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Phonics at Viewley Hill



What is Phonics?

Phonics is a method of learning to read. Phonics works by breaking each word up into its individual sounds before blending these sounds back together to read the word. It is the most effective way of teaching children to read. To start with, children are taught single letter sounds and move on to two /three letters making a sound.

What is Little Wandle?

Little Wandle is the Phonics programme we have adopted to teach our children to read. This is because the government require all schools to be using a Systematic Synthetic Phonics programme that is validated. These schemes must provide fully decodable books too.

Why Little Wandle?

Little Wandle is the closest programme to what we already had in school. This means less upheaval for the children and a continuity of their learning without a big disruption. The programme has clear progression and offers many opportunities to review and revisit learning. It includes 'keep-up' sessions to ensure no child is left behind. The scheme also provides fully decodable books.

The link below will take you to the Little Wandle website—the parent section. It has videos and resources that will show you how we teach Phonics:

<https://www.littlewandlelettersandsounds.org.uk/resources/for-parents/>

What about Reading?

Due to our change in Phonics scheme, we will also be changing our Reading sessions in school. For our reading practise we will use the same book for 3 sessions. Each session will have a different focus to ensure the children are becoming fluent, motivated and excited readers. A book at the same Phonics level will then be sent home for the children to read to you.

Alongside this, your child will also choose a 'sharing book' to bring home. This is to encourage children to become lifelong readers by reading for pleasure. You should not expect your child to read this alone—read it to them or with them. Discuss the pictures, predict what might happen next, use different voices for characters or explore the facts in a non-fiction book. The purpose is for enjoyment and fun!

Vocabulary

Phoneme: the smallest unit of sound that can be identified in words.

Grapheme: a letter or group of letters to represent a particular phoneme when writing.

GPC: the sound-letter relationship.

Blending: combine individual phonemes into a whole word.

Digraph: a grapheme using 2 letters to represent 1 phoneme ('2 letters, 1 sound')

Trigraph: a grapheme using 3 letters to represent 1 phoneme ('3 letters, 1 sound')

Fluency: ability to read accurately with speed and expression—read words automatically without decoding.

Mnemonic: a way of assisting the memory. We use pictures and catchphrases to help the children remember GPCS.