



## Information for Parents & Carers

# The Year 1 Phonics Screening Check

Your child will soon be preparing for the nationally required Phonics Screening Check, which will take place in June. Here is some useful information for you to support your child on their reading journey.

### What is the Phonics Screening Check?

The Phonics Screening Check is a short and simple way for teachers to see how well your child can use phonics (the sounds that letters make) to read. It takes place in June and is part of the Year 1 learning journey.

- Your child will read 40 words to their teacher.
- 20 words will be real words, and 20 will be made-up words, called 'alien words'.
- These made-up words help show how well children can sound out words they've never seen before – just like when they're reading new books!

### How does the check work?

- Your child will read the words one-to-one with a teacher they know.
- It's designed to be a stress-free and friendly experience.
- It usually takes just a few minutes, and there's no time limit.

### Why phonics and why 'alien' words?

- 'Alien words' are pretend words (like "blop" or "zort") used to check how well children use phonics to read unfamiliar words.
- These words are useful because they're completely new—so children can't memorize phonics knowledge.
- Phonics is the foundation of learning to read, helping children gain confidence and fluency.

### How you can help at home

Here are some simple ways you can support your child's reading:

- Continue to listen to them read their phonics books regularly.
- Read to them every day – stories, poems, signs, anything!
- Your child's teacher will let you know if any additional practice is needed.
- Encourage reading for fun – visit the library, explore different types of books, and celebrate their reading progress.

### Why reading matters

Helping your child become a confident reader sets them up for success in all areas of learning.

Reading helps children:

- Grow their vocabulary.
- Understand the world around them  
Build empathy.
- And most importantly... fall in love with reading!

Children who love reading are more likely to become strong learners – now and in the future.

