



Windmill Hill Primary School

Year 1 Phonics Screening Check

The phonics screening check is a short, light-touch assessment to confirm whether a pupil has learned phonic decoding to an appropriate standard.

It will identify the children who need extra help, so that they are given support (by their school) to improve their reading skills. They will then be able to re-take the check, so that schools can track children until they are able to decode. Children undertake this test in Year 1 in all state schools and children in Year 2, who did not meet the Year 1 standard, will also re-sit the test. Tests are administered internally (by teachers).

The phonics screening check is a short and simple assessment of phonic decoding. It consists of 40 words (half real words and half 'non-words'), which Year 1 children read to a teacher. Administering the assessment usually takes between four and nine minutes per child.

'Non-words' (made up words) are included because they will be new to all children, so there will not be a bias towards those with a good vocabulary knowledge or visual memory of words. Children who can read non-words should have the skills to decode almost any unfamiliar word. The 'non-words' are presented alongside a picture of an imaginary creature and children can be told the non-word is the name of that type of creature. This process helps children to understand the non-word should not be matched to their existing vocabulary.

Examples of words include: star, shelf.

Examples of non-words include: dov, vead.

All children need to be able to identify sounds associated with different letters, and letter combinations, and then blend these sounds together to correctly say the word on the page. The same skill is needed whether the word is a real word or a 'non-word'.

The words gradually get more difficult through the check as the combinations of letters become more complicated. As long as the child has said 32 out of the 40 words correctly, they will be considered to have met the standard.

Children should not realise that they are being formally assessed. The check should be seen as part of their everyday phonics activities and not as a test.

	Cohort	Number achieving expected standard	% School	% Local Authority	% National	Average Mark - School	Average Mark - National
All pupils	14	10	71	75.7	81	32	34
Male	8	5	63	72.7	77	30	33
Female	6	5	83	78.7	84	36	35

Over the last three years at Windmill Hill Primary School, the percentage of year 1 pupils achieving the expected standard in phonics has significantly increased. In 2016, the percentage of pupils achieving the expected standard was 71% compared to 60% in 2015 and 54% in 2014. Also, the number of girls achieving the expected standard is 4.3% higher than the LA average.