

10th March 2020

Dear Parents/Legal Guardians,

**Phonics Screening Check June 2020**

As you may already be aware, the Phonics Screening Check is coming up in June. Phonics is the process of learning sounds orally before starting to identify them and make words. Children learn letters which make each of the sounds and these are used to read and spell words. All children in

Year 1 will take the test, and also children in Year 2 who either did not take the test last year, or did not achieve the required result in Year 1.

Phonics Screening is designed to check whether children have learned the correct phonic decoding and blending skills to an appropriate standard.

The Phonics Screening Check contains 40 words; each child will sit one-to-one with a teacher and read the words aloud. The test takes roughly 10 minutes per child, although children can complete the test at their own pace. The words the children read are a combination of 20 real words and 20 alien (nonsense) words.

Alien words will be shown next to a picture of an alien. This provides the children with a context for alien words which is independent from any existing vocabulary they may have. Alien words are included because they are new to all pupils and so do not favour children with good vocabulary or visual memory of words. Some children struggle with the concept of alien words, and often replace them for words they know which sound or are spelt similarly; this is why it is important children practise as much as possible so they are as prepared as they can be for the screening.

Phonics packs will be sent home with your children which include flash cards of real, alien and tricky (red) words and some games the children can play to practise. When using the flashcards, if your child is struggling it is important to encourage children to sound out the word from left to right before blending it. Reading often with your child at home will also aid their phonics knowledge. Websites such as, [www.topmarks.co.uk](http://www.topmarks.co.uk) and [www.phonicsplay.co.uk](http://www.phonicsplay.co.uk) may also be useful for children to use for phonics games at home.

Thank you for taking the time to practise phonics with your children. If you have any questions about the packs or the phonics screening, please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Many thanks,

Miss Donkin, Class Teacher.