**Phonics Rationale**

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9. **Introduction**

At Mayfield School we place very high priority on early reading, including the teaching of phonics. Pupils engage in a robust and highly structured literacy programme with the aim of ensuring all of our pupils leave school, well on their way to achieving their potential.

*What do we mean by Phonics and phonemic awareness?*

Phonics instruction is where pupils are taught the relationships between the letters (graphemes) of written language and the individual sounds (phonemes) of spoken language. Phonemic awareness is defined as the ability to notice, think about, and work with the individual sounds in spoken words.

The National Literacy Trust explains that: ‘Introducing young children to the joy and wonder of books requires a systematic teaching of phonics.’ It goes on to describe three widely agreed systems of phonics teaching:

• Synthetic phonics - The most widely used approach associated with the teaching of reading in which phonemes (sounds) associated with particular graphemes (letters) are pronounced in isolation and blended together (synthesised).

• Analytical phonics - Associated with the teaching of reading in which the phonemes associated with particular graphemes are not pronounced in isolation. Children identify (analyse) the common phoneme in a set of words in which each word contains the phoneme under study. For example, teacher and pupils discuss how the following words are alike: pat, park, push and pen.

• Linguistic phonics - This system can be taught systematically and is also synthetic as it considers how sounds and graphemes are built into words. This method is highly recommended by Ann Sulivan (2023) in the teaching of phonics to pupils with complex needs as it can offer a logical teaching sequence, which can support pupils with complex needs to develop a ‘schema’ (mental plan) of the relationship between graphemes and phonemes (e.g. they focus on one phoneme and then learn all graphemes that can represent that at one time).

As a school we follow the Bug Club Phonics Scheme, which is based on Letters and Sounds.  Bug Club Phonics is a comprehensive systematic synthetic phonics teaching programme centred around an accessible and inclusive teaching approach. Teachers will follow the systematic phonic approach to support pupils to develop a clear understanding of the alphabetic code, and are also offered bespoke training on how to adapt phonics sessions to meet the needs of Mayfield’s pupils. Pupils from KS1 – KS3 access a 30 minute daily phonic session, and where appropriate are streamed into appropriate phase groups.

At Mayfield, the a lot of our pupils are not able to use verbal speech at a level that meets their communication requirements and rely on the use of AAC to communicate and access all curriculum areas. We know that pupils learning to communicate with AAC require systematic phonics and word study instruction. Spelling is what enables pupils to eventually communicate any word that they want to, or that they do not have a symbol for, therefore becoming autonomous communicators. Research shows that phonological awareness is often delayed in pupils who are learning to use AAC as they don’t get to practice learning to manipulate, isolate and delete sounds. Instead, their phonological awareness tends to develop later, as they learn to read. Comprehensive literacy instruction, including a robust systematic synthetic phonics programme, will help them develop phonological awareness, with the aim of becoming proficient readers, writers and communicators.

1. **Early Phonics Overview**

Our phonics strategy recognises the need for a pre-requisite to phonics for the pupils at Mayfield School. Staff will support pupils to develop a readiness for phase 1 phonics by supporting the development of attention, listening, engagement, and early communication skills. Some pupils may need to work at an ‘Early phonics’ level for some time, before being ready to embark on a formal phonics programme. These are generally those pupils who are working within the engagement elements of our curriculum (Milestone 1 -5). Pupils will experience intensive interaction, bucket time, sound play activities, and more, to support their attention and listening skills. The universal total communication strategies should be clearly embedded throughout all curriculum strands to support expressive and receptive communication skills. Early phonics is not taught discreetly, rather embedded into all strands of the curriculum to support generalisation. Teachers will utilise the Early Phonics Skills Map to judge when pupils are showing a readiness for Phase 1 phonics; in order to recognise our pupil’s spikey profiles, the skills are non-hierarchical. The Early Phonics Skills Map was informed by Birth to 5 Matters and Routes for Learning and incorporates the 5 lenses of engagement.

