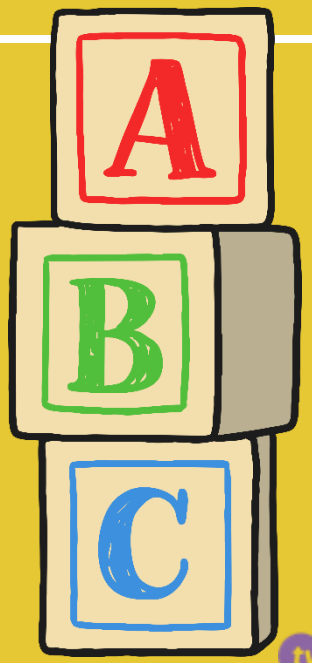
Year One

Phonics Screening Check

A Guide for Parents



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Chapters

1
What is Phonics?

2
What is the Phonics Screening Check?

3
What Happens During the Screening?

4
Pseudo Words (Nonsense words)

5
Reporting to Parents

6
How Can I Help My Child at Home?

next page

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What is Phonics?



Children begin to learn phonics (sounds) in early years. Once children begin learning sounds, these sounds are used orally to identify and make words. They will then begin to learn the letters which make each of the sounds and these are used to read and spell words.

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But!!!! Not all words can be 'sounded out', so we teach them how to read these 'tricky words'.

The children learn about digraphs, trigraphs, split digraphs and consonant blends in their every day lessons!! The children know this terminology from the beginning and are very good at identifying and using this in our phonics lessons!

chapter menu

next page

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What is the Phonics Screening Check?

Children in Year 1 throughout the country will all be taking part in a phonics screening check during the same week in June. Children in Year 2 will also take the check if they did not achieve the required result when in Year 1 or they have not taken the test before.

The government feels it is designed to give teachers and parents information on how their child is progressing in phonics. They say it will help to identify whether your child needs additional support at this stage so that they do not fall behind in this vital early reading skill.



chapter menu

next page

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What is the Phonics Screening Check?

* We do not need a test to give us the information about your child's phonic and reading skills. We continually assess children with their reading and their phonics development so we do not feel that we need a test to tell us if they need extra help! We already know!



* If a child needs a little extra help with their phonics, we will make sure they get it!

* The report cards and any additional conversations with a teacher will make sure you know if your child is finding phonics or learning to read difficult and will share information to support your child at home.

* From the moment they join us, we teach pre reading and reading skills alongside individual phonics lessons, and we assess each child on these skills all the way through school.

* The phonics screen is compulsory, but we ensure children have the skills to be readers and not just pass a test.

chapter menu

next page

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What Happens During the Test?

The test contains 40 words. The list of words the children read is a combination of 20 real words and 20 pseudo words (nonsense words).

Each child will sit one-to-one with their teacher and read each word aloud using the same strategies taught in phonics lessons throughout the school. They will identify the different sounds in the word, write the 'sound buttons' under the sounds and then blend the sounds to read the word. They then say the word out loud again.

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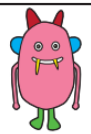
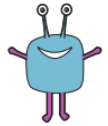
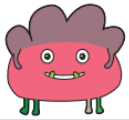
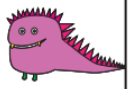
dat 	blot	clend 	model
cag 	greet	braits 	person
rin 	dust	scrug 	chapter
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chapter menu

next page

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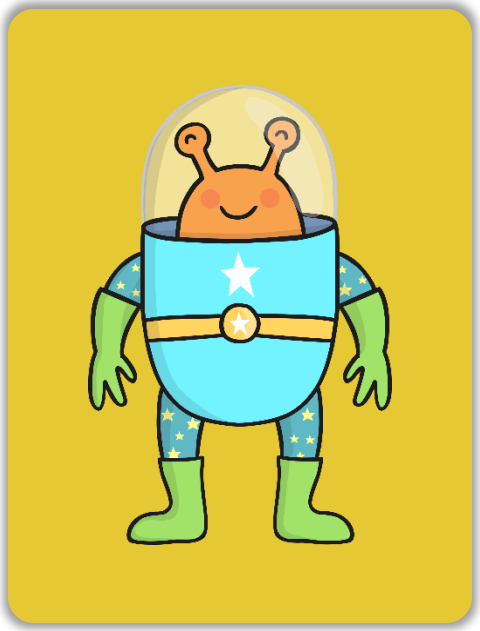
Pseudo Words (Nonsense Words)

The pseudo words will be shown to your child with a picture of an alien. At Toftwood, we call these Alien words. This provides the children with a context for the pseudo word which is independent from any existing vocabulary they may have. Pseudo words are included because they will be new to all pupils; they do not favour children with a good vocabulary knowledge or visual memory of words.



chapter menu

next page

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Reporting to Parents

We will let you know if your child has passed or not passed with the required mark with your end of year report. It is important to think about this in relation to your child the letter will either say:

1. They have passed the test with the required mark
2. They have not passed the test with the required mark but we have no concerns about their reading, or
3. They have not passed the test with the required mark but we have already shared with you during the year they find this difficult and we will continue to support them with their own personal progress

We then redo the test (quiz!) in year 2 with those who have not passed with the required mark.
We continue to work with all children to develop their reading skills, and phonics is a part of that, but not all of it!



chapter menu
next page

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How Can I Help My Child at Home?

- You can practise reading different words, real and 'alien' – please only do so for a few minutes at a time. Get them to do the 'sound buttons' underneath and 'sound it and say it' just like they do at school.
- Use the phonics play website.
- Read as much as possible to and with your child.
- Blend the sounds by pointing to each one, e.g. /c/ in cat, /p/ in pat, /ng/ in sing, /ee/ in been. Next move your finger under the whole word as you say it. Make sure you know how to pronounce each sound correctly.
- Discuss the meaning of words if your child does not know what they have read.
- Your class teacher is happy to provide any further advice or information

chapter menu
next page

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Thank you!

Any questions?

