

Phonics & Reading

In all aspects of reading and phonics we teach the skills of 'blending' and segmenting'.

- Blending

We teach the children how to blend or merge sounds together to read each word, in the right order, to read a word. E.g. c-a-t = cat.

- Segmenting

We teach the children how to segment each word to spell. E.g. cat = c-a-t

The aim is for the children to read the whole word automatically/ fluently.

These activities are all done orally. The emphasis is on helping children to hear the separate sounds in words and to create spoken sounds.



Ways you can support your children at home

Sound-talking (using sound buttons)

Find real objects around your home that have three phonemes (*sounds*) and practise 'sound talk'. First, just let them listen, then see if they will join in, for example, saying:

'I spy a p-e-g – peg.'

'I spy a c-u-p – cup.'

'Where's your other s-o-ck – sock?'

'Simon says – put your hands on your h-ea-d.'

'Simon says – touch your ch-i-n.'

Phonics

We teach the children the smallest unit of sound – called a 'phoneme'.

This is the order in which the 'phonemes' are taught and practised. Correct pronunciation is vital!

c not cuh or cee b not buh or bee a not ay

A 'grapheme' is the written version of this e.g. grapheme is a letter or letters that spell a sound in a word.

Here is an example of a 1 letter grapheme: c a t. The sounds /k/ is represented by the letter 'c'.

Here is an example of a 2 letter grapheme: l e a f. The sound /ee/ is represented by the letters 'e a'.

Here is a 3 letter grapheme: n i g h t. The sound /ie/ is represented by the letters 'i g h'.

Phonics is taught in Phases:

Phase 2, 3 and 4; Foundation

Set 1 letters = s, a, t, p Set 2 letters = i, n, m, d Set 3 letters = g, o, c, k

Set 4 letters = ck, e, u, r Set 5 letters = h, b, f, ff, l, ll, ss Set 6 letters = j, v, w, x

Set 7 letters = y, z, zz, qu

Phase 5: Year 1 – alternative spelling choices for phonemes

Phase 6: Year 2 – spelling rules, suffixes, prefixes



Ways you can support your children at home

Magnetic letters

Buy magnetic letters for your fridge, or for use with a tin tray. Find out which letters have been taught – have fun finding these with your child and place them on the magnetic surface.

Making little words together

Make little words together, for example, *it, up, am, and, top, dig, run, met, pick*. As you select the letters, say them aloud: 'a-m – am', 'm-e-t – met'.

Breaking words up

Now do it the other way around: read the word, break the word up and move the letters away, saying: 'met – m-e-t'.

Both these activities help children to see that reading and spelling are reversible processes.

Don't forget the writing box!

Spelling is harder than reading words – praise, don't criticise. Little whiteboards and pens, and magic boards, are a good way for children to try out spellings and practise their handwriting.

Your child might be trying to use letters from their name to write; this shows that they know that writing needs real alphabet letters.

Make or buy an alphabet poster.

Spelling/Reading – High Frequency words and tricky words.

Also within Phonics children are taught the reading and spelling of high frequency words and tricky words.

High frequency words are quite simply those words which occur most frequently in written material, for example, "and", "the", "as" and "it". They are often words that have little meaning on their own, but they do contribute a great deal to the meaning of a sentence. Some of the high frequency words can be sounded out using basic phonic rules, e.g. "it" is an easy word to read using phonics. However, many of the high frequency words are not phonically regular and are therefore hard to read in the early stages. These words are sometimes called tricky words, sight words or camera words. In addition to being difficult to sound out, most of the high frequency words have a rather abstract meaning which is hard to explain to a child. It's easy to learn words like "cat" and "house" because they can easily be related to a real object or a picture, but how do you represent the word "the" or "of"?

Please see the attached sheet with high frequency and tricky words. We use mnemonics and rhymes to help the children to remember these.

E.g. could, should, would – rhyme = ould – Oh You Lucky Duck.

Reading

Reading

- Make sure your child sees you reading.
- Read **to** your child. Show you like the book. Bring stories to life by using loud/soft/scary voices – let yourself go!
- Spread books around your house for your child to dip into.
- Let your child choose what **they** would like to read – books, comics, catalogues.
- Read favourite books over and over again. Enjoy!