



# Benhurst Primary School Policy Statement

'Only my best is good enough for me'



## Policy

## How we teacher reading

At Benhurst Primary School, children are taught reading skills from entry into the Early Years Foundation Stage and continue to build on these skills throughout their school life. Each skill is taught to cater for the individual needs of each child, using a range of reading strategies. The children quickly become skilled confident readers and show enjoyment in developing independent, successful reading skills.

We use phonics as a prime early reading skill. At Benhurst, we follow a Systematic Synthetic Phonics approach. This teaches the individual letter sounds (phonemes) and then builds up to blending (synthesising) these sounds together to achieve full pronunciation of whole words. Children are taught to pronounce each sound in a word, then to blend the phonemes together to form the word (e.g. /s/ - /a/ - /t/; "sat"). This knowledge also supports children when spelling the new words they hear by segmenting words into sounds.

At Benhurst, children are taught in a systematic way. They are taught sets of initial sounds (phonemes) and then taught to blend (synthesis) them. These sets become more complex (e.g. they will learn one sound for two letters e.g. /ay/ for the sound 'a'.)

As a school we realise that, while phonic knowledge is an excellent tool for reading, other skills support reading development too. Alongside decoding skills, children are taught sight recognition words (words that you are unable to use decoding rules to read). This also facilitates the development of fluency as the reader gains confidence to recognise words on sight rather than applying phonic skills. Children are also taught to use contextual and visual clues to work out unfamiliar words within the text. Comprehension and vocabulary are taught throughout topics, shared stories and discussion during both class and guided reading time.

Our School Home Reading Scheme is based on Oxford Reading Tree (ORT). This scheme has a range of phonic based texts, both fiction and non-fiction, plus books that enable children to apply their sight recognition and context skills in addition to decoding. In addition, we have a range of different texts types from different publishers that children have access to. These have been colour coded to reflect the progression of sounds and words taught.

During the school day, teachers use a range of texts within their daily Guided Reading sessions. These books are also organised into coloured bands. The books are new to the children and set at a slight harder reading level than their home reading book to ensure that children are supported and challenged in equal measure. We ensure that these books are from a variety of schemes to allow our children access to as many types of texts as possible.

Children enjoy selecting their own books and using the school library. Reading is celebrated throughout the school and parents are given support and guidance as their child progress through the stages of reading development.