

Phonics information for parents

'Letters and Sounds' is a fun and interactive way to support children in learning how to read and write. Initially, for the children to learn their sounds we use a programme called Jolly Phonics. Jolly Phonics represents each sound with an action helping children to remember both more easily. An explanation of each action will be sent home as the new sounds are introduced.

Spoken English uses about 42 sounds (phonemes). These phonemes are represented by letters (graphemes). A sound can be represented by a letter (e.g. 's' or 'h') or a group of letters (e.g. 'th' or 'ear')

Phonics is taught daily in phases throughout Foundation Stage and Key Stage One. Whilst we follow the programme carefully when teaching, the children will access the activities at their own level

Phase	Phonic Knowledge and Skills
<i>Phase One</i> (Nursery/Reception)	Playing with voice, environmental, instrumental and body sounds, rhythm and rhyme, alliteration and finally oral blending and segmenting.
<i>Phase Two</i> (Reception)	Learning 19 single letter phonemes. Blending sounds together to make words. Segmenting words into their separate sounds. Beginning to read simple captions.
<i>Phase Three</i> (Reception)	The remaining 7 single letter phonemes. Graphemes such as ch, oo, th representing the remaining phonemes not covered by single letters. Reading captions, sentences and questions.
<i>Phase Four</i> (Reception) 4	No new grapheme-phoneme correspondences are taught in this phase. Children learn to blend and segment longer words with adjacent consonants, e.g. swim, clap, jump.
<i>Phase Five</i> (Throughout Year 1)	Now we move on to the "complex code". Children learn different graphemes for the phonemes they already know, plus different ways of pronouncing the graphemes they already know.
<i>Phase Six</i> (Throughout Year 2 and beyond)	Working on spelling, including prefixes and suffixes, doubling and dropping letters etc.

Tricky Words

Throughout all the phases children learn to spell and sight read words that cannot be 'sounded out'. We call these 'tricky words'. Words like 'the' and 'said' have to be learnt by sight.

Blending and Segmenting

As soon as each set of letters is introduced, children will be encouraged to use their knowledge of the letter sounds to blend and sound out words. For example, they will learn to orally blend cvc (consonant, vowel, consonant) words like 's-a-t' to make the word 'sat'. They will also start learning to segment words. For example, they will learn to orally segment cvc words so when you say the word 'pat' they can hear the 'p-a-t' as separate sounds.

Once children begin learning sounds, they are used quickly to read and spell words. Children can then see the purpose of learning sounds. For this reason, the first six letters that are taught are 's', 'a', 't', 'p', 'i', 'n'. These can immediately be used to make a number of words such as 'sat', 'pin', 'pat', 'tap', 'nap'

Letter names

We teach both the sound (phoneme) and the name of the letters simultaneously. Both capital and lower case letters have the same letter sound and name. Please encourage the children to focus on the sound the letter makes for blending and segmenting rather than the name. (c-a-t) rather than (see-ay-tee)

It is these sounds that children will use to help them read and write words. It is really important for the children that every sound is pronounced correctly to ensure the child findings blending easy. For example, 'S' should not sound like 'suh', it should sound like 'sssss'.

Rhyming

An ability to hear and use rhyme is a vital part of developing children's reading skills. Enjoy singing together and reciting nursery rhymes. Play around with rhymes; change the endings to make up new ones of your own. Look for stories that are told in rhyme and encourage your child to predict the rhyming words when you are reading. Look for children's poetry books and learn some of the short poems by heart.

Letter Formation

Alongside all of this we will also practise letter formation. Please encourage your child to build up to a pincer grip, using the thumb and forefinger. We often use different ways of writing which you might like to try at home. Try large movements in the air, drawing to music 'doodle time' using a brush and water or paint. Fingers or a stick in sand, glitter, flour, steam on mirror. Felt tips are easier for mark making than a pencil especially if your child has weaker grip and light touch. We follow the Debbie Hepplewhite scheme which leads onto joined up writing in Key Stage One.

Useful Websites

You tube has Jolly phonics pronunciation guides and songs videos

www.bbc.co.uk/schools/wordsandpictures

www.bbc.co.uk/cbeebies/alphablocks

www.bbc.co.uk/cbeebies/fun-with-phonics/watch/fun-with-phonics-clips

www.phonicsplay.co.uk

www.kidstv123.com

www.ictgames/literacy.co.uk

www.jollylearning.com

www.letters-and-sounds.com

Remember little and often is best. Your child might be tired after school so don't worry it's better not to push it. Try and make it fun rather than formal, play games, use toys and sing songs.

Thank you for your support it really will help your child's learning.

The Reception Team