

Phonics teaching at Woodgrange

When we recognise the sounds (phonemes) that letters represent and join them together we are decoding text and using phonics to read.

At Woodgrange we believe this is only one of the strategies we use to learn to read.

Organisation

Children have a daily Phonics session– during the morning in Reception classes and immediately after lunch in Years 1 and 2.

Phonics is taught in groups of varying sizes– some nearly a full class others just 1 or 2 children.

Children are grouped according to the phonemes (letter sounds) they know.

The group are taught to recognise and use (in reading and spelling) new phonemes in a systematic order.

English is complicated and there are many ways to represent the same sound e.g. ay/ ai/ a_e (cake) etc. Children are taught all of these different ways in their phonics lessons. In each session children get to learn phonemes and apply them- using their fingers to sound out words.

The teaching Sequence

We start to teach phonics in Nursery through songs, games, rhymes and stories. Sessions become more focused as the children move into Reception and are very sharply focused in years 1 and 2.

We follow the teaching sequence set out in LETTERS and SOUNDS.

Children learn sets of sounds as they progress through phases.

In Nursery children are learning in Phases 1 & 2.

In reception children are learning in phases 2 through to 4.

We expect children to move rapidly through the remaining phases (up to 6) in key Stage 1.

Some words cannot be decoded- they are irregular e.g. was/ the/ go. These are gradually taught as whole (tricky) words

Assessing progress

About every 6 weeks children are assessed to see if they have learned the new phonemes and the groupings are changed accordingly.

Phonics is not the only way to learn to read. It does not work for all children.

The wider skills for reading are taught through Guided reading and in Literacy lessons.

Glossary of terms you might hear as a parent

CVC- consonant- vowel - consonant in a word such as c-a-t or b-u-g

Phoneme- sound made by a letter or group of letters e.g. a/ ch/ igh

Blend- combine phonemes to read a word e.g. ch-a-p-t-er (5 phonemes)

Segment- break down a word to spell e.g. d-o-c-t-or (5 phonemes) children put each phoneme on a finger

Decodable – words that can be read by reading and blending sounds (also known as regular words)

Irregular words- words that break the rules (also known as tricky words/ sight words/ high frequency words)