

## Phonics at Leighterton Primary School

### **What is phonics?**

Phonics is a strategy for teaching children to read. It involves teaching children to read by linking sounds (phonemes) to written letters (graphemes).

The children start by learning phonemes for individual letters, e.g. 's', 'a', 't'. The children then progress to learning phonemes are spelt using more than one letter, e.g. e.g. 'ee' in see, 'air' in 'fair'. Children then learn alternative ways of spelling e.g. 'ai' (ai, ay, eigh, a\_e...). They also learn that some graphemes can represent more than one phoneme, e.g. 'ch' in chip, school, and chef.

### **What is Essential Letters and Sounds?**

**Essential letters and sounds (ELS)** is a phonics programme approved by the DfE. **ELS** is our chosen phonics programme. It is used by many other primary schools nationally and locally.

### **How we teach phonics using ELS**

- We use a simple, consistent approach to teaching phonics.
- Opportunities to revisit prior learning.
- Teacher modelling- 'Me then you'
- Oral segmenting and blending- robot arms and blending hands
- Keep up rather than catch up ethos
- Daily Phonics sessions
- Children are taught 4 new sounds each week
- There is a review lesson after all the 4 new sounds have been taught
- There are also review weeks where the children just revisit prior learning
- Once children know the sounds (phonemes) for the 'grapheme', they will be able 'decode' unfamiliar words by breaking the word into sounds then read the word by **blending** back together.
- This means that by the end of the first week, children in Apsemore class will be reading, e.g. 's-a-t', 't-i-p'!

## Reading Books in Reception and Year 1

### Children will take home each week:

**1 Decodable Phonics Book**- this is carefully selected by the teacher each week and is personalised to each child based on their current phonics knowledge. This book should be read independently by the child and will be fully decodable. They should read this book at least **4 times a week** to develop fluency and other skills like reading with expression.

These will be written and recorded in the child's yellow reading log. Please write and date when your child has read this book along with a comment.

**1 Reading for Pleasure (Library) Book**- this book is to be read for the pure enjoyment and love of reading. It is a book that should be shared with an adult at home.

These books will be changed in school regularly.

### Supporting children's phonics learning at home.

- Children should read their decodable phonics book **at least 4 times** a week.
- Encourage children to point to each letter of the words as they read.
- Record reading in the yellow reading logs.
- Read to your child as well as listening to your child reading.
- Phonics and reading practise through online games that are phone and tablet friendly (see links below).

### Useful links for at home

Pronunciation of Phonemes videos:

<https://home.oxfordowl.co.uk/phonics-videos/>

Online phonics games:

<https://www.phonicsplay.co.uk/resources>

<https://www.phonicsbloom.com/>