

**HILDENBOROUGH CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY SCHOOL**

**“I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me,” (Philippians 4:13) so that I can be the best that I can be, for myself, for others and for God.**

Thursday 4th November 2021

Dear Parent/Carer,

**Year 2 Phonics Screening**

At the end of year 1, all pupils are required to complete a statutory phonics screening check which assesses whether they have learnt all the phonemes (letter sounds) to decode words to an age-appropriate standard. As you are aware, the statutory screener was postponed due to COVID-19. The children will therefore complete the phonics screening check this term, in the week beginning 29th November.

**What is in the phonics screening check?**The test comprises of a list of 20 real words and 20 pseudo-words which assess the phonics skills and knowledge learnt through reception and year 1. Your child will complete the assessment 1:1 with Mrs Forward and it takes between 4- 9 minutes. There are a few practise words at the beginning to make sure your child understands the activity and they will be asked to ‘sound out’ a word and blend the sounds together. This is very similar to the tasks the children already complete during phonics lessons. The assessment follows the format of the ‘Phonics Challenge’ which we use regularly to monitor the children’s progress. From experience, it is a short and enjoyable activity for children.

**What are Pseudo-words and why are they included?**

These are words that are phonetically decodable but are **not** real words with an associated meaning e.g. brip, snorb. These words are included in the check specifically to assess whether your child can decode a word using their phonic skills and not their memory. They are sometimes referred to as monster or alien words too – the children find this really funny!

**Support in school**

The children have continued their phonics learning in Year 2, with a focus on revising the phonemes taught in Year 1. Some pupils will also have the opportunity to participate in additional phonics sessions, to build confidence, improve phonetic knowledge and support them in securing the necessary skills for reading (sounding out and blending).

**What happens if my child does not pass the screening check?**

If your child does not achieve the age-appropriate standard in the phonics screening check, your child’s teacher will discuss this with you and suitable support will be put in place to enable them to progress. Your child will then be re-tested again at the end of year 2.

**Supporting at home**

If you would like to practice at home, past papers can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/national-curriculum-assessments-practice-materials#phonics-screening-check-resources>.

There are also a number of free phonics games which are useful for reading real and pseudo-words. These can be found at <https://www.phonicsplay.co.uk/resources>.

If you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to make contact. Thank you for your continued support.

Kind Regards,

Rachel Forward