

Year One Phonics Screening Check Workshop

14th October 2024

What is the Year One Phonics Screening Check?

The phonics screening check is taken individually by all children in year one in England, and is taken in June.

It is designed to give parents (and teachers) information on how your child is progressing in phonics.

The year one teachers regularly assess how your child is progressing in phonics as part of the structure phonics lessons. Additional support is provided, when needed, to help children acquire phonics skills as we know this helps with their early reading skills.

What sort of check is it and is it compulsory?

It is a school-based check and is usually carried out by Mrs Cass, who is well-equipped to make the experience stress free. The teachers understand your child's levels and abilities.

The check is compulsory; however, if your child has a high level of complex needs, they may not be able to access the check so they would be disapplied.

Your child's teacher would discuss this with you individually.

What is in the phonics screening check?

There are two sections in the 40-word check and it assesses phonics skills and knowledge learned through reception and year one.

Your child will read up to four words per page for Mrs Cass and most children will complete the check within ten minutes and in one sitting.

What does it check?

It checks that your child can:

- Sound out and blend graphemes in order to read simple words.
- Read phonically decodable one-syllable and two-syllable words, e.g. cat, sand, windmill.
- Read a selection of nonsense words which are referred to as pseudo words.

What are nonsense words or pseudo words and why are they included?

- These are words that are phonically decodable but are not actual words with an associated meaning e.g. brip, snorb. Pseudo words are included in the check specifically to assess whether your child can decode a word using phonics skills and not their memory.
- The pseudo words will be shown to your child with a picture of a monster and they will be asked to tell their teacher what sort of monster it is by reading the word. This not only makes the check a bit more fun, but provides the children with a context for the nonsense word which is independent from any existing vocabulary they may have. Crucially, it does not provide any clues, so your child just has to be able to decode it. Children generally find nonsense amusing so they enjoy reading these words.

How will the check be scored and is there a pass mark?

The check is not about passing or failing – it is checking if appropriate progress is being made by your child. The threshold mark (or pass standard) is set by the government and has been 32 correct answers out of 40 for the last few years.

If your child is struggling with phonics, you should already know before the check is taken. As previously mentioned, regular assessments are used to tailor work according to your child's need and to ensure children make progress from their starting points. Children make progress at different rates so not meeting the threshold score does not necessarily mean there is a serious problem. Children who do not meet the threshold mark will resit the check the following summer term when they are in year two.

What can you do to help your child?

Ensure your child attends school every day and is on time. Phonics sessions are the first lesson of the day – being late and missing school means they miss essential lesson content because learning builds on prior knowledge and understanding.

If you remember from the reception phonics workshop – the structure of teaching phonics is fast paced. Learning 44 phonemes (sounds) using just 26 letters in the English language to represent each of these phonemes as a grapheme is not easy. Missing vital days from school unnecessarily, does have an impact.

What can you do to help your child?

- Read regularly at home
- Complete the phonics homework
- Play phonics games together
- Read real and nonsense words to check phonic knowledge and understanding

What can you do to help your child?

Example homework

This week we have been focusing on split diagraphs. They make the long vowel sound.

a-e e-e i-e o-e u-e
cake Pete slide bone flute

Read the words and colour in the real words.

theme	slope	slake	cake
tefe	flute	flebe	vate
amaze	prine	spete	concrete
cave	plate	bone	slide

What can you do to help your child?

When reading

- Say each sound in a word from left to right.
- Blend the sounds by pointing to each letter, i.e. /b/ /a/ /t/ in bat, or letter group, i.e. /igh/ in sigh, as you say the sound, then run your finger under the whole word as you say it.
- Talk about the meaning if your child does not understand the word they have read.
- Work at your child's pace.
- Always be positive and give lots of praise and encouragement.

What can you do to help your child?

