

# Every Child a Reader



## Phonics and Early Reading A Guide for Parents

## Introduction

At St Hilda's and Hovingham Federation we know how important it is for parents and teachers to work together to give your child the best start. Reading together at home is one of the most effective and important ways in which you can help your child. Children should be encouraged to enjoy sharing books and read independently, as well as reading with an adult. This not only supports children's progression in reading but leads to them seeing reading as a source of pleasure and interest.

To support your child in becoming an effective and confident reader we hope to work with you to develop their knowledge of phonics (letter sounds) to enable them to decode different words they may come across.

Through this booklet we hope to give you an overview of phonics teaching with your child, and some ideas for how you can support your child at home.

## What is Phonics?

The alphabet contains only 26 letters. Spoken English uses about 44 sounds (phonemes). These phonemes are represented by letters (graphemes). In other words, a sound can be represented by a letter (e.g. 'e' or 'p') or a group of letters (e.g. 'sh' or 'air').

A letter consists of: a sound, a shape and it has a capital form and a lower case form.

# Aa

Only use capital letters for names and, when children are ready, at the beginning of sentences.

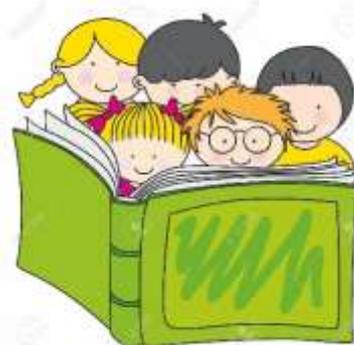
Letter shape= grapheme.

Letter sound= phoneme.



## Letters and Sounds

We are following Government guidance which refers to 6 phases of Phonics teaching (The Letters and Sounds programme). The six-phase teaching programme focuses on high quality synthetic 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 age of 7.' By the end of Year Two children should have completed phase 6. From Reception onwards, all pupils have a twenty-minute phonic lesson and follow up activities are planned throughout the day.



### The Phases:

#### Phase One

This begins in Nursery and continues throughout. The aim of Phase One is to develop children's listening and speaking skills as preparation for learning to read and spell with phonics. Children explore and experiment with sounds and become familiar with rhyme, rhythm and alliteration.

Parents can play a vital role helping their children develop these skills by encouraging them to listen carefully and talk extensively about what they hear, see and do.

#### Phase Two

Phase Two starts in Reception and introduces grapheme/phoneme (letter/sound) correspondence. Children learn that words are constructed from phonemes (hear) and that phonemes are represented by graphemes (write). They begin with a small selection of common consonants and vowels (s, a, t, p, i, n) and begin to put them together to read and spell CVC words (consonant vowel consonant).

E.g. c-a-t

s-i-t

p-a-n

#### Phase Three

Phase Three continues in Reception and teaches children one grapheme for each of the 44 phonemes in order to read and spell simple regular words. Children link sounds to letters, naming and sounding the letters of the alphabet. They hear and say sounds in order they occur in the word and read simple words by blending the phonemes from left to right. They recognise common digraphs

(1 sound 2 letters e.g. th) and read some common exception words and high frequency words. E.g. sh-e-ll

b-oa-t

t-r-ai-n

### **Phase Four**

Phase Four starts in the Spring Term of Reception and teaches children to read and spell words containing adjacent consonants. Children will be able to blend and segment these words and apply this skill when reading and spelling. They move from CVC words (pot, sheep) to CVCC words (pots) and CCVC words (spot) and then CCVCC words (spots). They will also explore polysyllabic words (shampoo, helper).

### **Phase Five**

Phase Five is begun in Year 1 and teaches children to use alternative ways of pronouncing the graphemes and spelling the phonemes already taught. For example, they will learn that the phoneme 'ai' can be spelt 'ai', 'ay' 'ey' and a\_e'. They will also learn that 'c' can be pronounced 'c' in coat or 'c' in city.

### **Phase Six**

Phase Six is taught in Year 2 and teaches children to develop their skills and automaticity in reading and spelling, creating ever increasing capacity to attend to reading for meaning. They apply phonic knowledge to recognise and spell an increasing number of complex words. This includes word endings er-ing-ed.



## Blending for Reading

To learn to read and spell children must be able to smoothly blend sounds together. Blending sounds fluidly helps to improve fluency when reading. Blending is more difficult to do with longer words so learning how to blend accurately at an early age is imperative. Showing your child how to blend is important. Model how to 'sound talk' sounds and blend them smoothly together without stopping at each individual sound.

