Phonic Screening Check 2026

Week commencing **Monday 8th June 2026**

All Year 1 children in the country will take a simple Phonic Screening Check during this week. Some children from Year 2 who did not meet the expected level in Year 1 will also take the check at the same time.

The Phonic Screening Check is designed to confirm whether individual children have learnt phonic decoding and blending skills to an appropriate standard.

What is in the check ?

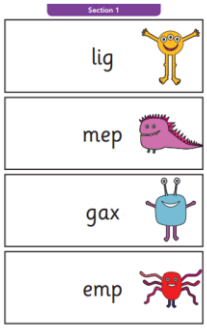
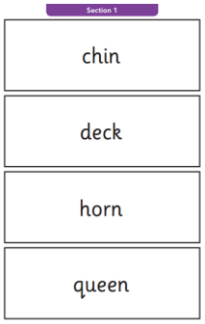
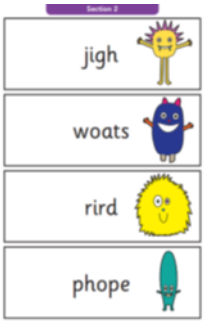
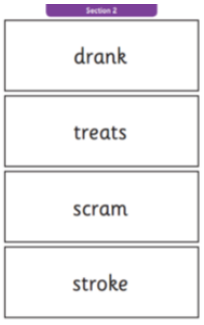
• 40 decodable words (words that can be sounded out and blended) separated into 2 sections.

• Mixture of alien / nonsense words (called pseudo words) and real words. The nonsense words have a picture of an alien next to them so the children know they are not real. These are included to check phonic knowledge as they will be new for all children meaning that children who have a good visual memory or a large vocabulary will not be at an advantage.

• The check is conducted one child at a time with a member of staff in a familiar setting. It usually takes about 10 minutes, but each child will do the check at their own pace so this can vary.

What does the check look like ?

Below are some example pages from a previous phonic screening check to show how the check will look to the children.

Section 1		Section 2	
Alien words	Real Words	Alien words	Real words
			

Please note that each year a new check is created and is not seen by staff before it is administered. The check will contain a random selection of sounds learnt (but not all) and we do not know which sounds or which words will be contained - it really is a check of their phonic knowledge.

What do we do with the results?

• The pass mark can change but has been 32/40 for the past few years. The final pass mark will be announced once all schools have completed the Phonic Screening Check.

• Those who do not reach the expected level will be given extra, targeted support through our Reading Booster Programme.

• There will be the opportunity to attend extra Phonics intervention groups.

• There is another chance to take the check next Summer (2027) when your child is in Year 2.

How to support your child

All of these activities will reinforce the skills we are teaching the children at school – if you need any further support please do not hesitate to contact your class teacher or Mrs Owen on the school phonic email: *phonics@westbourne.sutton.sch.uk*

Learn the sounds	Children need to be able to recognise the sounds quickly and say them correctly	Go over the flashcards or play the sound recognition games on our website in the phonic games sections.
Recognise the sounds within words	Sometimes the children find it hard to see a digraph (2 letters making 1 sound such as 'oa' in boat).	Get them to point to the digraph and say it BEFORE sounding out. The word bank can help generate words for this.
Blending sounds to read words	This is a skill like riding a bike, the more you do it, the easier it becomes.	Sound out a word and blend: see our phonic page for more information. If your child is finding this tricky, sound out more quickly so they can hear the word. The word bank is great for word suggestions.
Splitting longer words	The same process of sounding out can be applied to longer words.	Split the word into 2 parts e.g. picnic – pic/nic sound out and blend the first part and then sound out and blend the second. You can now combine the 2 parts together.

The children are usually unaware they are taking the check and we like to keep it that way as it isn't something they should be worried about ! They usually find taking the check fun, spending time 1:1 with a teacher and looking at the funny alien pictures.

How will you find out the results ?

By the end of the summer term, we report each child's results to his/her parents and confirm if the standard threshold has been met. Children who do not achieve the expected level will have targeted support through our Reading Booster Programme and will retake the test when they are in Year 2.