



LR/jm

October 2021

Dear Parents/Guardians

Year 1 and 2 Phonics Screening Check Meeting – Thursday 21st October 2021, 3.30pm – 4.00pm

You may be aware that the children undertake a Phonics Screening Check, and this usually takes place at the end of Year 1. Unfortunately, due to lockdown and school closures last school year, this check was cancelled nationally. The DfE states that, in the 2021-2022 academic year, it is statutory for schools to administer the Phonics Screening Check to Year 2 pupils during the second half of the 2021 Autumn Term and to return results to their local authority. The autumn check is intended to ensure that any Year 2 pupils, who need support in learning to decode using phonics, are not missed.

Children who are currently in Year 1 will be expected to take the check in June 2022, along with any Year 2 pupils who do not pass in the Autumn.

Prior to this year's Phonics Screening Check, we are planning to hold a parents' meeting in the school hall. During this meeting, which will take place on **Thursday 21st October**, between **3.30pm – 4.00pm**, we will provide you with an overview of the Phonic Screening Check and also offer ideas of how you can continue to support your child at home. There will be an opportunity to see some sample test materials, as well as resources and games we use in school to support the learning of phonics.

We would recommend that all parents/guardians of children in Years 1 and 2 aim to attend this meeting, as it is an important assessment point in your child's school life. On the next two pages, I have included some information that may answer some of the questions that you may have, about the Phonics Screening Check. Children are welcome to attend the meeting with you.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for the support that you are giving your child with their reading and phonics. Regularly practising their reading, sounds and the more difficult words, will really help them to make progress with their reading and writing.

If you are able to attend the meeting, please fill in the reply slip which will be sent separately. We would ask that parents/guardians wear masks when inside the building, if possible, please.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Mrs Robbins".

Mrs Robbins
Deputy Headteacher

INFORMATION AND GUIDANCE FOR PARENTS/GUARDIANS
PHONICS SCREENING CHECK – AUTUMN 2020

What is Phonics?

There has been a big shift in the past few years in how we teach reading in school. This is having a huge impact and helping many children learn to read and spell. Phonics is recommended as the first strategy that children should be taught in helping them learn to read. Phonics runs alongside other teaching methods to help children develop vital reading skills and give them a real love of reading.

At Moggerhanger Primary School, we follow the Letters & Sounds publication alongside the Phonics Play Scheme from Reception up to Year 2. Letters & Sounds is a phonics resource published by the Department for Education and Skills. It aims to build children's speaking and listening skills in their own right, as well as to prepare children for learning to read by developing their phonic knowledge and skills. It sets out a detailed and systematic programme for teaching phonic skills for children starting by the age of five, with the aim of them becoming fluent readers by age seven. We use Phonics Play for our structured planning, games and resources.

What is the Phonics Screening Check?

The National Phonics Screening Check was introduced in 2012 to all Year 1 pupils. It is a short, statutory assessment to ensure that children are making sufficient progress in the phonics skills to read words and are on track to become fluent readers, who can enjoy reading for pleasure and for learning.

All children who do not reach the required level have additional support to ensure that they are given every opportunity to develop their phonic skills and hence their ability to read.

When does the Year 1 Phonics Screening Check take place?

All Year 1 pupils and any Year 2 pupils who did not reach the expected standard when in Year 1, are tested in June each year. It is essential that children are in school during this period, so please ensure you do not book any activities which would result in a child being absent from school.

How is the Check Structured?

It comprises a list of 40 words and pseudowords, which the children know as 'alien' or 'monster' words. Your child will read one-to-one with a teacher. They will be asked to 'sound out' the word and blend the sounds together to read the word. The words will be presented as a booklet, with up to 4 words per page. Pseudowords will be presented with a colourful picture of an alien. The children will be asked what the alien's name is by reading the pseudo word. This will make the check a bit more fun and provides the children with a context for these non-words. They are included because they will be new to all pupils, so there will not be a bias to those with a good vocabulary knowledge or visual memory of words. Pupils who can read non-words should have the skills to decode almost any unfamiliar word. Half the words cover phonic skills, which are usually covered in Reception and half the words are based on Year 1 phonics skills.

In 2018 and 2019 the pass mark was 32 words correct out of 40. However, the pass mark is subject to change each year.

How will the Results from the Phonics Screening Check be used?

The phonics screening data is reported nationally. Schools have to inform parents/guardians of their child's results.

What Happens if a Child Struggles with the Screening Check?

The Screening Check will identify children who have phonic decoding skills below the level expected for the end of Year 1 and who, therefore, need extra help. If your child does not reach the expected standard, they will re-sit the check next year. All of the children are individuals and develop at different stages. In practical terms, the results of the Screening Check will assist teachers to identify which children will need further support with decoding. At Moggerhanger Primary School, we have a robust programme of checking phonic development throughout the year, so this screening forms part of our overall assessment procedure.

How Can I Help my Child?

There are a number of things that parents/guardians can do to support early reading skill development, and we look forward to sharing lots of ideas with you at the meeting.

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