1. **Phase 1 Phonics Overview**

Pupils working within Phase 1 Phonics will have a daily phonics lesson, in which they will have exposure to all 7 aspects; environmental sounds, body percussion, instrumental sounds, alliteration and initial sounds, voice sounds, rhythm and rhyme, oral blending and segmenting. These 7 aspects are non-hierarchical, and pupils should have discreet opportunities through phonics lesson to develop their skills, as well as opportunities within our other curriculum strands throughout their school day to generalise skills.

Our Phase 1 pupils access the Bug Club Phase 1 Units. As part of our approach, similarly to Early Phonics, we recognise that early reading and phonics instruction may span a longer period of time due to the nature of the needs of the pupils. Teachers will follow the structure of the suggested Units on Bug Club; however, we recognise that elements such as pace and resources may need to be adapted and individualised to support pupils' engagement and progression. This may involve using a multi-sensory approach to explore letters including the phonemes and graphemes, to support pupils in becoming familiar with these in an accessible way, e.g., feeling sensory letters, searching for letters in sand and water, sharing letters with adults, sorting letters, alphabet books, rhymes and songs, etc.

Each half term, teachers will choose a unit to focus on from Bug Club (see Bug Club Unit to Aspect Grid below) to support pupils to access the 7 aspects. Teachers will work through the units at a pace appropriate for their phonics group and may explore more than one unit each half term. As the aspects are non-hierarchical, teachers do not need to start at Unti A and work through to Unit F – rather review the units and start with a unit that will engage and motivate their pupils, to develop and promote the love of reading from the very start! Where the Bug Club Unit does not explore an aspect, teachers are expected to supplement accordingly e.g., Unit B does not explore instrumental sounds, teachers should use the ‘Extra Resources Grid’ for ideas of how they could deliver the aspect. The ’Extra Resources Grid’ is a working document where teachers can share ideas and activities, both sensory resources and IT resources.

Teachers should use the planning documents from Bug Club for learning intentions/outcomes and follow the structure of the lesson (as appropriate for individual pupils). All phonics lessons across all phases should start with the Bug Club Alphabet Song.

1. **Phase 2 and Beyond**

Unlike Early Phonics and Phase 1, pupils working within Phase 2 and beyond must follow the order of sounds outlined in Bug Club to support pupils understanding of the alphabetic code. Teachers will follow the units within each phase in the given order, and utilise the Phonics Coverage Grid to identify the units pupils have worked on each half term. We recognise that for our pupils, the pace and progression that Bug Club suggests may differ, and we encourage teachers to maintain our curriculum ethos of ‘giving enough time’ within phonic sessions. Teacher use the assessment indictors ‘learn, practise, master’ when completing assessments on evidence for learning to support this. Within each session pupils are given the opportunities to; review and revisit previous sounds learnt, teach new sounds, and practise and apply the alphabetic code. Teachers must follow this structure, which is embedded within the provided Bug Club plans. Teachers will use the resources provided by Bug Club, however additional individual adaptations are made by the teachers to enable access to the resources and activities as needed e.g. the use of technology to enable access to the materials or sensory resources for pupils with visual impairments.

We model the application of the alphabetic code through phonics in shared reading and writing, both inside and outside of the phonics lessons, and across the curriculum. We also have a strong focus on language development for our children because we know that skills in communication are crucial for reading and writing in all subjects. It will enable advocacy, and for our pupils to be contributing members of society in life beyond Mayfield School.

