



Phonics Policy

Brize Norton Primary School

We SHINE for ourselves and each other with kindness.

Strive, Help, Inspire, Nurture, Excel

Adopted by school LGB:	Brize Norton Primary School
Date:	March 2026
Review Date:	March 2029

Rationale

High-quality phonics teaching is one of the most effective ways to ensure that children develop secure early reading skills. A systematic, synthetic phonics approach enables pupils to understand the relationship between sounds (phonemes) and the letters that represent them (graphemes), giving them the tools to decode unfamiliar words with increasing accuracy and confidence.

A consistent phonics programme supports equity across the school: every child receives the same structured progression, clear expectations, and opportunities for success. Early mastery of phonics underpins later fluency, comprehension, and a lifelong enjoyment of reading.

A robust phonics policy also ensures that staff share a common language, approach, and set of practices, strengthening continuity from Early Years through Key Stage 1 and supporting any pupils who require additional intervention beyond this stage.

Aims

- Provide a systematic, synthetic phonics programme that is taught with fidelity and consistency across all classes.
- Ensure all pupils develop secure phoneme–grapheme knowledge and blending/segmenting skills to support accurate decoding.
- Build pupils’ confidence, fluency, and independence as early readers, enabling them to access a broad curriculum.
- Identify pupils at risk of falling behind early and provide timely, targeted intervention to close gaps.
- Equip staff with high-quality training, resources, and ongoing support to deliver effective phonics teaching.
- Engage parents and carers in supporting early reading through clear communication and practical guidance.

Intent

At Brize Norton Primary School we believe that it is essential that all children become confident, fluent readers and successful independent writers. We will provide systematic phonics teaching to provide a firm foundation for word reading and writing skills.

Through structured sessions we aim to:

- Establish consistent practice, progression and continuity in the teaching and learning of phonics
- Ensure that all children participate in high quality phonics sessions led by well-trained teachers and teaching partners

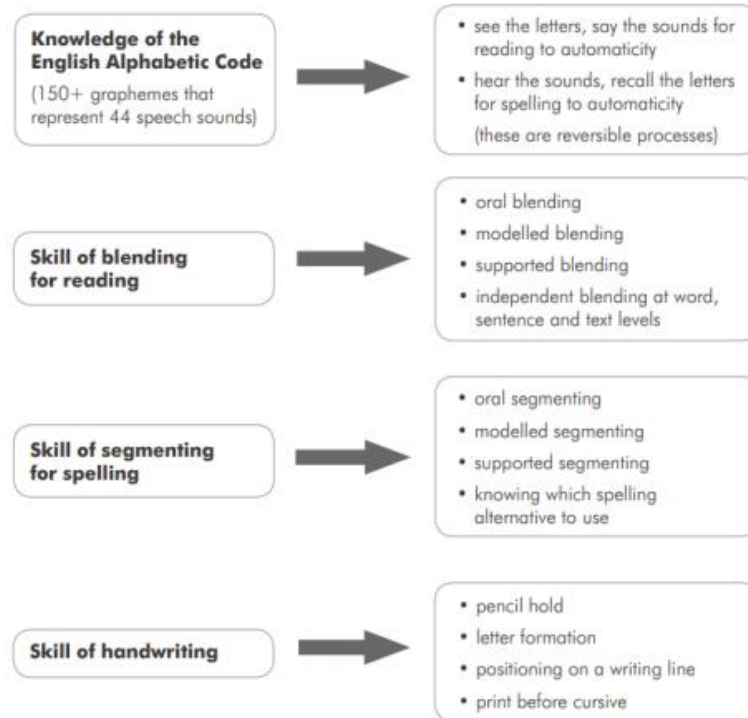
- Teach children word work strategies that will enable them to become fluent readers and confident writers
- Provide fully decodable reading books that are carefully matched to a child's developing phonic knowledge.
- Track children's progress regularly to ensure that no child fall behind and to provide extra support for children who need it.

Implementation

The teaching of Phonics at Brize Norton Primary School will follow the systematic synthetic phonics scheme, Rocket Phonics. A whole class teaching approach will expose all children to the daily learning, differentiated by the level of support and the expected outcomes. Each phonics session will follow the four-part teaching and learning cycle of revisit and review, teach, practise and then apply new learning Further catch-up sessions for those children who need them will be led by all staff.

