**Phonics Screening Check**

Year 1 children take the Phonics Screening Check in June every year, so please do no book a holiday!

The test measures progress in phonics skills and knowledge gained throughout Reception and Year 1. The aim of the screen is to identify children who would benefit from additional support to catch up with their peers at this important early stage.

The check is carried out individually in one sitting, taking about 5 – 10 minutes. It is meant to be an informal and relaxed test with practise words to ensure that each activity is understood. We practise the exact conditions with past tests throughout the year.

The test assesses the reading of:

-One-syllable and two-syllable phonically decodable words such as ‘blast’ and ‘dolphin’, by sounding out and blending graphemes/letters.

-Nonsense ‘pseudo’ words in order to assess phonics skills in isolation without memory as a support, for example, ‘chack’ and ‘meft’. All pseudo-words are accompanied by a picture of an imaginary creature or ‘alien’. This provides a context (naming the alien) for children and ensures that they are not trying to match the pseudo-word to a word in their vocabulary.

The pass mark is called the ‘threshold’ and is published after the test. Schools report to both parents and the Local Authority by the end of the Summer Term. The results are not published in a league table. Children who do not pass receive additional support in school and repeat the check at the end of Year 2.

**Test Structure**

The check consists of 40 words divided into two sections of 20 words. Both sections contain a mixture of real words and pseudo-words.

**Section 1**

The words in section 1 have a variety of simple word structures (for example CVC, VCC, CCVC and CVCC) using:

-single letters (a, b, c, d, e, f, g, h, I, j, k, l, m, n, o, p, q(u), r, s, t, u, v, w, x, y, z)

-some consonant digraphs (ch, ck, ff, ll, ng, sh, ss, th, zz)

-frequent and consistent vowel digraphs (ar, ee, oi, oo,or)

**Section 2**

Words in section 2 have more complex word structures (for example CCVCC, CCCVC, CCCVCC and two syllable words) with some:

-additional consonant digraphs (ph, wh)

-less frequent and consistent vowel digraphs, including split digraphs (a-e, ai, au, aw, ay, ea, e-e, er, ew, i-e, ie, ir, oa, o-e, ou, ow, oy, ue, u-e, ur)

-trigraphs (air, igh)

Monster Phonics is the scheme St John’s use to teach phonics and they have an online practise test available. It is not until near the end of Term 2 in Year 1 that children will have been taught all of the phonics they need to complete the test!

https://monsterphonics.com/phonics-screening-test/