

Essential Letters and Sounds

September 2023

Dear Parents and Carers,

Following an update from the Department for Education around phonics teaching we have moved to Essential Letters and Sounds, this is a phonics programme based on Letters and Sounds (2007). This new phonics programme will support your children in making quick progress to become fluent and confident readers.

Alongside this programme, there will be some changes to how reading books will be distributed and sent home with your children. We will be changing children's books **once a week on Fridays**. This will allow your child to re-read each text several times, building their confidence and fluency. This is especially important as they begin to learn that the sounds within our language can be spelled in different ways.

To best support us in teaching your child to read, we ask that you read the decodable text provided by the school **four times** across the week. Spending 10 minutes a day reading with your child will hugely support them on their journey to becoming an independent reader. For children, re-reading words and sentences that they can decode (sound out) until they are fluent (read with ease and precision) is a key part of learning to read. By reading texts several times, children have the greatest opportunity to achieve this fluency.

The decodable texts sent home are **carefully matched to the teaching** taking place in school. Your child will be practising what they have been taught in school with you at home. We will only ask children to read books independently when they can decode these by themselves. Any books that are not yet 100% decodable for the children will be sent home as a **sharing book**. These books will be sent home for you to read **with** your child, helping us to instil a love of reading from the very beginning of their reading journey. These could be read together **with** your child reading the words they are able to decode or could be read **to** your child.

We will be holding an information meeting this half term for parents and carers about this new phonics programme and we will let you know when a date has been confirmed for this.

If you have any further questions or queries in the meantime, please do not hesitate to contact your child's class teacher.

Kind regards

The Early Years and Key Stage 1 Teaching Team.