Fundamental concepts of Rocket Phonics:

- Phonics is taught for a minimum of 30 minutes daily (this time may be spilt in Reception class)
- All staff are supported with regular phonics professional development training.
- A clear pathway is followed through the alphabetic code
- Children are not asked to read texts by themselves that they can't yet read
- The Teaching and Learning Cycle (review and revisit, teach, practise, apply, consolidate) is followed
- Children are supported to keep up, so they don't need to catch up
- Phonics is taught at letter-sound, word, sentence, and text levels
- Core phonics provision is distinguished from phonics enrichment activities
- Teachers have clarity about what, why and how they are teaching
- Teachers focus on details, such as accurate modelling and pencil hold.
- The Systematic Synthetic Phonics Teaching Principles (knowledge of the code and the skills of blending, segmenting, and handwriting) are taught explicitly



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The Rocket Phonics teaching sequence introduces each new letter sound correspondence over two days, The first day focuses on blending to read skills and the second day on segmenting to spell. Reading and writing are interlinked so there will naturally be overlap, but by separating the skills teaching has more clarity and the children have more opportunity to learn and apply before moving on. Teachers will make frequent links between phonic sessions and reading and writing throughout the day and across the curriculum.

Whilst phonics is not taught discreetly throughout Key Stage 2, many of the sounds and patterns are revised and developed through spelling sessions and literacy lessons. All staff have awareness of Rocket Phonics so that it can be used to support those who need it throughout the school. For further details of how spelling is taught in Key Stage 2, see the Literacy Policy.

Expectations

These are the fundamental expectations to ensure that all teaching staff provide a consistent and cohesive approach to teaching phonics.

Frequency

- Phonics is taught everyday for at least 30 minutes (this may be broken down into smaller chunks for Reception children)

- Teachers/Teaching Partners will hear children read individually once a week. Children will participate in reading activities such as phonic sessions, guided reading, and wider curriculum activities.

Equipment

- Early Years and Key Stage 1 classrooms will have a Rocket Phonics frieze on display
- Adults who lead a phonics session will use Rocket Phonics flashcards, friezes and Big Books/Target Readers to aid learning
- Every classroom will have Rocket Phonic sound mats available for children to access.

Lesson format

- Lessons will follow the Teaching and Learning Cycle from Rocket Phonics:

Review and revisit ➡ Teach ➡ Practice ➡ Apply ➡ Consolidate

Terminology

- Teachers and Teaching Partners will use 'pure sounds' when teaching phonics or when supporting reading and writing activities

Key Phonics Vocabulary that will be used throughout the school:

Blending – process of using phonics for reading e.g. 'Let's blend these sounds together: c – a – t as in cat.'

Segmenting/chopping – process of using phonics for spelling and writing e.g. 'Let's segment/chop the word: cat is segmented/chopped as c – a – t'

Phoneme – the sound that is made by a letter or group of letters

Grapheme – the way that the sound looks when it is written down

Digraph – two letters which together make one sound

Trigraph – three letters which together make one sound

Quadgraph - 4 letters which together make one sound

Split digraph – two letters, which work together to make one sound but are separated within the word by another letter

Vowel digraph – a combination of two vowels that work together to represent a single vowel sound e.g. ai as in train or ee as in sheep

Handwriting

- Reception: Children will be taught the print formation of lowercase and capital letters with clear start and finish points
- Year 1 and Year 2: Lead-ins will be taught as a progression of the children mastering letter formation with lead outs.
- We will use the Brize Norton Primary School Handwriting Scripts to support the correct modelling to all children
- Teachers and Teaching Partners supporting handwriting will encourage children to use correct posture, positioning and pencil grip. Correct formation will also be modelled in all writing.

Impact

Through the teaching of systematic phonics, our aim is for children to become fluent readers by the end of Key Stage 1. Children can then focus on developing their fluency and comprehension as they move through the school.

Assessment

Regular assessment will be used to keep children on track. Formative assessment will be ongoing daily as teachers observe children's participation in lessons. Summative assessments will be used at the end of each teaching block in line with the Rocket Phonics scheme.

For any children identified as being at risk of falling below expected progress the following steps will be taken:

- Discussion between the class teacher and Phonics Lead
- Additional support will be provided within the phonics sessions where possible
- Specific difficulties will be identified with extra sessions outside the daily teaching of phonics to work on specific targets
- Next steps will be shared with parents and home packs provided where appropriate

In the Summer Term, all Year 1 children take part in the Phonics Screening Check, a national statutory check of the children's phonological understanding. Year 1 pupils will use Phonics Screen Check Practice Papers to prepare them for the check. Those children that do not achieve the threshold score for meeting the standard, will repeat the check in the Summer Term of Year 2. If applicable, they will receive phonics intervention to ensure there are no learning gaps.

Monitoring

The quality of phonics teaching and outcomes will be monitored by learning walks, work samples and by talking to children and listening to them read.

This policy is reviewed regularly to reflect:

- Ofsted guidance
- National Curriculum updates: Strong Foundations
- School priorities and pupil needs
- Inline with other school policies: Reading, Writing and Early Years.