1. **Appendix 1: Early Phonics Skills Map**

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **Early Phonics Skills Map** | | |
| **Expressive Communication** | **Receptive Communication** | **Engagement** |
| Shows an awareness of symbols with modelling from an adult | Can follow a one key word instruction with modelling from an adult | Shows clear anticipation |
| Attempts to explore own vocal range | Enjoys listening to an adult make sounds | Shows clear initiation |
| Uses gestures/eye movements to express themselves | Becomes active in routines e.g., anticipates | Shows clear persistence |
| Communicates needs in own way | Shows an interest in play with sounds, songs, and rhymes | Shows clear exploration |
|  | Turns towards familiar sounds | Shows clear realisation |
|  | Responds when hears own name | Shows single channeled attention on an activity |

1. **Appendix 2: Phase 1 Weekly Coverage**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Phase 1 Weekly Coverage** | | | | |
| Week 1 | | | | |
| Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday |
| Environmental Sounds | Body Percussion | Alliteration & Initial Sounds | Voice Sounds | Oral Blending & Segmenting |
| Week 2 | | | | |
| Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday |
| Environmental Sounds | Instrumental Sounds | Alliteration & Initial Sounds | Rhythm & Rhyme | Oral Blending & Segmenting |

1. **Appendix 3: Phase 1 Bug Club to Unit Aspect Grid**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Bug Club Unit to Aspect Grid** | | | | | | | |
| Bug Club Unit | **Environmental Sounds** | **Body Percussion** | **Alliteration & Initial Sounds** | **Voice Sounds** | **Instrumental Sounds** | **Rhythm & Rhyme** | **Oral Blending & Segmenting** |
| **A** | Unit A: A Wet Walk Lesson 1 <https://www.activelearnprimary.co.uk/planning#bugclub_phonics>  Unit A: A Wet Walk Lesson 4 <https://www.activelearnprimary.co.uk/planning#bugclub_phonics> | Unit A: A Wet Walk Lesson 1  <https://www.activelearnprimary.co.uk/planning#bugclub_phonics> | Unit A: A Wet Walk Lesson 3 <https://www.activelearnprimary.co.uk/planning#bugclub_phonics> | Unit A: A Wet Walk Lesson 4 <https://www.activelearnprimary.co.uk/planning#bugclub_phonics> |  |  | Unit A: A Wet Walk Lesson 2  <https://www.activelearnprimary.co.uk/planning#bugclub_phonics> |
