



# Oldbury Park

## Primary School

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### **Phonics at Oldbury Park Primary School**

Here at Oldbury Park, we teach phonics through an engaging and rigorous programme called Read Write Inc (RWI).

#### **What is phonics?**

Phonics is a way of teaching children to read quickly and skilfully. 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’ and ‘oo’;
- Blend these sounds together from left to right to make a word.

Children can then use this knowledge to segment and blend new words that they hear or see. This is the first important step in learning to read.

#### **What is Read Write Inc?**

Read Write Inc is a phonics programme which helps all children learn to read fluently and at speed, so they can focus on developing their skills in comprehension, vocabulary and spelling. The programme is designed for children aged 4-7 years old. At Oldbury Park, we continue teaching RWI to children beyond the age of 7 if they require additional phonic intervention. Once a child is secure in their phonics, they will begin learning the spelling rules following the RWI Spelling Programme. RWI was developed by Ruth Miskin and more information on this can be found at <https://ruthmiskin.com/en/find-out-more/parents/>

#### **How will Read Write Inc be taught?**

In Read Write Inc, the children are taught the sounds in three sets.

In Reception, all children are introduced to Set 1 sounds and will learn how to read the sounds in words and how those sounds can be written down. We teach the children to use ‘Fred Talk’, where they sound out each letter and blend these together to read the word. The children then progress to learning ‘Special Friends’ (2 or 3 letters with 1 sound e.g. sh, ch, ea) and then ‘Chatty Friends’ (2 letters that have been split up to make 1 sound e.g. u-e, a-e).

The expectation is that by the end of the Autumn term in Year 2, all children will be secure with Set 1, 2 and 3 of the speed sounds.

As well as learning the speed sounds, children will also have an opportunity to read storybooks that are matched to the sounds they are learning. They practise reading with a partner and answer questions about what is happening in each book.



## Fred Talk



Fred Talk We use pure sounds ('mmm' not 'muh', 'sss' not 'suh', etc.) so that your child will be able to blend sounds into words more easily. At school we use a frog puppet called Fred who is an expert at sounding out words! He can only say each sound separately in a word, so the children have to blend the sounds together in order to say whole words. We call this 'Fred Talk'. E.g. m-o-p, c-a-t, m-a-n, sh-o-p, b-l-a-ck. As the children develop confidence and fluency in recognising and applying the sounds to reading words using their 'Fred Talk', we encourage them to 'Fred in their Head'. This involves the children reading the sounds in their head and only speaking when they are ready to say the whole word out loud. This is such an important skill to develop, as it improves word recognition and the speed and fluency that children read. The following video is an example of blending sounds with Fred: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dEzfpod5w\\_Q](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dEzfpod5w_Q)

## Teaching individual sounds

To help your child remember his or her sounds we say that some make a stretchy sound and some make a bouncy sound. Stretchy sounds are said in one long continuous sound e.g. mmmm, nnnnn, sssss, fffffff, vvvvvv. Bouncy sounds are said with a short sharp gap between e.g. d-d-d, as in dinosaur,



p-p-p as in puff. Children will also use pictures for each sound to help recognise the sound and then form the shape of the sound.

## Set 2 and 3 Sounds

Once the children are confident with their single-letter sounds, they are then taught Set 2 Sounds - the long vowels. This is where they are introduced to 'special friends', which have two letters for one sound e.g. sh, ch, ng, nk. This link shows you the Set 2 special friends: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p7hRbrpq5Bo> When they are very confident with all of Set 1 and 2 they are taught Set 3 Sounds. Set 3 sounds are alternative ways to write the Set 2 sounds, with an addition of new three letter sounds. It is, therefore, important that the children know the Set 2 sounds in order to link the new sounds to ones they already know. During Set 3 sounds, the children are taught about 'chatty friends', which is when one sound is made with two letters, which have to be kept apart e.g. o\_e, a\_e, i\_e. All sounds have a 'catchy phrase' that enables the child to visualise the shape of the letter and begin to accurately write the letter down, these are sent home throughout the year as the child progresses through the program.

