

Thursday 23rd September 2021

Dear Parents of Year 2,

Ref: Phonics Screening Test

In June 2021 your child was due to sit the National Phonics Screening test for year 1, this was postponed due to COVID-19. This test has now be rescheduled for December 2021. The test will be carried out by a member of staff that your child is used to working with. Your child has been working on their phonics since the day they started Wootton Park School, they will be fully prepared and are used to reading a range of real and pseudo (nonsense) words. Below is some information regarding the test.

What is the phonics Screening Test?

There are two sections in this 40-word check and it assesses phonics skills and knowledge learned through Reception and Year 1. Your child will read up to four words per page with a member of staff and the test will take approximately 5-10 minutes.

What does the test check?

It checks that your child can:

- Sound out and blend graphemes in order to read simple words.
- Read phonically decodable one-syllable and two-syllable words, e.g. cat, sand, windmill.
- Read a selection of nonsense words which are referred to as pseudo words.

What are nonsense or pseudo words and why are they included?

These are words that are phonically decodable but are not actual words with an associated meaning e.g. brip, snorb. Pseudo words are included in the check specifically to assess whether your child can decode a word using phonics skills and not their memory.

The pseudo words will be shown to your child with a picture of a monster and they will be asked to tell their teacher what sort of monster it is by reading the word. This not only makes the check a bit more fun, but provides the children with a context for the nonsense word which is independent from any existing vocabulary they may have. Crucially, it does not provide any clues, so your child just has to be able to decode it. Children generally find nonsense amusing so they will probably enjoy reading these words.

Is there a pass mark?

The check is not about passing or failing but checking appropriate progress is being made. However, in order to pass the test children need to score a minimum of 32 out of 40. If your child does not meet the expected standard then they will re-sit the check in June 2022.

What happens to the results?

The school will report your child's results to the local authority. Once these have been verified, we will then share your child's results with you.

Below is a link that will demonstrate how the test is carried out and what constitutes a correct or incorrect answer.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IPJ_ZEBh1Bk

Examples of passed papers can be found below:

2017

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/621157/STA177753p_2017_phonics_screening_check_pupils_materials_standard.pdf

2018

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/715823/2018_phonics_pupils_materials_standard.pdf.pdf

2019

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/809986/2019_phonics_pupils_materials_standard.pdf

If you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely,



Mrs Jane Page

Senior Vice Principal