| **B** | Unit B: All Sorts of Art Lesson 1 <https://www.activelearnprimary.co.uk/planning#bugclub_phonics> | Unit B: All Sort of Art Lesson 2 <https://www.activelearnprimary.co.uk/planning#bugclub_phonics>  Unit B: All Sorts of Art Lesson 3 <https://www.activelearnprimary.co.uk/planning#bugclub_phonics> | Unit B: All Sorts of Art Lesson 5 <https://www.activelearnprimary.co.uk/planning#bugclub_phonics> | Unit B: All Sorts of Art Lesson 1  <https://www.activelearnprimary.co.uk/planning#bugclub_phonics> |  | Unit B: All Sorts of Art Lesson 3 <https://www.activelearnprimary.co.uk/planning#bugclub_phonics>  Unit B: All Sorts of Art Lesson 4 <https://www.activelearnprimary.co.uk/planning#bugclub_phonics> | Unit B: All Sorts of Art Lesson 2 <https://www.activelearnprimary.co.uk/planning#bugclub_phonics> |
| **C** | Unit C: Nature Shapes Lesson 2 <https://www.activelearnprimary.co.uk/planning#bugclub_phonics>  Unit C: Nature Shapes Lesson 3 <https://www.activelearnprimary.co.uk/planning#bugclub_phonics> |  | Unit C: Nature Shapes Lesson 1 <https://www.activelearnprimary.co.uk/planning#bugclub_phonics>  Unit C: Nature Shapes Lesson 5  <https://www.activelearnprimary.co.uk/planning#bugclub_phonics> | Unit C: Nature Shapes Lesson 2 <https://www.activelearnprimary.co.uk/planning#bugclub_phonics>  Unit C: Nature Shapes Lesson 3 <https://www.activelearnprimary.co.uk/planning#bugclub_phonics> | Unit C: Nature Shapes Lesson 4 <https://www.activelearnprimary.co.uk/planning#bugclub_phonics> |  | Unit C: Nature Shapes Lesson 3 <https://www.activelearnprimary.co.uk/planning#bugclub_phonics> |
| **D** |  |  |  |  | Unit D: The Missing Button Lesson 3  <https://www.activelearnprimary.co.uk/planning#bugclub_phonics> | Unit D: The Missing Button Lesson 2 <https://www.activelearnprimary.co.uk/planning#bugclub_phonics> | Unit D: The Missing Button Lesson 1 <https://www.activelearnprimary.co.uk/planning#bugclub_phonics> |
| **E** |  |  | Unit E: From Seed to Sandwich Lesson 2 <https://www.activelearnprimary.co.uk/planning#bugclub_phonics>  Unit E: From Seed to Sandwich Lesson 3  <https://www.activelearnprimary.co.uk/planning#bugclub_phonics>  Unit E: From Seed to Sandwich Lesson 4 <https://www.activelearnprimary.co.uk/planning#bugclub_phonics>  Unit E: From Seed to Sandwich Lesson 5  <https://www.activelearnprimary.co.uk/planning#bugclub_phonics> | Unit E: From Seed to Sandwich Lesson 1 <https://www.activelearnprimary.co.uk/planning#bugclub_phonics>  Unit E: From Seed to Sandwich Lesson 2  <https://www.activelearnprimary.co.uk/planning#bugclub_phonics> |  | Unit E: From Seed to Sandwich Lesson 3 <https://www.activelearnprimary.co.uk/planning#bugclub_phonics> | Unit E: From Seed to Sandwich Lesson 1 <https://www.activelearnprimary.co.uk/planning#bugclub_phonics> |
| **F** |  |  |  | Unit F: A Day at the Beach Lesson 1 <https://www.activelearnprimary.co.uk/planning#bugclub_phonics> | Unit F: A Day at the Beach Lesson 3 <https://www.activelearnprimary.co.uk/planning#bugclub_phonics> |  | Unit F: A Day at the Beach Lesson 2 <https://www.activelearnprimary.co.uk/planning#bugclub_phonics> |

