

Phonics at Ulcombe CE Primary School

Here at Ulcombe, we are using 'Letters and Sounds: Principles and Practice of High Quality Phonics' and the National Curriculum (September 2014) to structure our Phonics teaching. We use a website called 'Phonics Play' to provide us with our planning and interactive games, and we support this with a huge variety of other fun and engaging resources. We also teach the younger children 'Jolly Phonics' actions, in order to help them to recall sounds.

We teach Phonics daily for 20 minutes, with children being grouped by ability across the whole school. Children are regularly assessed on their phonic understanding and groups may change according to the pace of their learning. Children who can read confidently and have worked through all the phases of Phonics will be in a Spelling, Punctuation and Grammar (SPAG) group instead.

Children are taught Phonics and SPAG by either a Class Teacher or Teaching Assistant, and this is rotated throughout the year. All Teaching Assistants are supported by an experienced Class Teacher and the Subject Leader.

We hold a Phonics and reading meeting for new parents in the Autumn term, giving them an opportunity to learn more about how we teach phonics and how they can best support their child's reading progress.

Children have a reading book to take home from our reading scheme. These books can be changed regularly during the week once they have been read at home, and we encourage our older children to take responsibility for this. We use books from a variety of schemes (including Oxford Reading Tree, Songbirds and Dandelion Readers) and children move through these progressively, in line with the progress of their reading ability. We also encourage children to read other books in addition to these, whether that be their own books or library books, as we want children to develop a love of reading too. Our annual Reading challenge is another way we incentivise children to read at home.

Alongside our teaching of Phonics, we also teach sight vocabulary (including the high frequency words) and as such children may receive weekly spellings, linked to what they are learning in school. We appreciate parental support in helping their children to learn these.

We also encourage the use of context to support reading fluency. We teach children how to appreciate and be critical of what they are reading and develop the skills of inference and deduction. (What do they know that is not explicitly stated in the book?) Children will also be exposed to other good quality, age-appropriate books, during their Reading and Writing lessons, as well as during Story-Time at the end of every day.

If you have any questions about your child's Phonics learning or Reading, please contact their Class Teacher.