



Verwood CE First School and Nursery

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Dear Parents and Carers,

As we move through the school year, we want to share some friendly information with you regarding the Phonics Screening Check. While this is a national requirement for all Year 1 pupils, please be assured that we keep the experience very light-hearted and positive. For the children, it is simply a quick, 1-to-1 reading session with a teacher they already know and trust.

Phonics is the main way we teach children to read and write. It involves learning to recognize the individual sounds that make up words, then "segmenting" those sounds and "blending" them back together to read fluently. The check, which takes place during the Summer Term, is designed to see how well your child can use these skills to decode different words.

During the check, your child will read aloud a list of 40 words. This list is a mix of real words and "pseudo-words" (which we call "nonsense" or "alien" words). We include these silly words—always shown with a picture of a friendly alien—to make sure children are actually using their phonic "coding" skills rather than just recognizing a word they have seen in a book before.

To meet the national expected standard, the Department for Education typically sets a threshold of 32 out of 40 marks. This check is a wonderful tool that allows us to celebrate your child's progress and identify any specific areas where they might need a little extra "boost" as they transition into Year 2. Our main priority is ensuring every child feels confident and proud of their reading journey!

Kind Regards,

The Year 1 Team