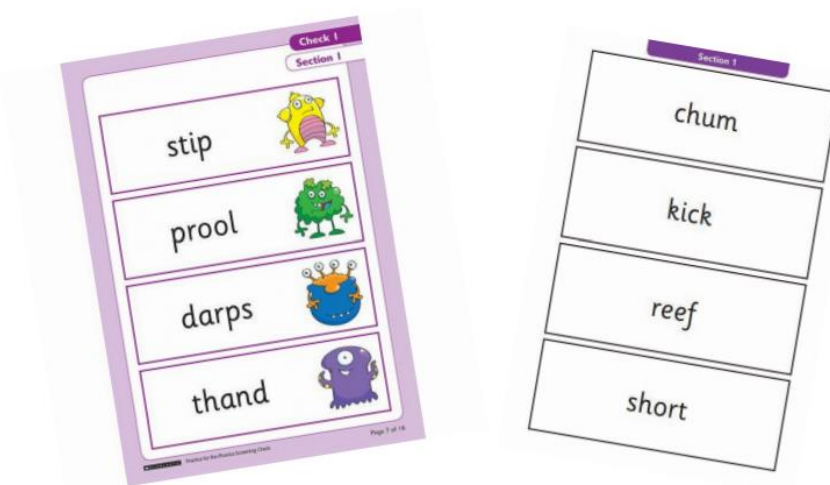
## **The Phonics Screening Check**

At the end of Year 1, all children take part in a reading activity. This activity requires the children to decode and blend 40 words, some real and some nonsense (pseudo). Please take time to watch the short video link below and view the expectations;

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LbKGLJPp6ww&list=PLDe74j1F52zSCiOMSn3zQDSzgu9TrbQ1c&index=5>

### **What are nonsense words?**

Your child will be told during the check which words are nonsense words (that he/she will not have seen before). Your child will be familiar with this because we already use 'nonsense-words' when teaching phonics in school. Nonsense-words are important to include because words such as 'vap' or 'jound' are new to all children. Children cannot read the non-words by using their memory or vocabulary; they have to use their decoding skills. This is a fair way to assess their ability to decode. Here are some example pages from the screening check:



After the check, we will tell you about your child's progress in phonics and how he or she has done in the screening check. If your child has found the check difficult, we will also tell you what support we have put in place to help him or her improve. All children are individuals and develop at different paces, therefore the screening check ensures that teachers understand which children need extra help with phonic decoding.

### **Helping your child with phonics**

Phonics works best when children are given plenty of encouragement and learn to enjoy reading and books. Parents play a very important part in helping with this. Some simple steps to help your child learn to read through phonics:

Step 1 – identify 'Special Friends' in words (2 or 3 letters that make 1 sound) e.g. ch, th, igh

Step 2 – 'Fred Talk' the sounds (say each sound separately) eg. ch– a-t, n-igh-t, b-l-a-ck

Step 3 – read the word (blend sounds together)

- Practise reading and making up a mixture of real and nonsense words (see the example pages of a phonics screening check test for ideas) based on the speed sounds. Then ask your child to make some

up for you to read too – have a competition to see who can come up with the silliest sounding ones!  
eg. snark gort, flink

- With all books, encourage your child to ‘sound out’/‘Fred Talk’ unfamiliar words and then blend the sounds together from left to right rather than looking at the pictures to guess. Once your child has read an unfamiliar word you can talk about what it means and help him or her to follow the story.
- Try to make time to read with your child every day. Grandparents and older brother or sisters can help too. Encourage your child to blend the sounds all the way through a word.
- Word games like ‘I-spy’ can also be an enjoyable way of teaching children about sounds and letters. You can also encourage your child to read words from your shopping list or road signs to practise phonics.
- Lots of Fred talk at home (where you say the separate sounds in each word for your child to blend together).

If you would like any further help or guidance on how to support your child with their phonics, or how we use Read Write Inc in school, we would strongly recommend you visit the Read Write Inc website at: <https://www.ruthmiskin.com/en/find-out-more/parents/> . There are also lots of short video clips on You Tube about Read Write Inc. including:

10 Things to Think About When Reading with Your Child:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?list=PLDe74j1F52zSCiOMSn3zQDSzgu9TrbQ1c&v=iHMI70ZmxIQ>

We are here to help! If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact our Phonics Lead, Laura Jones, or your child’s class teacher.