

Dear Parent/Carer,

### National Phonics Screening Test

I am writing to inform you about the National Phonics Screening check which will take place the **week commencing the 12<sup>th</sup> June 2023**.

This letter aims to explain this process, in addition to providing you with ideas to help your child with phonics at home.

### What is the phonics screening check?

The phonics screening check is an informal test that children will need to complete at the end of year 1.

The phonics screening check is an important part of children's early phonics education.

In section 1, children will be encouraged to read out words that follow simple instructions such as CVC (consonant-vowel-consonant; cat-dog) and CVCC (consonant-vowel-consonant-consonant; help-band).



In section 2, children will have some more challenging words to decode that follow complex structures including CCVC (stop-flip), CCCVC (split-shrug) and CCCVCC (string-crying).

They will also encounter words with split digraphs, trigraphs and digraphs that can be used to represent more than one sound.

### What are 'alien' words?

During the check, children will be asked to decode a series of 40 different words. While most of these words will be real words,



there will also be some pseudo-words (nonsense words) mixed in. These are sometimes known as 'alien words'. These words are phonetically similar to real words, but they do not hold any meaning.

### What happens after the check?

You will be sent a letter informing you about how your child has done in the screening check. To pass the phonics screening check, children will need to correctly decode **30-32 of the 40 words** that they will be shown.

If a child does not achieve the required passing grade during the phonics screening check, they will be given extra support over the course of the next school year to strengthen their abilities at reading and decoding words.

### How do I prepare my children for the phonics screening check?

While it seems like there is a lot of ground to cover when getting them ready for the screening check, there are lots of things that you can do at home to help support your children, such as:

- Reading with your child every day.

Anyone that is older than your child can read and support your child as well as you.

- Breaking down words using sound fingers and sound buttons and reviewing 'tricky words.'

Here is a useful YouTube video from the Learning Lady which we use at school. This can help you learn more about phonics:

<https://youtu.be/XvwezGvi60Y>

You can also practise using past screening check papers, using this link:

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/809986/2019\\_phonics\\_pupils\\_materials\\_standard.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/809986/2019_phonics_pupils_materials_standard.pdf)