**Systematic Phonics – research and audit at CT**

**Report compiled by:**

Lead Practitioner -Teaching & Learning, Anne Duncan

English Lead – Natasha Nixon

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| Context | * The Reading Framework - Teaching the foundations of literacy (July 2021) states that all schools must teach reading using systematic phonics.
* The government is currently reviewing full Systematic Synthetic Phonics (SSP) programmes to go into an updated catalogue of providers. The validation process will be completed in the spring of this year.
* The programmes that make the cut will need to provide a full resource of teaching materials, resources, texts and training.
* As required, College Town completed an audit of

phonics provision in school, to assess how far the current provision aligns with government criteria. * Currently, College Town outcomes in the Phonics Screening Check are in line with national standards
* The English Lead and Lead Practitioner identified areas of improvement in phonics provision and set up a timetable of improvements linked to key requirements to ensure that provision is strong against all criteria.
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| Actions completed to date  | *Parents are informed about the phonics programme: what is taught; how they could provide extra practice to develop accuracy and fluency;* *How the school will support children to keep up from the start through extra practice.* | 1 The Head Teacher completed a training session for EYFS parents in October 2021, to explain how the school teaches phonics and the interventions it can provide to ensure children progress. 2 Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 placed additional information on class pages, with video links for parents, to explain how children are taught to read using sounds.4 The English Lead sent home an information leaflet for parents to explain how reading is taught at CT and how learning could be consolidated at home with specific activities.3 The Lead Practitioner worked with ECT to provide support and coaching in the teaching of phonics and advised new staff.  |
|  | *Children practise reading only with books that are decodable for them at that stage of their learning.**Children read a decodable book or other decodable text most days.*  *Enough books are available at each stage of the phonics programme for children to practise reading*.*The organisation of books matches the order in which the phonics programme introduces grapheme-phoneme correspondences (GPCs) and exception words.*  | **EYFS** 1 The school purchased complete sets of Dandelion readers that link to the Letters and Sounds programme. These are phonically decodable books that can be matched to the sounds being taught, this expanded current provision in the school. All EYFS early readers are phonically decodable.2 The school purchased complete sets of Bug Club books for Guided Reading sessions that follow the same order as L & S. Bug Club books are also set online, for children to read at home. **Year 1****1** The school purchased a smaller set of Dandelion readers for those children that may need transition materials in moving from Reception to Year 1.2 The school audited Year 1 reading books to ensure that children practise reading using only phonically decodable books. Some books were removed from circulation. Provision may be updated further.3 New sets of Bug Club books for Guided Reading sessions, were purchased for Year 1 teachers. These follow the same order as Letters and Sounds in terms of sounds being introduced. |
|  | *Teachers are aware of activities that might hinder children’s progress in learning to read and write.* | 1 EYFS teachers and support staff were provided with additional CPD, to ensure that lessons were interactive and inclusive for all.2 Whole school CPD sessions have included focus on understanding the reading framework, supporting SEND needs, differentiation, simple view of reading and writing. |
|  | *The SSP should be designed for daily teaching sessions and teach the main grapheme-phoneme correspondences of English (the alphabetic principle) in a clearly defined, incremental sequence.* | 1 Staff currently have medium term planning from which they plan daily phonics lessons, together with information about the appropriate teaching strategies that should be used to deliver the Letters and Sounds Programme.2 The Lead Practitioner and English Lead are currently writing a more detailed weekly overview of the teaching programme for staff, to ensure that the sequence is more clearly defined. This will be supported with further CPD when it is complete. |
|  | *Provide resources that support the teaching of lower-case and capital letters correctly, with clear start and finish points.**The programme should move children on by teaching them to write words made up of learned GPCs, followed by simple sentences composed from such words as well as any common exception word*s. | 1 The provision for teaching letter formation was enhanced with new resources in the EYFS area. New wall mounted writing boards and tracking patterns were installed, for use in the writing area. Practice was adapted in line with new recommendations so that children are taught to print first, then are taught lead-ins from Year 1 onwards.2 SLT and the English Lead evaluated the provision for teaching lower-case and capital letters at the end of the Autumn term in KS 1. The quality of handwriting was also evaluated by sampling handwriting across KS 2. As a result of this evaluation, it has been decided that teachers will be offered additional structure to support the teaching of handwriting. CT has purchased a whole school scheme – Teach Handwriting- Whole School Teaching Scheme. This will be available from end of January.3 The Letters and Sounds programme includes provision for writing whole words and composing sentences, including common exception words. |
| Positive provision at CT | * Progress is systematically assessed every half term using our Phonics tracker, to highlight children at risk of falling behind. Suitable interventions are then provided. The system ensures priority readers are given additional support.
* Smaller class sizes have been deliberately created in this academic year to ensure that teachers can deliver more individualised support and address gaps in phonic knowledge.
* Class teachers have been given guidance to ensure lessons are interactive, so that all children can participate.
* Children are given tasks that allow them to practise and apply what they have been taught to read and write.
* Children in EYFS are introduced to a defined group of grapheme-phoneme correspondences that enables them to read and spell many words early on.
* Teachers understand why fluency is essential for children’s reading comprehension.
* Accurate decoding is assured before children move on to read a new book.
* The meaning of new words is explained to children to increase their vocabulary and accelerate their reading of words ‘at a glance’.
* Children are taught to apply the skill of segmenting spoken words into their constituent phonemes for spelling and that this is the reverse of blending phonemes to read words.
* Children are given opportunities to practise and apply known phoneme-grapheme correspondences for spelling through dictation of sounds, words and sentences.
* Children are taught to decode and spell common exception words (sometimes called ‘tricky’ words), appropriate to their level of progress.
* Phonics teaching at College Town is built around direct teaching sessions, with extensive teacher-child interaction.
* Our phonics teaching, presents systematic, synthetic phonic work as the prime approach to decoding print.
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