HOLY ROOD
Catholic Primary School

A Guide for Parents
Year One Phonics Screening Check

What is Phonics?

Children begin to learn phonics (sounds) in Early Years. Once children begin learning sounds, these are then used to read and spell words. Children can then see the purpose of learning sounds. For this reason, the first initial sounds that are taught are 's', 'a', 't', 'p', 'i', 'n'. These can immediately be blended for reading to make simple CVC words (consonant, vowel, consonant) e.g. sat, pin. Children then develop segmenting for writing skills; breaking the words into sounds to spell it out.

What is the Phonics Screening Check?

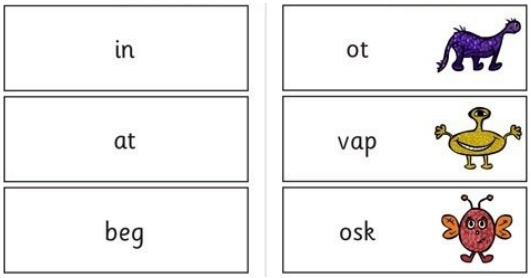
Children in Year 1 throughout the country will all be taking part in a phonics screening check during the same week in June (week beginning 12th June). Children in year 2 will also take the check if they did not achieve the required result when in Year 1 or if they have not taken the test before. The phonics screening check is designed to confirm whether individual children have learnt sufficient phonic decoding and blending skills.

What happens during the test?

The test contains 40 words. Each child sits one to one and reads each word aloud to their teacher. The test will take approximately 10 minutes per child, although all children are different and will complete the check at their own pace. The list of words the children read is a combination of 20 real words and 20 pseudo words (nonsense words).

Pseudo Words (Nonsense words)

The pseudo words will be shown to your child with a picture of an alien. 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.



Reporting to Parents

The results of the Phonic Screening Check will be sent to parents as part of the end of year report. They will also confirm if the child has met the standard threshold. Children who do not achieve the expected level will retake the test when they are in Year 2.

How are the results used?

Results from the check will be used by schools to analyse their own performance and for Ofsted to use in inspections.

How can I help my child at home?

- Play lots of sound and listening games with your child.
- Read as much as possible to and with your child.
- Encourage and praise – get them to have a 'good guess'.
- If your child is struggling to decode a word, help them by encouraging them to say each sound in the word from left to right. For larger words, split the word into chunks.
- Blend the sounds by pointing to each letter, e.g. /c/ in cat, or the letter group, e.g. /ng/ in sing. Next move your finger under the whole word as you say it.
- Discuss the meaning of words if your child does not know what they have read.