1. **Appendix 4: Example Phase 1 Extra Resources Grid**

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| **Environmental Sounds** | **Body Percussion** | **Alliteration & Initial Sounds** | **Voice Sounds** | **Instrumental Sounds** | **Rhythm & Rhyme** | **Oral Blending & Segmenting** |
| Weather Sounds: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/teach/school-radio/eyfs-listening-skills-weather/zvrcf4j> | Nursery Rhymes & Action Songs <https://www.bbc.co.uk/teach/school-radio/nursery-rhymes-action-songs-medley/z7jwrj6> | Brown Bear Book: <https://www.yonkerspublicschools.org/cms/lib/NY01814060/Centricity/Domain/1621/Brown%20Bear%20Book.pdf> | Voice Sounds Sensory Pack: [Voice sounds sensory pack](https://wilsonstbham.sharepoint.com/:f:/r/sites/mayfield_staff/Shared%20Documents/General/Curriculum/English%20and%20Communication/Phonics/Phase%201/Voice%20sounds%20sensory%20pack?csf=1&web=1&e=fHBdWk) | Musical Instruments: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/teach/school-radio/eyfs-listening-skills-music/zrthqp3> | Rhythm: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/teach/school-radio/eyfs-listening-skills-rhythm/zv6tjhv> |  |
| Inside Sounds: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/teach/school-radio/eyfs-listening-skills-inside-sounds/zr2m8xs> | Nursery Rhymes: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/teach/school-radio/nursery-rhymes-cat-sandion-medley/zm2792p> | Click Clack Moo: <https://www.arvindguptatoys.com/arvindgupta/clickclackcows.pdf> | Sounds Play Cars: | Exploring Musical Instruments; consider fast/slow/loud/quiet | Nursery Rhymes & Action Songs  <https://www.bbc.co.uk/teach/school-radio/nursery-rhymes-action-songs-medley/z7jwrj6> |  |
| Outside Sounds: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/teach/school-radio/eyfs-outside-sounds/zjyvt39> | Noisy Neigbour:  <https://wilsonstbham.sharepoint.com/:p:/r/sites/mayfield_staff/_layouts/15/Doc.aspx?sourcedoc=%7BA27C1D4D-2321-4E11-B6C7-DBC5A01FCDAE%7D&file=Noisy%20Neighbour.pptx&action=edit&mobileredirect=true> | Initial Sound Cards: <https://wilsonstbham.sharepoint.com/sites/mayfield_staff/Shared%20Documents/Forms/AllItems.aspx?id=%2Fsites%2Fmayfield%5Fstaff%2FShared%20Documents%2FGeneral%2FCurriculum%2FEnglish%20and%20Communication%2FPhonics%2FPhase%201%2FPh1%20pack%2FPhase%201%20Robot%20Computer%20Sound%20Cards&viewid=20c2f601%2Ddc21%2D46fe%2Db059%2D42a74ccef21e> |  | Purple Mash Music Maker | Nursery Rhymes: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/teach/school-radio/nursery-rhymes-cat-sandion-medley/zm2792p> |  |
| Journey Sounds: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/teach/school-radio/eyfs-listening-skills-journeys/zfwjcqt> | Busy Body: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/teach/school-radio/eyfs-listen-and-play-my-busy-body/zr3vhbk> | Bertha goes to the Zoo: <https://wilsonstbham.sharepoint.com/sites/mayfield_staff/Shared%20Documents/Forms/AllItems.aspx?id=%2Fsites%2Fmayfield%5Fstaff%2FShared%20Documents%2FGeneral%2FCurriculum%2FEnglish%20and%20Communication%2FPhonics%2FPhase%201%2FPh1%20pack%2FBertha%20Goes%20to%20The%20Zoo%20Alliteration%2Epdf&viewid=20c2f601%2Ddc21%2D46fe%2Db059%2D42a74ccef21e&parent=%2Fsites%2Fmayfield%5Fstaff%2FShared%20Documents%2FGeneral%2FCurriculum%2FEnglish%20and%20Communication%2FPhonics%2FPhase%201%2FPh1%20pack> |  |  | Wiggle Waggle: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/teach/school-radio/eyfs-wiggle-waggle-index/zdw9382> |  |
| Animal & Habitat Sounds: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/teach/school-radio/eyfs-listening-skills-animals-and-habitats/z7bgnrd> | Wiggle Waggle: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/teach/school-radio/eyfs-wiggle-waggle-index/zdw9382> |  |  |  | Supermovers Rhyme: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/teach/supermovers/ks1-english-rhyme-with-radzi/zvbm47h> |  |
| What job? Sounds: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/teach/school-radio/eyfs-listening-skills-jobs/zh8dgwx> | Body Percussion: <https://wilsonstbham.sharepoint.com/:p:/r/sites/mayfield_staff/_layouts/15/Doc.aspx?sourcedoc=%7B2617AF3A-2C47-4216-9DA1-A5B9B88872BE%7D&file=t-t-2545943-body-percussion-powerpoint_ver_1.ppt&action=edit&mobileredirect=true> |  |  |  |  |  |
| Sports Sounds: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/teach/school-radio/eyfs-listening-skills-sports/zkfy6v4> |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Near & Far: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/teach/school-radio/eyfs-listening-skills-near-and-far/z6k8bdm> |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Sound Story: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/teach/school-radio/eyfs-listening-skills-sound-story/zhq792p> |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Sound Games 1: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/teach/school-radio/eyfs-listening-skills-sound-games-1/zm72kmn> |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Sound Games 3: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/teach/school-radio/eyfs-listening-skills-sound-games-3/znnsmfr> |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Sound Games 4: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/teach/school-radio/eyfs-listening-skills-sound-games-4/zhpn2sg> |  |  |  |  |  |  |