Phonics at Mount Nod

At Mount Nod, in line with government advice, we teach a programme of synthetic phonics. This works alongside the love of books and reading we encourage in school and other strategies used to develop reading skills.

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What is Phonics?

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

-recognise the sounds that each individual letter makes

-identify the sounds that different combinations of letters make - such as '*sh'* or '*oo';* and blend these sounds together from left to right to make a word

Children can then use this knowledge to 'de-code' new words that they hear or see. This is the first important step in learning to read, and is used alongside other strategies.

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. It is particularly helpful for children aged 5–7.

Almost all children who receive good teaching of phonics will learn the skills they need to tackle new words. They can then go on to read any kind of text fluently and confidently, and to read for enjoyment.

Children who have been taught phonics also tend to read more accurately than those taught using other methods, such as 'look and say'. This includes children who find learning to read difficult, for example those who have dyslexia.

If you would like to find out more about phonics, search for 'phonics' on the Department for Education website at www.education.gov.uk.

At Mount Nod we teach phonics using the Letters and Sounds programme. As children develop their reading, writing and spelling they move on to a phonics based spelling programme called Get Spelling. Most children begin this in the summer term of year two.

Helping your child with phonics

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

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

Familiarise yourself with letter sounds and use these rather than letter names. (Ask your child's class teacher for assistance with this),

Play sound games, such as I spy or collecting objects or pictures with the same initial sound or letter pattern.

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.