

Friday 22nd May 2026

Dear Parents/ Carers,

### **Re: Important Information: Year 1 Phonics Screening Check (PSC)**

During the week commencing **Monday 8th June** all children in Year 1 will participate in the national **Phonics Screening Check (PSC)**.

The purpose of this check is to confirm that your child has learned phonic decoding to an age-appropriate standard. It helps us understand how well they are progressing with their early reading skills and identifies if any additional support is needed as they move into Year 2.

### **What is the Phonics Screening Check?**

The check is not a formal, high-pressure exam. It is a quick, one-to-one reading activity carried out in a relaxed environment with a familiar adult. It usually takes around 10 minutes, and there is no strict time limit.

Your child will be asked to read **40 words** aloud. The list contains a mix of:

- **Real words:** Familiar everyday words (e.g., *shop, yell, blossom*).
- **Pseudo-words (Nonsense words):** Made-up words (e.g., *sut, meck*). These words are accompanied by a picture of a friendly alien, and we tell the children they are reading the "alien's name." Nonsense words are used specifically to test whether a child can reliably decode a word using phonics rules, rather than just guessing based on memory.

### **How We Report the Results**

The government sets a national "expected standard" benchmark (which has historically been 32 out of 40 correctly read words). We will share your child's



score with you before the end of the summer term.

**Please Note:** If your child does not reach the expected standard this year, please do not worry. It simply means we will provide them with targeted, extra phonics support next year, and they will easily retake the check at the end of Year 2.

## How You Can Help at Home

You are already doing a fantastic job supporting your child's reading journey! Leading up to the check, you can continue to help by:

- **Reading Daily:** Encourage your child to sport the special friends, Fred Talk unfamiliar words and then read the whole word.
- **Playing with "Alien Words":** When reading or playing games, make up nonsense words together using the sounds they know to practice decoding.
- **Keeping it Fun:** The most important thing is that children feel relaxed. Please don't mention "tests" or "exams" to them; at school, we treat it simply as a fun reading activity.

If you have any questions or would like some extra phonics resources to practice at home, please feel free to speak to your child's class teacher.

Thank you for your continued partnership and support.

Yours faithfully,

Tahreena Ward

**Principal**