



Stanton St. Quintin Primary School
Stanton St. Quintin, Nr Chippenham, Wiltshire SN14 6DQ
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(01666) 837602. Head of School: Sarah Matthews. Executive Headteacher: Karen Winterburn

Child's name: _____

Year 1 National Phonics Screening Test

30th January 2024

Dear Parents/Carers,

I am writing to inform you about the National Phonics Screening Test which will take place in Key Stage 1 during the week beginning 10th June 2024. This letter aims to explain this process, in addition to providing you with ideas to help your child with phonics at home.

Who takes the test?

All children in Year 1 and any children in Year 2 who did not pass the screen last year. If for any reason, we feel that there is a valid reason why your child should not take the test in Year 1, the class teacher will discuss this with you. Please note, this is only done in exceptional circumstances and your child would still be eligible to take the retake when they are in Year 2.

What is phonics?

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

- Recognise the sounds that each individual letter makes
- Identify the sounds that different combinations of letters make e.g. sh and oo
- Blend these sounds together from left to right to make a word. Children can then use this knowledge to segment and blend new words that they hear or see.

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.

What is the phonics screening check?

The phonics screening check was introduced by the government in 2012 to assess children's **reading** ability in line with the Year 1 expectations. Teaching staff shall use this data, together with ongoing teacher assessment, to inform next steps which ensure that your child continues to make sufficient progress in phonics throughout Year 1 and beyond. The phonics screen does not assess your child's ability to spell.

It comprises of a list of 40 words that children read one-to-one with Mrs Anderson. The list is a combination of both real and made up, non-words which rely purely on using phonics to decode. The non-words are words that have been made up and will be shown with a picture of an alien to prompt your child.

The phonics screening check will take place on a one to one basis, in a relaxed and informal setting and the children will largely be unaware of it being a test as they have already participated in some practice assessments.

What are nonsense words?

Your child will be told during the check which words are nonsense words (that he/she will not have seen before). Your child will be familiar with this because we already use 'nonsense-words/alien words' when teaching phonics in school. Nonsense-words are important to include because words such as 'vap' or 'jound' are new to all children. Children cannot read the non-words by using their memory or vocabulary; they have to use their decoding skills. This is a fair way to assess their ability to decode.

After the check

We shall report your child's outcome to you following the phonics screen. We shall further discuss your child's progress in phonics as part of the end of year report. If your child has found the check difficult, we will also tell you what support we have put in place to help him or her improve. All children are individuals and develop at different rates. The screening check ensures that we understand which children need extra help with phonic decoding.

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:

Step 1 – identify 'two letters, one sound' or 'three letters, one sound' (children are allowed to underline the sounds)

Step 2 – Say the sounds (say each sound separately)

Step 3 – Read the word (blend sounds together)

- Support your child to keep practising words from their phonics (cat) bookmarks- not just the most recent but the bookmarks from all the way back to the start of the year. Encourage your child to underline any two/three letters, one sound.
- From these bookmarks, choose 4 words a week that your child is unfamiliar with to display at home. Practise reading these words and highlighting the two/three letters, one sound.
 - You can then highlight these sounds when you read with your child.
- Provide a mixture of real and nonsense words for your child to practice. An example of a phonics screening check test has been included below.
- Make up nonsense words and ask your child to read them. Make sure you prompt them to spot any two/three letters, one sound first.
- With all books, 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.
- Try to make time to read with your child every day. Grandparents and older brother or sisters can help, too. Make sure children are saying the whole word after they have sounded it out.
- You can also encourage your child to read words from your shopping list or road signs to practise reading.

In Term 4, I shall be sending home a QR code each week which when scanned on any device, will take you to a list of words for your child to practise reading in preparation for the phonics screening test. Please look out for these in Term 4.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to get in touch with me. I thank you in anticipation for supporting your child.

Kind regards,

Mrs Verity Anderson
KS1 Class Teacher & English Subject Lead



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Sounds taught **before** the Phonics Screening Test

ay	play	e	be	e	went
ai	rain	ee	tree	ea	bread
ea	great	ea	please	ai	again
a-e	make	y	happy		
er	winter	ou	shout	u	put
ur	turn	ow	down	oo	book
ir	girl			oul	could
or	world				
o	to	i	child	o	go
oo	food	igh	night	oa	boat
ew	grew	y	sky	ow	grow
ue	blue	ie	tie	o-e	alone
u-e	June	i-e	like	oe	toe
oi	coin	f	find	s	sing
oy	boy	ph	phone	c	face
ar	star	air	chair	or	born
				au	author

An example of phonics screening check assessment. Please note these are the answer sheets for the teacher administering the test. This is not the sheet children will read from.

Section 1			
Word	Correct	Incorrect	Comment
dat			
cag			
rin			
ept			
jash			
quib			
coid			
quass			
glog			
blard			
disp			
murbs			
chum			
kick			
reef			
short			
blot			
greet			
dust			
parks			

Section 2			
Word	Correct	Incorrect	Comment
tay			
sloam			
zued			
meve			
clend			
braits			
scrug			
splue			
high			
feast			
goal			
shape			
trunk			
groups			
straw			
scribe			
model			
person			
chapter			
reptiles			