

Ofsted Reading Questions- 14th May 2021

- What approach to phonics does your school take? When is it introduced and how soon does phonics teaching start?

Phonics at Pioneer Schools

The Pioneer Federation has a rigorous whole school approach to the teaching of phonics through daily teaching sessions and ongoing assessment.

All children in Nursery, Reception and Year 1 will be taught phonic skills through a range of teaching methods. The Letters and Sounds framework and Jolly Phonics letter sounds and actions are used alongside a wealth of games and activities. The content of the 'Phonics Play' planners are used as a basis for teachers' planning for each new sound, alongside thorough ongoing assessment. Online learning tools are also utilised in phonics sessions; Discovery Espresso Phonics clips, games and activities alongside many others. '

Phonics is taught daily for 20 minutes. The dedicated daily phonics lessons follow a thorough programme to ensure the rapid learning of skills.

- How many children are on track each year to meet the phonics screening check requirements? What happens for children who do not meet the check prior to retesting in Year 2?

This year there are currently 10 Year 1 children (83%) who are on track to have reached the Phonics screening check if it were to have taken place this June. Currently the Year 2 children who did not receive the expected pass rate when they took it in the Autumn term continue to do their Phonics learning with the Year 1 children. Depending on the gaps in this children's Phonics knowledge when they take the screening check they will either continue with their phonics learning with the Year 1 cohort or have regular intervention sessions to fill any gaps they have in their phonics knowledge.

- Does your phonics and reading data align? If not why not?

Year ½ class:

Currently the Year 1 children who are on-track to reach expected or above at the end of the year are the children who would be expected to pass the Phonics screening if it were to have taken place. The Year 2 children who passed the Phonics screening when they took it in the autumn term are on-track to reach either expected or above at the end of this year.

- What happens to those who don't meet the screen requirements in Year 2 as they go into Year 3?

For the children who do not receive the required pass mark when they re-take the test in Year 2 continue to receive Phonics intervention in Year 3. This could be through 1:1 Phonics sessions, group intervention or independent tasks. These children continue to be tracked on phonics tracker to identify the sounds for which they need to focus. This will continue until the children are able to identify all sounds.

For some of the Year 3 children who passed the Phonics screening that they took in the Autumn term continue to receive Phonics intervention. As there were still sounds identified that these children need to focus on.

As with all the children in the school phonics is not 'forgotten' once they leave Key Stage 1. It is important that we continue to support these pupils with their Phonics knowledge to allow them to develop as fluent readers.

- How do the reading books meet both the phonics development as well as skills of comprehension?

We have recently been overhauling our banded books provided for the EYFS and Key Stage 1 pupils to ensure that the book bands relate to the Phonics phase that the children are reading. Some of these books include questions to be asked so that parents and staff can support the pupils with their comprehension of texts when reading. We are introducing the 'VIPERS' technique to give parents ideas of comprehension style questions they can ask their children when reading with them, if the book they are reading does not provide reading comprehension questions.

- Does your school have a reading scheme for the teaching of reading? Is this a whole school approach?

Currently the pupils in EYFS and Key stage 1 follow the quite commonly used colour banded system (as seen below)



Then the school has devised our own approach to the book bands of pupils in Key Stage 2 as we found that pupils were reading a variety of books and sometimes lost the transition in their reading.

Free-Reader Books

- Pearl
- Sapphire
- Emerald
- Amethyst
- Diamond
- Ruby

There is a suggested list of books for each of these bands to support the children with their reading progression.

This is a quote that I feel represents our approach to banded books:

Book bands originated from The Institute of Education's publication, Book Bands for Guided Reading (Bickler et al, 1998) and built on the proven success of the Reading Recovery initiative. Book Band levels were introduced as a means for schools to instil a breadth of reading across a variety of published reading schemes so that children are able to access a variety of texts to keep them engaged during their journey to literacy.

- How does your school ensure consistency in the teaching of reading?

We have devised a reading policy that is followed by all members of the school community to ensure that the approach to reading is consistent. Reading is high priority across the school and monitoring is completed by SLT and reading lead.

- Do all staff have an understanding of the whole school approach and how it develops from Early Years to Year 6?

Staff members undertake training relating to the approach to Reading and will read through the policy to ensure they are fully understanding of the approach.

- How do you know all children in your school have the opportunity to develop a love of reading?

Dedicated independent reading time is allocated after lunch for every class. Development of the reading books for KS2 with input from the children on their favourite and suggested authors with reviews with pupils annually or biannually where possible. Daily reading from a class book (with an adults reading to the class) where children are not asked to analyse the text, but just enjoy the story, occurs in every class every day.

- Where children join Year 7 below age related expectations in reading, what support and interventions are put in place to enable them to fully access the Key Stage 3 curriculum?

N/A