Dear Parents

YEAR 1 PHONICS SCREENING CHECK 2018

You may have heard of the national phonics screening programme which takes place in June for all children in Year 1. This letter is intended to provide you with a little more information about how and why this check is carried out and what it means for your own Year 1 child.

What is ‘Phonics’?

Children are taught to read by breaking down words into separate sounds or ‘phonemes’. There are around forty different sounds in the English language and we help the children to recognise these during their Reception Year and into Year 1. They are then taught to blend these sounds together to read the whole word. Our children at Dormansland have a twenty minute phonics session each day, as well as being encouraged to use these strategies to read and write in other lessons.

Why are the children being screened?

Every Year 1 child in the country will be taking the phonics screening check in the same week in June. The aim of the check is to ensure that all children are able to segment (split up) and blend words by the end of Year 2. It reinforces the Year 1 teacher’s judgements about where there may still be some sounds that your child has not yet fully recognised and helps the Year 2 teacher to plan to address these gaps accordingly.

What will the children be expected to do?

The check is very similar to some of the tasks that the children are used to doing during their daily phonics sessions. Children will spend anything up to fifteen minutes working individually in a quiet, familiar place in the school. They will be asked to ‘sound out’ a word and blend the sounds together, eg. d-o-g: ‘dog’.

As the focus of the check is to see which sounds the children know, the second set of words they will be asked to read will be ‘nonsense’ words. They have already had plenty of practice at reading silly words during phonics in the classroom, so this will not be an unfamiliar experience for them.

There are forty words in total for the children to read.