



Phonics

Intent:

At Peacehaven Heights Primary School, we strive to teach children to read effectively and quickly, using the Letters and Sounds programme which includes teaching synthetic phonics, sight vocabulary, decoding and encoding words as well as spelling and accurate letter formation. Our structure of teaching letter sounds is derived from the 'Letters and Sounds' programme which outlines six phonic phases, each with new phonemes to be learnt and increasing with difficulty as you progress from phase one to six.

We passionately believe that teaching children to read and write independently, as quickly as possible, is one of the core purposes of a primary school. These fundamental skills not only hold the keys to the rest of the curriculum but also have a huge impact on children's self-esteem and future life chances. Using the Letters and Sounds program we teach children to:

- read easily, fluently and with good understanding
- develop the habit of reading widely and often, for both pleasure and information
- write clearly, accurately and coherently, adapting their language and style in and for a range of contexts, purposes and audiences.

Implementation:

At Peacehaven Heights Primary School, we believe that reading and writing is an essential life skill and are dedicated to enabling our children to become enthused, engaged and successful lifelong readers and writers. To support this, we implement the following:

- Daily Phonics sessions, whereby the children learn new phonemes, improve their ability to segment and blend sounds, and their ability to apply this knowledge into their reading and writing.
- Pupils have regular reading sessions with an adult we ensure the pupils are regularly practising and applying their phonics knowledge. In the EYFS

the continuous provision matches the pupil's current knowledge and understanding whilst ensuring the children are suitably challenged.

- All classes are equipped with a wide range of reading books to meet the needs of all children in the classroom which also engage and challenge keen readers.
- All children from Reception to Year 2 are issued a reading book that is appropriate for their reading ability. Children who are not yet 'free readers', will work through our school reading scheme – these are levelled books which match the children's current reading age. We expect family at home to read these books with their child daily and make comments in their child's reading record.

In practice, children learn the 44 common sounds in the English language and are taught how to blend these sounds to decode (read) words. At Peacehaven Heights Primary School, we follow the 'Letters and Sounds' programme of sound teaching as mentioned above. We start teaching children in Nursery Phase One, which allows children to become aware of the sounds they hear in their immediate environments, as well as the sounds they can create themselves, using their body or instruments. When children reach Reception, we move on to Phase Two, which introduces the children to 23 new phonemes. During this phase the children will learn to recognise, form and use these sounds in simple consonant-vowel-consonant (CVC) words to begin to read and write simple words and captions. Once they have conquered this skill, they start reading stories and texts that have words made up of the sounds they know. This means that they can embed and apply their phonic knowledge and start to build their reading fluency. Once secure, the children move on to the next phase whereby they will learn new sounds, improve their reading fluency and develop a greater writing ability. Throughout this process there is a focus on comprehension, reading with expression and reading for enjoyment.

Throughout Early Years and Key Stage One, children are taught in small and focussed groups to target their specific needs for Phonics, alongside children of the same ability. Teachers and Teaching assistants regularly assess the children in their group and converse with the teacher daily so that all planning meets the needs of the children in that group, therefore ensuring all children are confident before moving onto a new phonics phase. In addition to this, all children will be benchmarked at the end of every term to ensure their reading books offer enough challenge and room to improve. This tied with our daily observations enables confidence when issuing new reading books for the children to enjoy at home. We make sure that pupils read books that are closely matched to their

increasing knowledge of phonics and ability to read 'tricky words'; so they experience early reading success and gain confidence that they are readers, as well as consolidating the learning that takes place in school.

Impact:

Through the teaching of systematic phonics, our aim is for children to become fluent readers by the end of Key Stage One. This way, children can focus on developing their fluency and comprehension as they move through the school. Attainment in reading is measured using the statutory assessments at the end of Key Stage One and Two. These results are measured against the reading attainment of children nationally. Attainment in phonics is measured by the Phonics Screening Test at the end of Year 1. However, we firmly believe that reading is the key to all learning and so the impact of our Phonics and reading curriculum goes beyond the results of the statutory assessments.