



# Banks Road Infants and Nursery School

“A Home for Learning, Laughing, Caring and Trying”

## Phonics Screening

All children in Year 1 will take the phonics screening check during the summer term.

### **What is the year 1 Phonics screening check?**

The phonics screening check has been taken individually by all children in year 1 in England from June 2012. It is designed to give teachers and parents information on how your child is progressing in phonics. 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.

There will be two sections in this 40-word check and it will assess phonic skills and knowledge learned through reception and year 1. Your child will read up to four words per page for their teacher and they will properly do the check in one sitting of about 5-10 minutes.

### **What sort of check is it and is it compulsory?**

It is a school based check to make sure that your child receives any additional support promptly, should they need it. It is not a stressful situation as the teacher will be well equipped to listen and understand your child's level of skills.

### **What will it check?**

It will check that your child can

- Sound out and blend graphemes in order to read simple words.
- Read phonetically decodable one-syllable and two syllable words e.g. cat, sand, windmill.
- Read a selection of nonsense words which are referred to as pseudo words.

### **What are nonsense or pseudo words and why are they included?**

These are words that are phonically decodable but are not actual words with an associated meaning e.g. brip, snorb. Pseudo words are included in the check specifically to assess whether your child can decode a word using phonic skills and not their memory.

The pseudo words will be shown to your child with a picture of a monster and they will be asked to tell their teacher what sort of monster it is by reading the word. This not only makes the check a bit more fun, but provides the children with a context for the nonsense word which is independent from any vocabulary they may have. Crucially, it does not provide any clues, so your child just has to be able to decode it. Children generally find nonsense amusing so they will probably enjoy reading these words.

### **Is there a pass mark?**

The check is not about passing or failing but checking appropriate progress is being made. If children do not reach the required 'standard', then we will look at any additional, tailored support to ensure that your child can catch up. Children progress at different speeds so not reaching the threshold score does not mean necessarily mean there is a serious problem. Your child will re-sit the check the following summer term.

### **What happens to the results?**

The school will report your child's results to you by the end of the summer term as well as to the local authority, but the results won't be published in a league table as with SATs.

### **Do all schools and child participate?**

All schools and academies in England must take part in the phonics screening check unless they are an independent school. There is a process in place for reviewing children with special educational needs, so if your child's teacher thinks there are very special reasons related to your child and their needs that make them think the phonics screening check may not be appropriate, they will decide on appropriate action and discuss with you.

### **What can I do to help?**

Please ensure your child has plenty of sleep and a great breakfast during the phonics screening week so that they are alert and are given the best opportunity to preform to their potential!