

## Phonics and Early Reading

At Crowcombe and Stogumber, we have chosen to follow the Pearson Phonics Bug Club systematic synthetic phonics scheme to deliver high quality phonics. Bug Club Phonics is a comprehensive phonics teaching programme centred around an accessible and inclusive teaching approach. It is designed to build children's confidence and enjoyment of reading at the very start of their reading journey. It is designed to get children reading real books as soon as possible and feel empowered that reading is for them. The programme is a balanced approach, simultaneously teaching blending of reading, alongside the segmentation of words for spelling and develops phonemic awareness skills.

All of our staff have received professional development training to ensure they have a strong understanding of how to use Bug Club Phonics to get the best outcomes for pupils from the start.

### Phonics sessions:

In Reception and Key Stage one we teach daily phonics lessons. Graphemes and corresponding phonemes are taught just before the introduction of words that contain these letters. To read these words, children are taught to pronounce the individual phonemes (sounds) associated with the graphemes (letters) they see, and then to blend them together (synthesise) to form the word.

In our approach, both blending for reading and segmenting for spelling are fully scaffolded. We model for the children how to sound and blend words for reading, and also model for the children how to segment for spelling and continue to scaffold the children through the process with each word they spell. This ensures that they identify each phoneme and choose the appropriate grapheme in turn, until the word is spelt. Decodable readers are introduced after just 2 weeks' teaching at the end of unit 2. This enables children to apply the taught strategies and enjoy contextualised reading early on.

Bringing a multi-sensory element to the teaching of phonics is widely recognised to be hugely beneficial to its effectiveness. Bug Club Phonics recommends the use of magnetic letters and boards to consolidate children's blending and segmenting abilities during the initial stages of the programme.

Bug Club Phonics is delivered through teacher modelling and rehearsal with the whole class, supported with visual resources for guided independent work. It follows a repeated teaching sequence to build familiarity to support all learners. Every session begins with revision to reinforce previous learning, followed by resources to practise and apply blending and segmenting skills and adaptive teaching approaches to support all learners.

### Reading sessions:

Bug Club Phonics is supported by decodable readers, which match the order of phoneme introduction. When the children have completed the first two units of Bug Club Phonics,

they will have acquired a sufficient number of grapheme-phoneme correspondences to start reading their own books. This should be a motivating and enjoyable experience for them. There are books to match each unit of the teaching programme and these help children to practise and consolidate their learning at each stage. Specific reading taught sessions take place in small groups three times per week. These sessions follow a 3 session teaching structure which focuses on word reading skills, develops fluency and prosody and incorporates comprehension and language development using de-codable reading books matched to the Bug Club Phonics Scheme. In addition to these reading sessions children take home an individual decodable reader to consolidate their learning.

### **Language sessions:**

Language Sessions occur at the end of each unit. These sessions combine the teaching of irregular words with using words in the context of captions and sentences. The acquisition of skills for reading single words is only part of the reading process. To read with fluency and comprehension, children need to apply and develop the skills taught.

### **Writing:**

In writing, children are taught to sit correctly at a table and hold a pencil comfortably, being taught explicitly how to form lower-case letters in the correct direction. As taught in the Bug Club phonics scheme, children can write letters in response to hearing a sound can spell words by identifying the sounds and then write the sound with letters, alongside being able to spell common exception words, eventually leading to writing simple dictated sentences from memory. Children are taught to write sentences by saying aloud what they are going to write about and re-reading what they have written to check that it makes sense.

### **Parental support and engagement:**

We engage parents through information sessions and workshops, equipping them with strategies to support their child's learning of sounds and words at home, reinforcing our commitment to every student's success in reading and writing.

### **Assessment:**

Frequent assessment opportunities ensure all children's needs are identified and evidenced at an early stage and additional support put in place to reinforce, practice and consolidate their learning. These sessions are part of the targeted catch-up support within the Bug Club Phonics scheme.