

OAKDALE SCHOOL: OUR APPROACH TO PHONICS

Introduction:

At Oakdale School our aim is to support our pupils to become 'the best that they can be,' to help them achieve a level of independence and self-esteem that will enable them to grow and develop their own, unique potential. Communication skills are a key factor contributing towards this goal.

Our approach to communication, literacy and phonics is as follows:

1. The Statutory Inclusion Statement of the National Curriculum requires staff to modify programmes of study and literacy strategies to give all pupils relevant and appropriately challenging work at each key stage.
2. Staff can modify English/Literacy programmes of study by:
 - Choosing material from an earlier key stage
 - Choosing differentiated material appropriate to the age and needs of pupils
 - Re-enforcing and consolidating whilst encouraging pupils to aim high
 - Assessing and reviewing individual pupil needs and monitoring and planning for individual progress

Pupils will also be supported by:

- Ensuring communication opportunities are enjoyable and relevant and motivating
- Providing access to appropriate Augmentative Aids to Communication
- Adopting communication systems supported by signs, symbols and physical prompts
- Adopting a multi-sensory approach
- Using high-tech communication aids
- Incorporating age appropriate activities and texts, taking into account and ensuring pupil dignity, interest and engagement.

Adaptations for the introduction and teaching & learning of PHONICS:

EARLY PHONICS:

Pupils assessed as achieving within P Levels P1-P3(ii) will benefit by delivering activities and following assessment opportunities proposed in:

- (i) The Guidance document: **Development Matters in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS); Communication and Language: Listening and Attention**

Ref: www.early-education.org.uk or www.foundationyears.org.uk

- (ii) The **EQUALS Literacy Strategy** provides individual approaches, learning objectives and desired learning outcomes and examples of experiences and activities for enabling optimum pupil access to phonics for pupils achieving P1-P3(ii). Please consult EQUALS Literacy Strategy - Document Prerequisites for Literacy.

For pupils achieving within P levels P4-P8 and NC Level 1C-2A, please consult Documents 'Word Level', 'Phonics, Spelling & Handwriting.' (Sentence Level & Text level documents may also be found useful.)

Ref: www.equals.co.uk Scheme of Work for the National Curriculum for teachers working with pupils who are achieving/working within the P Scales

- (iii) The **Oakdale Schemes of Work for Reading and Writing** also provide valuable guidance and activities, learning objectives and learning outcomes along with resource suggestions and assessment opportunities, also linked to pupil progress and associated P levels.

Ref: Team Site

(iv) **LETTERS and SOUNDS: Principles and Practice of High Quality Phonics (Primary National Strategy; dept. for education and skills)**

Ref: www.gov.uk

Phase One of Letters and Sounds to be followed, falls largely within the Communication, Language and Literacy area of learning in EYFS (Communication & Language; Listening & Attention p15-16). It will support linking sounds and letters in the order in which they occur in words and naming and sounding letters of the alphabet. Following the content of Letters and Sounds will benefit, support and promote other areas of learning, particularly P.S.E.D. and Creative Development as areas such as music and play are an integral and important part in developing children's language and communication skills.

Phase One aims to provide children with adult led activities, teaching elements of phonic sounds as oral segmenting and blending of familiar words. Freely chosen activities to be encouraged, will also offer opportunities to enrich children's language and communication development across the broader curriculum. Phase One encourages adults to model good listening and to provide good models of spoken English.

Phase One: examples of activities may be found to be entirely appropriate for some of our pupils at Oakdale. Most pupils, however, may not proceed beyond Phase One, regardless of age.

If activities outlined in Phase One are not appropriate it is recommended to adapt such activities in response to the diverse and complex needs of individual children. Augmentative methods may be used throughout Oakdale to provide a total communication environment. Both teaching and support staff with specialist knowledge are able to support pupils with complex learning needs and provide access to alternative methods of communication and access to ICT, Writing with symbols, Boardmaker, PEC'S, communication boards, switches etc.

Phase One activities are arranged under seven 'aspects' and three strands.

Aspects 1-6 are considered to be of benefit to Oakdale pupils; it is unlikely that Aspect 7 (oral blending and segmenting) will benefit all but a very few (if any) Oakdale pupils.

