



## Why do we teach phonics at Cavendish Close?

We recognise that some children at Key Stage 2 may be experiencing difficulty in reading and/or writing because they are not secure in their phonic awareness and understanding. This could be because they have missed or misunderstood a crucial phase of systematic phonics teaching. Research suggests it is particularly helpful for children learning to read from ages 5-7 but should continue to practice if they are finding it difficult.

## What is phonics?

Phonics is a way of teaching children to read and spell skillfully. They are taught how to recognise the sounds that each individual letter makes, identify the sounds that different combinations of letters make - such as 'sh' or 'oo' and blend these sounds together from left to right to make a word. Children can then use this knowledge to 'de-code' new words that they hear or see.

## How do we teach phonics?

At Cavendish Close Junior Academy, we teach phonics through targeted interventions for pupils who have not embedded these vital skills in Key Stage One. We follow The Harmony Trusts' framework for teaching phonics. A copy of this document can be found on our website in the reading section under our curriculum tab. It covers the rationale and evidence base for the development of this approach.

Children access phonics interventions through grouped daily sessions during spelling time. There are a variety of ways that our children can access phonics in school and at home:

- Ability group intervention
- 1:1 targeted support
- Marking and feedback
- Accessing activities in continuous provision
- Using Spelling Shed
- Access to online books through MyOn
- Targeted phonics reading books aligned to our framework
- Daily session in our specialist Browne class.

Pupils are tracked by teachers using assessments which are phase specific. This gives us a clear, precise set of sounds and misconceptions that we can target for each child.

Children that receive phonics support are issued with a reading book to engage and enthuse them. The books are aimed at a high interest level whilst coverage is maintained for the phonics phases.

## How do we assess and track phonics?

Children requiring a phonics intervention are identified using Key Stage One data we receive and whether they passed the phonics screening check. Children's current attainment is also taken into account. If children are currently working below their key stage, they are put forward for a phonics intervention. Interventions are fluid so staff also consider attainment and progress throughout the year and identify whether children would benefit from a phonics intervention.



### **How has COVID affected our approach?**

As a result of COVID, it is evident that a higher proportion of children in Year 3 had not passed the phonics screening check in Key Stage One due to school closures and missed learning. Staff have used the data from transition to identify children as a priority for phonics. As part of our catch up plan, our phonics interventions have made significant impact on children's progress as evident in our assessments.

### **How is phonics linked to other interventions?**

Along with recognising graphemes and their associated phonemes, children are taught 'tricky' words which cannot be segmented or blended. If our assessments identify gaps in the children's recognition of tricky words, other interventions can be embedded to supplement phonics.

As an academy, we access the Super Seven Spelling programme which aims to embed the reading and spelling of high frequency words using a methodical approach to embed the learning into their long term memory.

Alongside this, we have been using the SNIP programme which aims to increase the spelling and reading of high frequency words. The words are grouped by words which visually look different to each other. It is aimed at pupils in Key Stage 2 who have been exposed to effective phonics teaching but are still struggling.

### **How is phonics supported by our HTML Strategy?**

School wide, we use Spelling Shed. It is a useful online platform developed by EdShed to deliver our spelling programme. This platform has been built with students, teachers and parents in mind and aims to make spelling fun for children as well as simple for adults to manage. The scheme has been created following key National Curriculum objectives and will take our children through the statutory and non-statutory spelling lists in each age phase.

Following a trial of NESSY, our academy now supplements our phonics approach using this program. Nesy programs are research-proven and designed to follow the principles of structured, multi-sensory learning. This programme requires the use of a device to access.

Phonics Play is a useful website with planning, resources and educational games for children to access. Having individual devices will make this resource very accessible to children.

Accessibility functions on our 1:1 devices are promoted by staff to encourage children to access texts in a variety of ways including dictation, font size and coloured screen backgrounds.

A central resource library known as our URL (Universal Resource Library) is available to staff at our school. These high quality resources and planning have been carefully designed to support the Harmony Trusts' systematic and synthetic approach to phonics.