Online games:

<https://www.phonicsplay.co.uk/resources>

<https://www.phonicsbloom.com/>

<https://ictgames.com/mobilePage/soundSayer/>

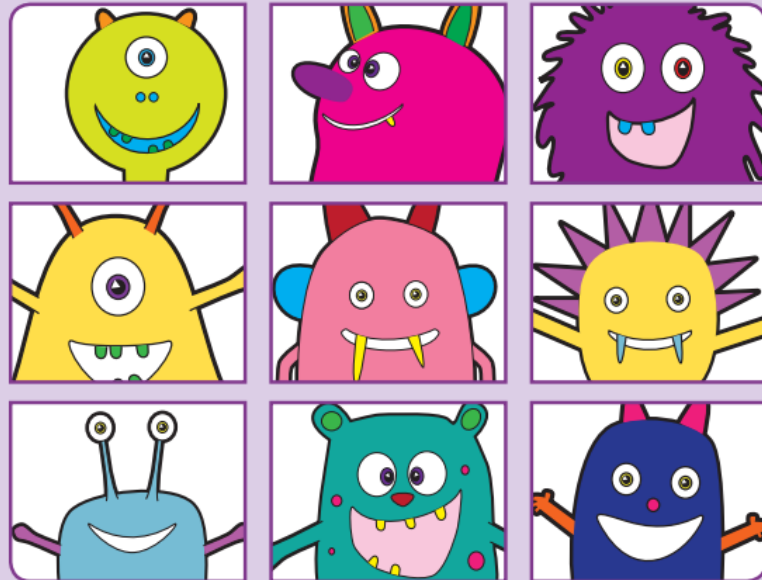
Let's look at a phonics screening check...

2018 national curriculum assessments

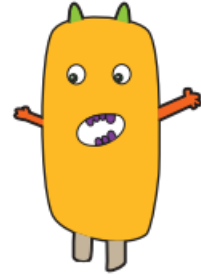
Key stage 1

Phonics screening check

Pupils' materials



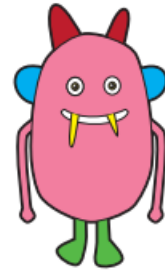
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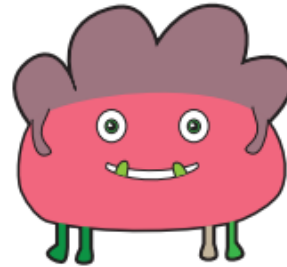
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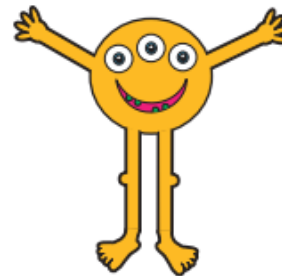
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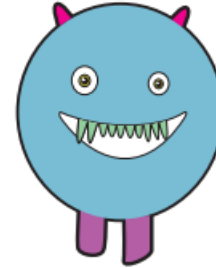
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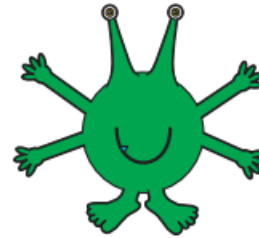
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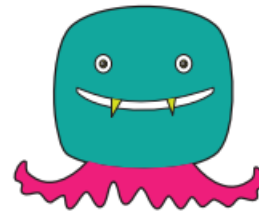
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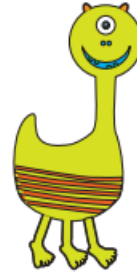
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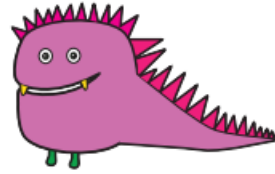
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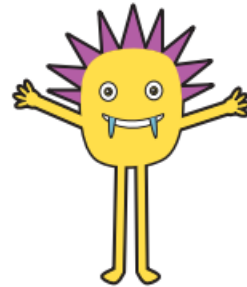
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Any questions?