



Phonics Approach

Breakwater Academy

At Breakwater Academy we teach reading through Linguistic Phonics. The rationale for Linguistic Phonics is that children are taught to understand the relationship between spoken language and written words. It starts with what the children naturally acquire, spoken language, and teaches them the relationship between sound-spelling correspondences. Teaching children to read through Linguistic Phonics allows them to develop their decoding skills; this supports children in learning to blend graphemes (letters) for reading, segment phonemes (sounds) for spelling and manipulate phonemes (sounds) to develop accuracy in reading and spelling.

Linguistic Phonics teaches the concept that all sounds can be spelled. We therefore do not promote silent letters, magic letters, or memorising whole words by sight. We appreciate parental support and ask that you read with your children in this way, encouraging children to use their decoding skills to read and spell.

All of our teachers receive training to deliver the Sounds~Write phonics programme. Sounds~Write takes children through systematic, incremental steps to teach children the 44 sounds in the English language and their multiple spellings.

In the Early Years Foundation Stage, the children study the Initial Code. This teaches them the concept of one sound, one spelling. They begin with CVC words (consonant, vowel, consonant e.g. dog, mum, big). When all single-letter sound-spelling correspondences are taught, they discuss double consonant spellings (e.g. pull, miss, buzz). Once the children understand the concept of two letters representing one sound, they are exposed to spellings with two different letters (e.g. ch in chip, sh in ship). As the programme progresses children learn to read and write words that follow the structure of VCC, CVCC, CCVC, CCVCC, CCCVCC, CCVCCC etc. such as 'old,' 'pink,' 'crisps' etc.

In Key Stage 1, children learn the one, two, three and four letter spellings of sounds. This is called the Extended Code. They learn the concept that one sound can be represented by multiple spellings. For example, the first spellings of the /ae/ sound include in rain, in play, in steak, and in cake. They also learn the concept that one spelling can represent multiple sounds. For example, represents the /ae/ sound in steak and the /ee/ sound in clean.

Running parallel to the Extended Code is the application of phonics at the Polysyllabic Level. Children are explicitly taught strategies to read and spell words with 2 or more syllables. This stage is essential as an estimated 80% of words in the English language are polysyllabic. Polysyllabic words begin at the Initial Code Level with compound words such as 'backpack' and 'jumping' before moving on to words with Extended Code spellings and 2, 3, 4, 5 or 6 syllables.

New arrivals to the school, or children who have not mastered the English Alphabet Code, are supported with working systematically through the code. Reading and spelling requires expertise in blending, segmenting and manipulating. Blending is the process of pushing sounds together to form words. Segmenting is separating words into sounds. Manipulating is taking sounds out and putting sounds in to words.