

King Edwin Primary School

Head Teacher Mr Callaghan-Wetton
Fourth Avenue, Edwinstowe, Notts, NG21 9NS
Tel: (01623) 822111 Fax: (01623) 825707
E Mail: office@kingedwin.notts.sch.uk
Website: www.kingedwin.notts.sch.uk



Tuesday 30th November 2021

Re: National Phonics Screening Test

Dear Parents/Carers

We are writing to inform you about the National Phonics Screening Test which will take place in Key Stage 1 during the week beginning 6th June 2022. This letter aims to explain this process, in addition to providing you with ideas to help your child with phonics at home.

Who takes the test?

All children in Year 1 take the test as well as, any child in Year 2 who did not reach the required level when they took the test in the autumn term. If for any reason, we feel that there is a valid reason why your child should not take the test in Year 1, the class teacher will discuss this with you. Please note, this is only done in exceptional circumstances and your child would still be eligible to take the retake when they are in Year 2.

What is phonics?

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

- Recognise the sounds that each individual letter makes
- Identify the sounds that different combinations of letters make e.g. sh and oo
- Blend these sounds together from left to right to read a word.

Why phonics?

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.

What is the phonics screening check?

The government introduced an annual phonics screening check in 2011. It comprises of a list of 40 words that children read on a one-to-one basis with a teacher. The list is a combination of both real and made up, nonsense words which rely purely on using phonics to decode. The children will largely be unaware of it being a test and have already participated in some practice ones. The check normally takes just a few minutes to complete and there is no time limit. If your child is struggling, the teacher will stop the check. The check is carefully designed not to be stressful for your child. They actually enjoy having the one-to-one time as well as getting a biscuit at the end!



We're working towards Artsmark
Awarded by Arts Council England



What are nonsense words?

Your child will be told during the check which words are nonsense words and this is something that your child will already be familiar with because we already use 'nonsense-words' when teaching phonics in school.

Nonsense words are important to include because words such as 'vap' or 'jound' are new to all children. Children cannot read the nonsense words by using their memory or vocabulary; they have to use their decoding skills. This is a fair way to assess their ability to decode.

After the check

You will be notified about your child's progress in phonics and how he or she has done in the screening check as part of the end of year report. If your child has found the check difficult, you will also be told what support has been put in place to help them improve.

Helping your child with phonics

Phonics works best when children are given plenty of encouragement and learn to enjoy reading and books. Parents/Carers play a very important part in helping with this.

Some simple steps to help your child learn to read through phonics:

- Use the phonics booklet that will be sent home with your child. This is a past Phonics Screening check which includes a mixture of real and nonsense words for your child to practise.
- Phonics play is a great website to practise phonics through games and this is what we also use in school. Phase 3 and phase 5 are the phases that need more practise:
www.phonicsplay.co.uk
Username: KEPSPHONICSPRAY
Password: peapod
- With all books, encourage your child to 'sound out' unfamiliar words and then blend the sounds together from left to right rather than looking at the pictures to guess. Once your child has read an unfamiliar word you can talk about what it means and help him or her to follow the story.
- Your child's reading books contain the right level of phonics for your child so listening to them read daily is hugely beneficial.
- Word games like 'I-spy' can also be an enjoyable way of teaching children about sounds and letters. You can also encourage your child to read words from your shopping list or road signs to practise phonics.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact myself or your child's class teacher.

Yours sincerely,

Key Stage One Team



We're working towards Artsmark
Awarded by Arts Council England

