

Letters and Sounds



Phonics information for parents and carers

The ability to read and write is a vital skill for all children, paving the way for an enjoyable and successful school experience.

The aim of this information is to give you a clear picture of how we approach the teaching of phonics and word recognition, and how as a parent or carer you can support and encourage your child at home.

We use a systematic phonics programme called Letters and Sounds which focuses on high quality phonics work. The intention is to "equip children who are 5 with the phonic knowledge and skills they need to become fluent readers by the time they are 7." By the end of Year Two children should have completed all six phases.

Your child takes part in a high quality phonics session every day. These are fun sessions involving lots of speaking, listening and reading and writing games where the emphasis is on children's active participation. They learn to use their phonics knowledge for reading and writing activities across all areas of the curriculum and in their independent play.

PHASE 1

Activities are planned that will help your child to listen attentively to sounds around them, e.g. animal sounds, sounds their toys make or sounds in spoken language. Your child will experience a wide range of nursery rhymes and songs and read books with a grown up. This helps to increase your child's vocabulary and talk confidently about books.

Helping your child at home

Play "What do we have in here?" Put some items in a bag and pull one out at a time. Emphasise the first sound of the name of the object by repeating it e.g. ccc car or bbb box. Say - Tommy the ticklish teddy or Lucy loves lemons! This is called alliteration. Use familiar names for example: Mummy makes music or Ben's bouncy ball!

Learning how to "sound talk"

Your child will be shown how to do this - c-a-t = cat.

The separate sounds (phonemes) are spoken aloud, in order through the word and then they are merged together into the whole word. The merging together is called **blending** and is a vital skill for reading. Your child will learn to reverse the process - cat=c-a-t. The whole word is spoken aloud and then broken up into sounds (phonemes) in order through the word. This is called **segmenting** and is a vital skill for spelling.

PHASE 2

Your child will continue practise activities from Phase 1 including "sound talk." Your child will also be taught the phonemes (sounds) for a number or letters and which phoneme is represented by which letter (grapheme.) Your child will also learn that a phoneme can be represented by more than one letter, for example ll as in bell.

Now your child will be seeing letters and words as well as hearing them. They will be shown how to read simple words by pushing the sound buttons (this is called blending) and how to write simple words by breaking the word up into individual sounds (this is called segmenting.) These simple words will be made up of two phonemes such as am, it, up, on or three phonemes for example cat, rug, sun, tick, bell.

Tricky Words

Your child will also learn several tricky words the, to no, go, I, into

Your child will still be practising oral blending and oral segmenting skills daily. They will need lots of opportunities to practise these skills.

Saying the sounds

Your child will be taught how to pronounce the sounds (phonemes) correctly to make blending easier. Sounds should be continued where possible e.g. sss, fff and where this is not possible, "uh" sounds after consonants should be shortened e.g. try to avoid saying buh cuh! Grown ups will help your child to look at different letters and say the right sounds for them.

PHASE 3

The purpose of this phase is to

- Teach more phonemes / graphemes, most of which are made up of 2 letters for example oa as in boat.
- Practise blending and segmenting a wider set of cvc words, for example fizz, chip, sheep, light.
- Learn all letter names and begin to form them correctly.
- Read more tricky words in phrases and sentences.

Here are some examples of words your child will be reading, tail, week, soap, food, park, cord, soil, night.

Your child's confidence from the daily experience of practising and applying their phonic knowledge to reading and writing will improve greatly.

Tricky Words

The number of tricky words is growing. These are so important for reading and spelling he, she, we, me, be, was, my, you, her, they, all.

Helping your child at home

Sing the alphabet song together.

Play I spy using letter sounds and names.

Continue to play with magnetic letters using sounds which have 2 letters in them.

r - ai - n = rain (blending for reading)

rain = r - ai - n (segmenting for spelling)

Look for different phonemes they have been learning in their reading books

Can they spot different phonemes in the environment?

PHASE 4

Your child will continue to practise previously learned graphemes (letters) and phonemes (sounds) and learn how to read and write

CVCC words such as tent, damp, toast, chimp

For example in the word toast, t = consonant, oa = vowel s = consonant t = consonant

CCVC words such as swim, plum, sport, spoon

For example in the word spoon, s = consonant, p = consonant oo = vowel n = consonant

Your child will be learning more tricky words and continuing to read and write sentences together.

Tricky Words

said, so, do, have, like, some, come, were, there, little, one, when, out, what

Helping your child at home

Practise reading and spelling some cvcc and ccvc words but continue to play around with cvc words too. Your child will enjoy reading and spelling words that they have previously worked with as this makes them feel successful.

Make up captions for your child to read and write, e.g. a silver star, crisps crunch.

Look out for words in the environment such as food packaging for example fresh milk or fish and chips.

Daily phonics teaching will continue in KSI

As your child enters KSI they will continue to take part in daily phonics lessons. They will learn that most phonemes (sounds) can be spelt in more than one way. For example the f sound can be written as f in fan, ff in huff or ph in photo.