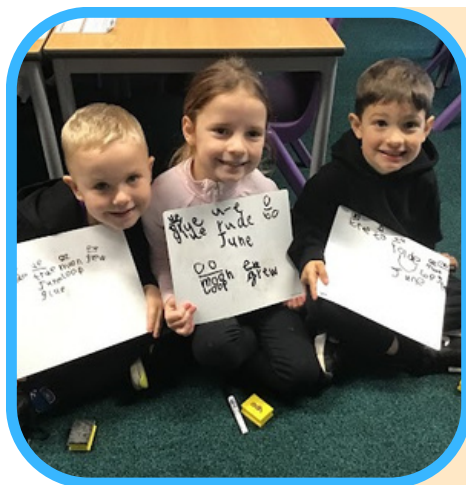


# 'Makes more sense than other phonics schemes I have used'

Galley Hill Primary School, Cleveland, UK, November 2025



Karen Rees, Year 1/2 Class Teacher and Phonics Lead, talked to us about the implementation of Sounds-Write and how she leads phonics at Galley Hill Primary School.



- School: **Galley Hill Primary School**
- Location: **Guisborough, Cleveland, UK**
- Pupils on roll: **274**
- Age range: **3-11**
- Free school meals: **6.8%**
- Special Educational Needs: **12.4%**
- English as an additional language: **1.1%**

## Why did you choose Sounds-Write?

Galley Hill Primary School became part of Galileo Academy Trust in April 2019. This gave us an opportunity to completely revamp the curriculum and approach the Trust with innovative ideas. I was lucky enough to visit a school who were already established in Sounds-Write, along with the CEO and School Improvement Officer, and we really liked what we saw in the lessons. Sounds-Write was the first scheme I had seen that had a straightforward and direct approach to phonics and taught children that letters represent sounds, with no gimmicks or extras that may cause confusion.

## How was the implementation and how did you find the training and support?

I trained in July 2019, and found the course fascinating. I have continued to work closely with the Literacy Specialist and have now developed a great relationship. The continuous support she has given me while embedding Sounds-Write into Early Years and Key Stage 1 has been phenomenal. I have also sought advice from John Walker via social media, and he is always happy to help, which is fantastic.

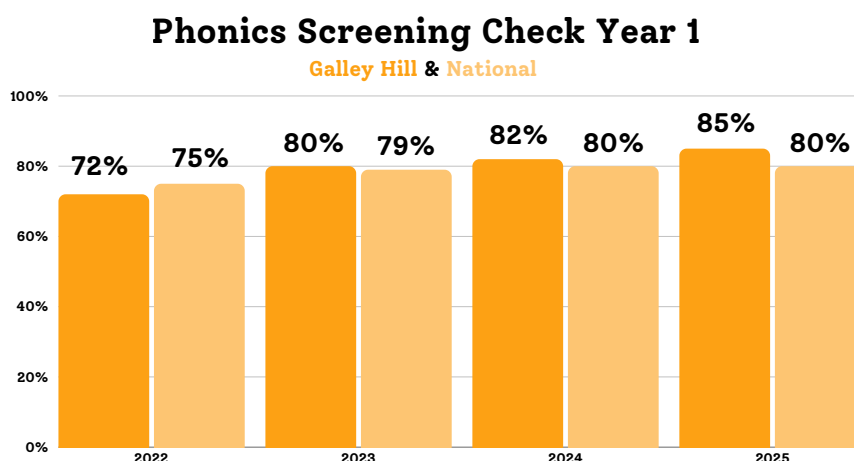
We planned staff training and although the implementation would be gradual, I was fully invested and very keen to embed Sounds-Write at Galley Hill. I have been trained in and taught three other phonics programmes in the past, but I felt that Sounds-Write was a much more structured, systematic programme that just made more sense.

By September 2020, all classes in Early Years and Key Stage 1 were using Sounds-Write to teach phonics. Since then, we have been able to train all staff including the headteacher and most teaching assistants. Although this has taken time, I have been determined to ensure that everyone in schools is familiar with Sounds-Write and can teach the Sounds-Write way! There is a very positive attitude towards the teaching of phonics in our school and it is my intention to get Sounds Write fully implemented across Key Stage 2 this year.

**'Any pupils who need extra help receive additional support, on the day it is needed, from skilled adults. As a result, all pupils develop fluency and confidence in reading.'**  
(Ofsted, 2022)

### **What has been the children's reaction, and what impact has Sounds-Write had on progress?**

Our children look forward to the Sounds-Write lessons. They are generally positive and enthusiastic about their learning, but particularly their phonics sessions. I especially love that there are no 'tricky' words in Sounds Write and that every word is decodable with the correct explanation. The most noticeable difference that Sounds Write has made in school has been to the confidence of the children. They are more positive in reading and writing and this is because they are not frightened of making mistakes or getting it wrong. They know that sometimes they will make mistakes, but with the error correction scripts, staff are equipped to deal with these errors swiftly and efficiently. Reading and writing data results have improved and children are making better progress.



### **What would you say to schools who are considering Sounds-Write?**

I would recommend Sounds-Write to all schools. It has been designed in a way that makes more sense than other phonics schemes I have used, and the lesson scripts are great to ensure that everyone is using the same language and that the teaching is consistent.

