



Letters and Sounds

Letters and Sounds is the method by which we teach phonics. It starts in nursery and most children are proficient in phonics by the end of year 2.

The teaching of phonics enables children to build confidence to decode words and build up word recognition and fluency skills. A phoneme is a unit of sound which may be represented by 1, 2 or 3 letters.

Letter and Sounds is divided into 6 phases.

Phase One – Concentrates on activities to promote:

- Speaking and Listening
- Phonological awareness
- Oral blending and segmenting
- Phase One of Letters and Sounds concentrates on developing children's speaking and listening skills and lays the foundations for the phonic work which starts in Phase 2. The emphasis during Phase 1 is to get children attuned to the sounds around them and ready to begin developing oral blending and segmenting skills.
- Phase 1 is divided into seven aspects. Each aspect contains three strands: Tuning in to sounds (auditory discrimination), Listening and remembering sounds (auditory memory and sequencing) and Talking about sounds (developing vocabulary and language comprehension).
- Aspect 1 - General sound discrimination – environmental.
- Aspect 2 - General sound discrimination – instrumental sounds.
- Aspect 3 - General sound discrimination - body percussion.
- Aspect 4 - Rhythm and rhyme.
- Aspect 5 – Alliteration.
- Aspect 6 - Voice sounds.
- Aspect 7 - Oral blending and segmenting.

Phase Two – up to 6 weeks

- Pupils are introduced to 19 sounds.

- In Phase 2, letters and their sounds are introduced one at a time. A set of letters is taught each week, in the following sequence:
- **Set 1:** s, a, t, p
Set 2: i, n, m, d
Set 3: g, o, c, k
Set 4: ck, e, u, r plus 2 tricky words the and to
Set 5: h, b, f, ff, l, ll, ss plus tricky words no, go, l
- As soon as each set of letters is introduced, children will be encouraged to use their knowledge of the letter sounds to segment, blend and sound out words.

Purpose of Phase 2

- To teach at least 19 letters.
- To move from oral blending and segmentation to blending and segmenting with letters.
- To read some VC and CVC words and to spell them using either magnetic letters or write them on paper/whiteboards.
- Introduction to reading two-syllable words and simple captions.
- Learn some high frequency 'tricky' words: the, l, to, go, no.

Phase Three - up to 12 weeks

- Pupils are taught the remaining GPC – by the end of Phase Three pupils should know one grapheme, phoneme correspondent for all the phonemes in spoken English.
- The purpose of this phase is to teach another 25 graphemes, most of them comprising two letters (e.g. oa), so the children can represent each of about 42 phonemes by a grapheme
- To continue to practise CVC blending and segmentation.
- To apply knowledge of blending and segmenting to reading and spelling simple two-syllable words and captions.
- To learn letter names.
- To read some more high frequency 'tricky' words and begin to learn to spell some of these words.

Phase Four - up to 6-weeks

- Pupils are taught to read and spell words containing adjacent consonants.
- Children entering Phase Four will be able to represent each of 42 phonemes by a grapheme, and be able to blend phonemes to read CVC words and segment CVC words for spelling. They will have some experience in reading simple two-syllable words and captions. They will know letter names and be able to read and spell some tricky words.

Phase Five – 30 weeks

- Pupils begin to recognise and use alternative ways of pronouncing and spelling the graphemes.
- The purpose of this phase is for children to broaden their knowledge of graphemes and phonemes for use in reading and spelling.

- They will learn new graphemes and alternative pronunciations for these and graphemes they already know, where relevant.
- Some of the alternatives will already have been encountered in the high-frequency words that have been taught.
- Children become quicker at recognising graphemes of more than one letter in words and at blending the phonemes they represent.
- When spelling words they will learn to choose the appropriate graphemes to represent phonemes and begin to build word-specific knowledge of the spellings of words.

Phase 6 – suffixes, plurals

How often is phonics taught?

- Short sessions, 15 to 20 minutes, daily.

What should a phonics lesson include?

- It should:
- Be active, pacy, engaging and multi-sensory.
- Be tightly focused on the learning goal
- Follow the 4 part lesson “Review, Teach, Practise, Apply”.
- Use a familiar structure that scaffolds new learning and shows pupils how to apply it in real reading and writing.
- Use props i.e. pictures, real objects, to clarify understanding.

Tracking pupils’ phonic progress is done half termly.

Parents can help at home by watching videos to pronounce the sounds correctly

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BqhXUW_v-1s

There are also many different websites with fun, active phonics games; at school we use

<http://www.letters-and-sounds.com/>

www.phonicplay.co.uk