Phonics Phases (Letters and Sounds) and Book Band Year Group Expectations

The following grid is intended only as rough guide to support teachers in identifying appropriate books matched to phonics phases and age-related expectations.

**Children at the early stages of reading development** - National Curriculum 2014 demands that the books used by these children are closely matched to their developing phonics knowledge and knowledge of common exception words. Further guidance from DfE advocates that the books children are asked to read for themselves (i.e. Guided Reading books and home reading books) must be 100% decodable, up until the end of Phase 5 (Year 1 for most children). In order to master phonic decoding as the route to decode words, children should work with books that are written and structured to provide opportunity for them to apply their developing skills and knowledge. For this reason, teachers should match books closely to the GPCs being taught up until the end of Phase 5, or equivalent, depending upon a school’s selected phonics programme.

In addition to the books the children read for themselves, they should also encounter wider experiences of books and reading each day, experiences which will contribute to their language development, comprehension skills and love of literature, (e.g. books explored through shared reading, story-time, library books, familiar books and class book corners).

**Developing and fluent readers** – from the end of Y1 onwards, children become more skilled in their word reading and as their reading fluency develops, they become increasingly able to focus on their comprehension. This is where the coloured book bands provide a useful guide to indicate the increasing level of challenge – in both word reading and comprehension - from different books. Many publishers use this approach within their reading schemes but, as they all have slightly different interpretations, it is wise to see this as a ‘best-fit’ guide with overlaps between the colours. Once a child has secured decoding, how easy or difficult they find a text is heavily influenced by their interests and life experiences. The emphasis should then be on broadening and deepening the children’s reading experiences, rather than moving too quickly through the colour bands.

**Phonics Phases (Letters and Sounds) and Book Bands Year Group Expectations**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Phonics Progression (Letters and Sounds)** | **Book Band** | **Year Group Expectations** |
| **Phase 1** |  | **Nursery** |
| **Phase 2** |  | **Reception** |
| **Phase 3** |  | **Reception** |
| **Phase 4** |  | **Reception** |
| **Phase 4** |  | **Year 1** |
| **Phase 5** |  | **Year 1** |
| **Phase 5** | **Turquoise** | **Year 1** |
|  | **Purple** | **Year 2** |
|  | **Gold** | **Year 2** |
|  | **White** | **Year 2** |
|  | **Lime** | **Year 2/3** |
|  | **Brown** | **Year 3** |
|  | **Grey** | **Year 4** |
|  | **Blue** | **Year 5** |
|  | **Red** | **Year 6** |
|  | **Black** | **Year 6** |