

Phonic and Reading Development at Cosby Primary School

At Cosby Primary School, we use a structured approach to the teaching of phonics using the stages of development as outlined in the Letters to Sounds Guidance.

Phonics is a way of teaching children to read quickly and skilfully. They are taught how to:

- recognise the sounds that each individual letter makes;
- identify the sounds that different combinations of letters make - such as 'sh' or 'oo';
- blend these sounds together from left to right to make a word.

Children can then use this knowledge to 'de-code' new words that they hear or see. This is the first important step in learning to read.

Research shows that when phonics is taught in a structured way - starting with the easiest sounds and progressing through to the most complex – it is the most effective way of teaching young children to read. It is particularly helpful for children aged 5–7.

Almost all children who receive good teaching of phonics will learn the skills they need to tackle new words. They can then go on to read any kind of text accurately, fluently and confidently, and to read for enjoyment.

In the Foundation Stage and in years 1 and 2 all pupils take part in a daily session of phonics teaching as they work through the different stages. They will often be given follow up activities to do at home to help them to reinforce their learning. In Reception, the children are given a phonics based homework task every week.

The majority of pupils will have mastered all of the phonics stages and be ready to move on to more complex reading and spelling skills in Key Stage 2. Where this is not the case, additional support will be provided.

Alongside the phonics based learning, the children will also develop their reading skills.

In Reception and Key Stage 1, the children bring home two books each week to share with parents and carers as well as with school staff. The books will be at

a level appropriate for your child's stage of development and will give plenty of opportunity for children to apply what they have been learning in their letters and sounds work. We encourage parents and carers to read with their children for a short time each day and to use the Home-School Book as a way to communicate what your child has read. The home school book will tell you whether your child has enjoyed a particular book and shows any particular problems or successes he or she has had.

As the children progress into Key Stage 2, they will be taught specific reading and spelling skills as part of the daily Literacy lesson. Again, additional follow-up activities may be given to reinforce learning at home. Although children are not heard to read individually, unless there is a specific difficulty with reading development, all children participate in guided reading sessions. This involves a small group of children, at the same level, reading and sharing a book together. These sessions are designed not just to enhance reading decoding skills, but to develop more complex skills such as comprehension, inference and deduction.

Throughout their time at school we aim to instil a love of reading in our children, encouraging them to read little and often across a variety of styles and genres. We often run additional activities to promote an enjoyment of reading. These include visits to the local library, participation in World Book Day, author visits and reading challenges.