Phonological Awareness

Phonological Awareness refers to sounds ***not*** *letters, it is spoken* ***not*** *written.*

Dyce School Parent Information

We will share more about Emerging Literacy at our Curriculum Evening. www.highlandliteracy.com has a huge range of helpful information for anyone who wishes to find out more.

Introduction

At the start of Primary One your child worked with his/her class teacher to complete a *Phonological Awareness Assessment.* The assessment was created by The Highland Council and designed in collaboration with Speech and Language Therapists. Children across Scotland are assessed using the same questions. These questions help us to gain a clearer insight to your child's sound awareness; it is this awareness that will support him/her when learning phonics.

Our Early Years teachers have been working alongside other professionals across Aberdeen City Council to adopt a developmental approach to teaching phonics. This approach carefully monitors the key skills and understanding that children require to begin learning phonics. This means that children will be introduced to, and progress through, phonics at varying speeds which are relevant to their own needs.

We believe that this approach means that; "No child is left behind and no child is held back." (James Cook, Highland Literacy Quality Improvement Officer.) Those that may need extra support are identified before phonics even begin so that key foundational skills can be worked on at home and in school. Those who possess almost all skills can get started and progress with phonics alongside consolidation of phonological awareness. This leaflet contains some information on what the assessment included with some suggestions on how you can support your child's development at home. Every child progresses differently, and it is important we work together to support the needs of your child so please do not be concerned by the number of areas highlighted by the teacher. All children will be exposed to daily phonic activities once the first group of children are ready to start but will receive differentiated support to help meet their needs.

We are aware that your child may not yet be confident enough with his/her teacher to demonstrate his/her true potential. After the initial assessment the outcomes are regularly revisited in class and if anything is a particular sticking point for your son/daughter his/her teacher will let you know.

The skills outlined in this leaflet are all taught, revisited and reinforced throughout Primary 1 and beyond. Alongside this we provide opportunities to support pre-handwriting skills. More information on this can be found on the additional page included. These skills were identified by Occupational Therapists working with Highland Council, who were able to list the essential skills children need before they are physically ready to begin the practical exercise of writing.

If you have any queries, concerns, questions or suggestions please speak to your child's class teacher or contact Mrs Hewitt who will be happy to discuss this with you.

1. Listening and Attention

Children may be able to concentrate on an adult led task for 10 minutes or more.
Support this at home by: Playing games together, asking your child to set the table with additional tasks being added after each job is done.

2. Auditory Discrimination

Children may be able to identify whether 2 sounds are the same or different.
Support this at home by: Practising verbal pairs, e.g Listen s, s. Are they the same? Listen g, l. Are they the same? Ask your child to test you.

3. Auditory Memory

Children may be able to remember a list of 3 or more words.
***Support this at home by*:** Playing the Minister's Cat, make a shopping list, play eye spy and remember 3 answers in a row.

4. Word Boundaries

Children may be able to identify how many words are in a short sentence. This can be really tricky, think of times when children are able to sing songs but find it hard to separate the words or can sing the alphabet but are not aware of the 26 letters in the song as 'klmnop' has become one word.
***Support this at home by*:** Playing word hopscotch; saying a simple sentence but jumping on each word. Lay out 3 stones; say "I love you" moving one stone on each word. Try with other short phrases or sentences. Eating an ice lolly; Say a sentence and your child can take a bite or a lick after each word.

5. Rhyme Awareness and Detection

Children may be able to identify whether 2 words have the same ending sound which makes them rhyme.
***Support this at home by*:** Playing Thumbs Up, Thumbs Down; the adult says 2 words and the child put thumbs up if they rhyme and down if they don't. Silly Nursery Rhymes; play games with well known rhymes such as saying "Jack and Jill went up the mountain." Does it sound right? No, because Jill and mountain don't rhyme. Which other word could be added. Jack and Jill went up the hill, mill, fill, drill…

6. Syllable Blending

Children may be able to blend spoken syllables to create a word.

***Support this at home by*:** Talking like a robot; Say com…pute…er, ask your child what word it makes. Try foot…ball, rain…bow, butt…er…fly and so on.

7. Syllable Detection

Children may be able to split words in to syllables.

Support this at home by: Clapping the syllables in a word, have fun talking like a robot to separate longer words in to syllables; colourful becomes cul..er...ful, caterpillar becomes cat…er…pill…ar, and so on.

8. Rhyme Production

Children may be able to add a word to a list of the same rhyming family.

***Support this at home by*:** Encouraging children to play with rhyme, create lists of rhyming words together, emphasising that it is the ending of the words that needs to sound the same. Create nonsense rhyming words together, fox, socks, box, crocs, mox, locks, tox etc. Play I spy but with rhyming words; I spy with my little eye something that rhymes with cat.

9. Onset-Rime

Children may be able to take sounds and blend them together to make a word. E.g d…og becomes dog.

***Support this at home by*:** Playing Sound S-p-y; I spy with my little eye a ch-ai-r, and the child may guess chair. Look at a book and ask the child to guess which picture you are thinking of, tell them, "It's the d-u-ck." Can they guess it is the duck?

10. Phoneme Discrimination and Alliteration

Children may be able to identify the first sound in a word.

***Support this at home by*:** Exaggerating the first sound in a word to help children to hear it and identify it e.g ssssssun, ffffffrog etc. Play I spy, you can see how helpful this game is as it comes up in most areas!

11. Phoneme Blending

This is when children may be able to blend sounds to create words. Once children can recognise the written letters and know the sounds, this is the skill that is needed to read. At this stage we are purely looking at doing this through hearing and saying though.

***Support this at home by*:** Practising saying the sounds in a word, pass me the p, e, n. Where is your c,u,p.

12. Phoneme Segmentation

This is when children may be able to split words in to sounds. When children are able to recognise and write letters, knowing the sounds, this is the step that is needed for children to write words independently so it is important to be able to do this verbally first.

***Support this at home by*:** Sounding out familiar words together at home, you could say, "Let's read a book; b, oo, k. There is a frog; f, r, o, g. Children should be encouraged to do this once they can her the sounds. Be careful not to incorrectly blend 2 sounds together like fr in frog. Th, sh, ch, wh are common initial sounds that are made up of 2 letters and should be said as one sound.