Letters and Sounds: Aspects 1-6:

Aspect 1: *General sound discrimination-environmental sounds*

Aspect 2: *General sound discrimination-instrumental sounds*

Aspect 3: *General sound discrimination-body percussion*

Aspect 4: Rhythm and rhyme

Aspect 5: Alliteration

Aspect 6: Voice sounds

(Aspect 7: Oral blending and segmenting)

Letters and Sounds: Strands:

Strand 1: Tuning into sounds (auditory discrimination)

Strand 2: Listening and remembering sounds (auditory memory and sequencing)

Strand 3: Talking about sounds (developing vocabulary and language comprehension)

Selection of Suggested Activities:

Aspect 1 GSD-environmental sounds:

- Listening walks (communication/symbol board)
- Sound/sensory stories, music sessions
- Favourite sounds
- Animal sounds/representational sounds
- Sound lottos e.g. Espresso; familiar sounds around the home
- Enlivening stories e.g. using ICT/touchscreen, sound beams, dynavox, smartboard, switches etc.

Aspect 2 GSD-instrumental sounds:

- Which instrument? (photos/symbols matching)
- Musical show and tell (visual prompts/objects of reference)
- Animal sounds (which instrument sounds like...cat, dog, bird?)

- Weather sounds (which instrument sounds like....? Rain, snow, thunder/lightning?)

Aspect 3 GSD- body percussion:

- Tuning into sounds-signing, symbols, objects of reference
- Musical cues for activities; prompts for songs
- Action /body songs
- Listening remembering sounds
- Talking about sounds

Aspect 4 Rhythm and Rhyme:

- Rhyming books/switches
- Repetitive verses/chorus
- Favourite rhymes/visual strips
- Acting out rhymes/drama
- Re-writing poems
- Finish the rhyme

Aspect 5 Alliteration:

- Sound boxes
- Sounds books
- Taking photo albums
- Digital photo frames

Aspect 6 Voice Sounds:

- Whose voice?
- Expression/tone/volume
- Making or producing sounds using a microphone
- Voice trumpets
- Add sound effects to a story

Most pupils will *not* access Aspect 7: Oral Blending & Segmenting or Phase Two of Letters and Sounds.

Reading & Phonics Skills

How do children learn to 'read?' What route to take?

All children learn through play, which is also influenced by curiosity and motivation, self-confidence and self-esteem (Rose Education Trust). All staff are alert to the opportunities to promote language development through children's play. Exposure to books from an early age benefits children hugely. Encouraging children to explore sounds in words and encouraging children to develop their ability to tune into speech sounds also aids development of language and phonics skills. It should be noted, however, that some pupils will need additional support to discriminate between or even to produce the sounds of speech. Most children with Down Syndrome should be recognized as visual learners and all teaching should be supported by visual materials. According to the Down Syndrome Educational Trust, Down Syndrome children learn to read by:

- Establishing a visual store of whole words i.e. sight vocabulary (Lithographic Strategy - whole word recognition on a visual basis and the whole word is remembered by visual pattern)
- Looking for meaning in text or picture clues as well as
- Learning sounds that the printed letters represent (Alphabetic Strategy - applies to letter-to sound knowledge in the decoding of unfamiliar items.)

These methods or combination of strategies may or may not result in limited sight word 'reading' but if successful will give useful access to 'print' around us in our daily lives e.g.

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|-----------------|-----------------------------|
| • Adverts | Boards at stations/airports |
| • Street names | Food packets |
| • Signposts | DVD's/Software |
| • TV programmes | Games & equipment |
| • Music & songs | Shopping lists |
| • Addresses | Newspapers/comics/magazines |
| • Shop names | |

Useful websites:

www.EducationCity.com

www.Heineman.co.uk/phonics

www.jollylearning.co.uk Jolly Phonics

www.sparklebox.co.uk

www.phonicsplay.co.uk - Click on the parents tab and then Phase 2

www.lettersandsounds.com-Click on Phase2 button and then Interactive Games

www.mumsnet.com/learning/phonics/listen-to-the-44phonic-sounds

www.boosterphonics.co.uk

www.bbc.co.uk/cbeebies/alphablocks/

www.lawrenceeducational.co.uk/shop/

www.tts-group.co.uk/shops/tts/Range/Search?search=phonics

App: Recognise the Sound

You Tube Boogie Mites (25 songs for Phonics) CD can be downloaded from iTunes

References:

Planning, Teaching and Assessing the Curriculum for Pupils with learning Difficulties: ENGLISH QCA

Development matters in the EYFS

EQUALS Literacy Strategy - Pre-requisites for Literacy

-Word Level; Phonics & Spelling; Vocabulary;

Handwriting

Letters and Sounds: Principles and Practice of High Quality Phonics; Primary National Strategy

Down Syndrome-Issues and Information; The Down Syndrome Educational Trust

Park Lane School; Cheshire County Council

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