We use our fingers to support this. Remember some sounds (digraphs) are represented by two letters, such as ee or oi. Children should sound out the digraph not the individual letters (e.g. oi not o-i). Some words may also have trigraphs, three letters to represent one sound, (e.g. h-ear or p-air.)

Try these words:

Plant - p-l-a-n-t

Sheep - sh- ee-p

Explain e-x-p-l-ai-n

Spelling

isn't

**EZ**



## Segmenting to Spell

Segmenting is a skill used in spelling. In order to spell a word, it is necessary to segment the word into its constituent sounds. E.g. ran r-a-n. Start by having your child listen for the first sound in a word (games like i-spy are ideal). Next try listening for the end sounds and then the middle sounds (middle sounds are hardest to hear). Begin with simple three letters words (e.g. tap or hot) and build it up. Take care with digraphs, the word fish, for example, has four letters but only three sounds f-i-sh.

Rhyming games and poems also help tune the ears to the sounds in words.

## Strategy for spelling:

Encourage children to think about the word, say it several times and then write it. Then look at it. Does it look right?

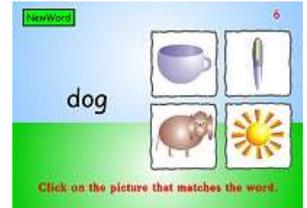
## Common Exception Words and Tricky Words

Tricky words are words that cannot be 'sounded-out' but need to be learnt by heart. They don't fit into usual spelling patterns. When learning these words, it is important for children to start with the familiar sounds and then notice the 'tricky' bits.

## Games to play at home

### Eye Spy

'Something beginning with....' or 'Something that rhymes with...'



### Hoop Game

Get 2 hoops, trays or plates and place a letter card on each of them e.g. s and a. Have a variety of objects beginning with these 2 sounds. Ask your child to select an object and say the name of it. Repeat it several times and then ask your child to place it on the correct tray.

### Sound Hunt

Encourage children to hunt around the house or garden for objects beginning with a certain sound. This can also be done with words hidden around the house.

### Rogue Sound Game

Show a variety of objects to your child. All of the objects have the same initial sound except one. Ask them to identify the rogue item.

### Bingo

Bingo board can be easily made and differentiated. Put letters, digraphs, words etc. in 6 spaces and make 6 cards that match. Can your child match them? Can they be the 'bingo caller' and say what is on the card first.

### Letters/graphemes in the mud

Encourage children to write letters/graphemes in different ways. Write them with a stick in the mud, with their finger in sand, a straw in paint. This is not only great for their sound/letter correspondence but also for handwriting.

### Treasure/Trash

Make some word cards with real and non-sense words using a variety of graphemes. Decode the word together, blend and decide if it is a real 'treasure' word or a 'trash' non-sense word (which can go in the bin).

### **Having a Problem with Phonics:**

As soon as our pupils start their phonic journey, we keep close attention to their progress. Any pupil who is finding the acquisition of phonics difficult, for whatever reason, will be given additional targeted intervention and support. Teachers always welcome parental support in reinforcing these skills at home and might ask you if you can help play specific games or complete specific activities to help your child 'catch up'.

### **Phonics is not all:**

We want all children to become readers and phonics plays a significant part in getting our children to begin their reading journey. However, reading in all phases needs to be supplemented and backed up by high quality speaking and listening opportunities to further develop auditory discrimination, further develop auditory memory and sequencing, increase vocabulary and language comprehension. These are essential skills for fluent readers and writers.

Sharing stories and having fun with storybooks, poems, rhymes and fact books, with your child is an essential part in helping us to help your child to develop a life-long love of reading.

### **Useful Websites**

There are lots of fantastic websites to support the learning of phonics.

[www.letters-and-sounds.com](http://www.letters-and-sounds.com)

<https://www.teachyourmonstertoread.com/> (free games)

<https://www.topmarks.co.uk/english-games/5-7-years/letters-and-sounds>

<https://readingeggs.co.uk/> (free trial)

<https://www.phonicshero.com/> (7day free trial)

[www.bbc.co.uk/cbeebies/grownups/the-alphablocks-guide-to-phonics](http://www.bbc.co.uk/cbeebies/grownups/the-alphablocks-guide-to-phonics)

[www.phonicsplay.co.uk](http://www.phonicsplay.co.uk)

[www.ictgames.co.uk](http://www.ictgames.co.uk)

