



**Aston Rowant C+E Primary School**  
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## **Phonics Rationale**

At Aston Rowant School, we believe that we need to equip children with the skills needed to become successful readers. This opens up a world of opportunities and enjoyment to help them to fully engage with all areas of the curriculum as well as becoming life-long learners.

In Hedgehog class children begin a daily phonics program after assessing their phase 1 skills and current phonic knowledge. Teachers are highly skilled at ensuring each child develops aural blending and segmenting skills alongside learning phase 2 GPCs. As part of daily phonics sessions using The Rocket Phonics programme, new phonemes are introduced and practised and applied through small group adult led tasks and regularly throughout the school day through: play provision, handwriting where appropriate, whole class reading games, references to graphemes in the environment and much more. Sound cards are sent home to ensure they practise and consolidate. Decodable reading books containing taught phonemes are sent home in order to practise blending skills. A presentation is given to parents in the first few weeks to ensure they have a good understanding of how early reading develops and how to support their children at home. The children often make rapid progress through phase 2 and are tracked carefully through a phonics trajectory. Children are also monitored through professional discussions on a weekly basis and interventions are planned as necessary for children who are not making the desired progress. Children who are exceeding are challenged through reading books matched to their level and moving through the sound cards at their own pace. By the end of early years we aim for all children to have a good understanding and working knowledge of phase 3 and be able to apply this in their reading and writing. Some will have had exposure to phase 4 and 5.

As children move into Year 1 (Squirrel Class) thorough discussions are held with previous teachers in order to pass on information and to plan for next steps. The Year 1 teacher makes careful observations and assessments of children coming into Year 1 in order to plan for their needs. Some children will need to revise phase 2 and 3 sounds whilst other children are working at phase 4 or phase 5.

In Squirrel Class, phonics is taught daily using the Rocket Phonics teaching materials. The teaching sequence is clear and consistent. All friezes and sound mats are from the Rocket Phonics scheme to ensure consistency. In each phonics lesson, previous phonemes are revised and then the new sound is introduced using the phoneme cards, words and big book. The children practise reading and writing words containing the phoneme in their Pupil Practice Books. Children are given a set of words containing the taught phoneme/s to practise at home over the week. Children are also given regular opportunities to read pseudo-words containing the phoneme in order to prepare for the phonics screening test in June. Our reading books are carefully matched to the sounds the children have been taught. On the back or inside cover of each book, a list of phonemes is displayed which must be secure before the child can successfully decode the book. Each day, children are supported by the class teacher if they need to change their reading book. They are still encouraged to read from across our range of reading books but with parental support with unfamiliar words and those which they cannot decode. These books also contain tricky words and high frequency words for the children to practise quick word recognition.

Children are carefully monitored and assessed regularly through a phonics trajectory and those at risk of not passing the phonics screening are given extra support and practice with an adult where necessary. Some children may have SEN needs that create a barrier to learning phonics. These children are brought to the attention of the SENCO as early as possible and are monitored and assessed regularly. Children who do not pass the screening continue to receive extra targeted phonics support twice a week based on their areas of difficulty to practise phase 3 - 5 phonemes and to decode real and pseudo words. They are also taken for extra individual reading at least twice a week.

In Year 2, children follow a structured plan for spelling the words set out in the National Curriculum. Group teaching and fun activities help the children to consolidate each spelling pattern. Resources and books from the Rocket Phonics Programme are carefully used at the right time in the teaching sequence. The children take home a list of these words to practise at home each week. Challenge words containing the same spelling pattern are also included for those which wish to learn them.

In Year 1 and Year 2, the common exception words are taught and practised most days. They are also displayed in the classroom and sent home, as part of the children's spelling practice.

Beyond year 2 any children who are still working within the phonics program receive interventions with the class teacher and are monitored carefully by the SENCO.

**G**RATITUDE   **R**ESILIENCE   **O**UTREACH   **W**ONDER   **T**RUST   **H**ARMONY