged regularly to ensure children are familiar with them and are able to use both. 'Pure sounds' must always be used when working with the children; correct modelling will enable the children to segment and blend sounds effectively and use them independently across the curriculum.

How are sessions delivered?

'Twinkl Phonics' provide an interactive PowerPoint for each session that follows the 4 stages of learning: revisit, teach, practise and apply. It is essential that these presentations are examined prior to the start of the lesson to consider how they will be delivered, ensure that all of the words are appropriate, and the activities are relevant.

All members of staff will need to use the 'Twinkl Phonics' actions (see appendix). These actions are always used in Unicorn and Griffin class to accommodate different learning styles. Beyond year 1,

adults are encouraged to make a judgment if the actions are necessary for the children in their group.

When words are recorded on the board, sound buttons may be added to emphasise different sounds within a word (see appendix).

- A single dot should be recorded under a letter if it represents an individual phoneme.
- A line should be used to show digraphs and trigraphs.
- A loop under the word should be used to show split digraphs.

Children may also be encouraged to add sound buttons to their work as this would enable them to identify sounds when working independently.

When modelling segmenting, adults need to ‘stretch’ the word using a ‘band.’ It is important that adults emphasise each sound, both with movement and their voice, as this will develop the child’s ability to hear individual sounds. Once each phoneme has been explicitly spoken, the complete word should be said out loud again. Following the stretching, ‘phoneme fingers’ should be used to further clarify the recognition of each sound.

To support sentence writing it is essential that the sentence is repeated many times and in different voices. Children should be encouraged to break the sentence into manageable parts. Strategies such as ‘robot arms’ and counting the words on your hand, allow the children to physically partition the sentence as well as hear the different elements.

Rhymes and acronyms (see appendix) can be used to support children when learning new sounds or tricky words. These rhymes can be used as part of direct teaching, small group work or to further develop independent writing.

Physical aids are essential tools in early reading and writing. Reception children are encouraged to use blocks to record individual words in a sentence. This strategy allows the children to reread the sentence using the blocks to ensure that no words have been missed. Additionally, finger space sticks are used to ensure words are clearly separated. If necessary, these strategies can be continued into year 1 and beyond.

It is essential that teachers carefully consider the children’s phonics development when they are planning English and other literacy based activities. For example, if the children are learning the tricky word ‘no,’ this word could appear in shared writing activities or a guided reading text. This enables the children to see their learning in context and how it can be applied in different ways.

Appendix

- Rhymes and acronyms
- Sound buttons
- Actions