



Phonics Policy

At Stephen Hawking School phonics is taught and reinforced via activities that are relevant and tailored to each child and their individual needs and developmental levels.

Key approaches to teaching phonics

a) Promoting Listening Skills

Developing children's listening skills underpins our approach to phonics. Listening skills are actively reinforced across the school's curriculum. Each classroom environment supports listening skills via a consistent approach, for example via story time, resonance board sessions and role play.

b) Sounds in the environment

- Being made aware of different sound in their environment, for example familiar voices, animal sounds and transport sounds.
- Supporting the children to comment on and copy different environmental sounds using their voices and additional communication aids such as switches and symbols.
- Encouraging the children to discriminate between different sounds, for example listening games

c) Exploring musical instruments and creating sounds

- Explore musical instruments in music activities.
- Supported to comment on the way songs are sang and instruments are played through appropriate communication method.
- Repeat actions during an adult led activity and game.
- Explore sounds in child initiated play through instruments, songs and stories.

d) Creating sounds through actions

- Experience and copy action songs and rhymes which involve sequencing simple actions, varying the pace of actions and recalling different sounds for example, through games on the resonance board.

e) Rhythm and rhyme

- Listening to rhymes and rhythms in a variety of activities, for example listening to nursery rhymes and listening to story books with repetitive phrases.
- Joining in with rhymes and rhythms through adult led activities, with visual support, for example objects, photos, signs and symbols.
- Reinforcing rhymes and rhythms through singing in small group and whole class activities.

f) Alliteration

- Experience and explore alliterative games, rhymes and jingles.
- Support children to identify initial sounds and reproduce initial sounds.
- Encourage children to create alliterative phrases, through practical activities and games.

g) Voice sounds

- We actively encourage children to listen to and make action sounds in multi-sensory activities.
- We support the children to use their voices to add sounds to familiar stories.
- Use of IT, such as switch It programmes or Big Mack switches.

Letters and sounds

All children have opportunities to experience letter sounds within topic based activities. Letter sounds are reinforced orally and with visual support using strategies such as specialist computer programmes, for example Switch It, See and Learn and via photos, symbols and pictures.

According to the child's individual education needs children will experience blending letter sounds to make whole words, starting with simple vc and cvc and progressing to more complex words. Where appropriate for children to use phonics in order to decode words the school has adopted a synthetic phonics approach. At Stephen Hawking School we follow the Letters and Sounds document when teaching synthetic phonics, incorporating other approaches such as Jollyphonics as required according to meet children's individual needs.

Consolidation

We recognise the importance of time, repetition and reinforcement when teaching phonics to meet our children's individual needs.