## The phonemes/graphemes: 44 sounds in the English language

### Consonants:

Phoneme	IPA Symbol	Graphemes	Examples	Voiced?
1	b	b, bb	bug, bubble	Yes
2	d	d, dd, ed	dad, add, milled	Yes
3	f	f, ff, ph, gh, lf, ft	fat, cliff, phone, enough, half, often	No
4	g	g, gg, gh, gu, gue	gun, egg, ghost, guest, prologue	Yes
5	h	h, wh	hop, who	No
6	dʒ	j, ge, g, dge, di, gg	jam, wage, giraffe, edge, soldier, exaggerate	Yes
7	k	k, c, ch, cc, lk, qu, q(u), ck, x	kit, cat, chris, accent, folk, bouquet, queen, rack, box	No
8	l	l, ll	live, well	Yes
9	m	m, mm, mb, mn, lm	man, summer, comb, column, palm	Yes
10	n	n, nn, kn, gn, pn	net, funny, know, gnat, pneumonic	Yes
11	p	p, pp	pin, dippy	No
12	r	r, rr, wr, rh	run, carrot, wrench, rhyme	Yes
13	s	s, ss, c, sc, ps, st, ce, se	sit, less, circle, scene, psycho, listen, pace, course	No
14	t	t, tt, th, ed	tip, matter, thomas, ripped	No
15	v	v, f, ph, ve	vine, of, stephen, five	Yes
16	w	w, wh, u, o	wit, why, quick, choir	Yes
17	z	z, zz, s, ss, x, ze, se	zed, buzz, his, scissors, xylophone, craze	Yes
18	ʒ	s, si, z	treasure, division, azure	Yes
19	tʃ	ch, tch, tu, ti, te	chip, watch, future, action, righteous	No
20	ʃ	sh, ce, s, ci, si, ch, sci, ti	sham, ocean, sure, special, pension, machine, conscience, station	No
21	θ	th	thongs	No
22	ð	th	leather	Yes
23	ŋ	ng, n, ngue	ring, pink, tongue	Yes
24	j	y, i, j	you, onion, hallelujah	Yes

## Vowels:

Phoneme	IPA Symbol	Graphemes	Examples
25	æ	a, ai, au	cat, plaid, laugh
26	eɪ	a, ai, eigh, aigh, ay, er, et, ei, au, a_e, ea, ey	bay, maid, weigh, straight, pay, foyer, filet, eight, gauge, mate, break, they
27	e	e, ea, u, ie, ai, a, eo, ei, ae	end, bread, bury, friend, said, many, leopard, heifer, aesthetic
28	i:	e, ee, ea, y, ey, oe, ie, i, ei, eo, ay	be, bee, meat, lady, key, phoenix, grief, ski, deceive, people, quay
29	ɪ	i, e, o, u, ui, y, ie	it, england, women, busy, guild, gym, sieve
30	aɪ	i, y, igh, ie, uy, ye, ai, is, eigh, i_e	spider, sky, night, pie, guy, stye, aisle, island, height, kite
31	ɒ	a, ho, au, aw, ough	swan, honest, maul, slaw, fought
32	oʊ	o, oa, o_e, oe, ow, ough, eau, oo, ew	open, moat, bone, toe, sow, dough, beau, brooch, sew
33	ʊ	o, oo, u,ou	wolf, look, bush, would
34	ʌ	u, o, oo, ou	lug, monkey, blood, double
35	u:	o, oo, ew, ue, u_e, oe, ough, ui, oew, ou	who, loon, dew, blue, flute, shoe, through, fruit, manoeuvre, group
36	ɔɪ	oi, oy, uoy	join, boy, buoy
37	aʊ	ow, ou, ough	now, shout, bough
38	ə	a, er, i, ar, our, ur	about, ladder, pencil, dollar, honour, augur
39	eəʳ	air, are, ear, ere, eir, ayer	chair, dare, pear, where, their, prayer
40	ɑ:	a	arm
41	ɜ:ʳ	ir, er, ur, ear, or, our, yr	bird, term, burn, pearl, word, journey, myrtle
42	ɔ:	aw, a, or, oor, ore, oar, our, augh, ar, ough, au	paw, ball, fork, poor, fore, board, four, taught, war, bought, sauce
43	ɪəʳ	ear, eer, ere, ier	ear, steer, here, tier
44	ʊəʳ	ure, our	cure, tourist

To hear how the sound should be pronounced: <https://www.oxfordowl.co.uk/for-home/reading/phonics-made-easy#audio>

