

Parent's Guide to Phonics

From a very early stage, children develop an awareness of different sounds in spoken language. They develop an understanding that spoken words are made up of different sounds (phonemes) and they learn to match these phonemes to letters (graphemes). Phonics is about children knowing how letters link to sounds (graphemes to phonemes), e.g. c as in 'cat', ll as in 'fell', ee as in 'sheep'. Children use this phonics knowledge when they are reading and writing. This system has been shown to be quicker and more efficient way for children to learn to read the words on a page fluently and accurately. It also gives them essential skills for spelling.

As Overdale C.P School we use the letters and sounds document to support the teaching of phonics. Letters and Sounds is divided into six phrases with each phase following closely from the last. Phase 1 begins in Nursery and phases 2,3,4 and 5 are taught in Reception and Year 1. Phase 6 is taught in Year 2. The children's phonics knowledge is regularly assessed. All EYFS, KS1 children take part in high-quality daily phonics sessions. These are fun sessions involving lots of children's active participation. They learn to apply their phonic knowledge in reading and writing activities and in their independent play and work.

Letters and Sounds Phases

Phase 1 (Nursery)

Phase 1 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 2 (Reception – Autumn Term 1)

In Phase 2, letters and their sounds are introduced one at a time. The letters are taught 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

Set 5: h,b,f,ff,l,ll,ss

The children will begin to learn to blend and segment to begin reading and spelling. This will begin with simple words.

Tricky words introduced in Phase 2:

the	to	i
go	into	no

Phase 3 (Reception – Autumn Term 2)

During Phase 3, twenty-five new graphemes are introduced (one at time).

Set 6: j,v,w,x

Set 7: y,z,zz,qu

Consonant digraphs: ch,sh,th,ng

Vowel digraphs: ai,ee,igh,oa,oo,ar,or,ur,ow,oi,ear,ure,er

Sounds	Word Example	Sounds	Word Example	Sounds	Word Example
j	jam	sh	shin	oo (short)	cook
v	vet	th	thick	ow	now
w	win	ng	song	ar	star
x	box	ai	train	air	hair
y	yes	igh	sight	ear	hear
z	zip	oa	boat	er	term
zz	buzz	oi	coil	ur	curl
qu	quick	oo (long)	boot	or	form
ch	chop	ee	tree	ure	pure

Tricky words introduced in Phase 3:

we	me	be	was	no	go
my	you	they	her	all	are

Phase 4 (Reception – Summer Term)

By Phase 4 children will be able to represent each of 42 phonemes with a grapheme. They will blend phonemes to read CCVC and CVCC words and segment these words for spelling. They will also be able to read two syllable words that are simple. They will be able to read all the tricky words learnt so far and will be able to spell some of them.

This phase consolidates all the children have learnt in the previous phases.

Tricky words introduced in Phase 4:

said	so	she	he	have	like
some	come	were	there	little	one
they	all	are	do	when	out
what	my	her			

By this point children would be expected to be reading CVC words at speed along with the tricky words from the previous phases. It is important that children are taught that blending is only used when a word is unfamiliar.

Phase 5 (Year 1 – Starting Autumn Term)

Children will be taught new graphemes and alternative pronunciations for these graphemes and graphemes they already know. They will begin to learn to choose the appropriate grapheme when spelling. The children will be automatically decoding a large number of words for reading by this point.

Tricky words introduced in Phase 5:

oh	their	people	Mr	Mrs	looked
called	asked				
water	where	who	again	thought	through
work	mouse	many	laughed	because	different
any	eyes	friends	once	please	

New graphemes for reading:

ay day	oy boy	wh when	e-e make
ou out	ir girl	ph photo	e-e these
ie tie	ue blue	ew new	i-e like
ea eat	aw saw	oe toe	o-e home
		au Paul	u-e rule

During this phase children will begin reading words fluently and no longer be blending and segmenting familiar words.

They will also begin learning to add prefixes (un) and suffixes (s,es,er,est,ing,er) to root words.

Phase 6

In phase 6 children will be reading longer and less familiar texts independently and fluently. It is crucial that at this point children are now reading to learn and reading for **pleasure**.

Children should be able to read the 300 high frequency words. At this point it is important that comprehension strategies are developed so that children clarify meaning, ask answer questions about the texts they are reading, construct mental images during reading and summarise what they read.

In spelling children are introduced to the adding of more prefixes and suffixes and how to spell longer words. Throughout the phase children are encouraged to develop strategies for learning spellings.

What can I do at home?

Useful website letters and sounds games:

- <http://www.letters-and-sounds.com>
- <http://www.phonicsplay.co.uk/>
- <http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/wordsandpictures/>
- <http://www.wictgames.com/phonemeFlopv4html>
- <http://www.oxfordowl.co.uk/welcome/home/reading-owl/fun-ideas>
- <http://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/ks1/literacy/phonics/play/popup.shtml>

Ways you can support your children at home: reading together

Teach lots of nursery rhymes – each one tells a different story. Enjoy and share books together – buy or borrow books that will fire their imagination and interest. Read and reread those they love best. Make time to read with your child throughout their time in school. PLEASE continue reading to your child, even when they are reading independently. This is very important – your child needs to practise their reading skills every day, and needs the support of an interested adult.

Grandparents, older brothers or sisters can help too.

Let them see you reading – grown-ups can share their magazines about their favourite sport or hobby. Read with your child- ask your child to attempt unknown words, using their phonic skills and knowledge. Make sure they blend all through the word.

Talk about the meaning of the book, too – take time to talk about what is happening in the book, or things that they found really interesting in an information book. Discuss the characters and important events. Ask them their views. Provide toys, puppets and dressing-up clothes that will help them to act out stories. Explain the meaning of words (vocabulary) that your child can read but may not understand, for example, *flapped*, *roared*.

Listen to story tapes.

Teach your child some action rhymes- “Heads, shoulders, knees and toes”, “Here we go round the mulberry bush”, “We all clap hands together”. Use tapes and CD-ROMs of nursery rhymes to sing along to. Read simple rhyming books together – leave out a rhyming word now and then, and see if your child can work out the missing word. If not, you say it.

Borrow or buy the best books you can to share with your child. Libraries and bookshops can advise you of the most popular books.

Add sound effects when reading a story and encourage your child to join in.

A quiet area with some cushions and toys is a comfortable place where you and your child can go to look at a book together.

Ways you can support your children at home: writing together

Ways you can support your children at home: what to do if your child is reluctant to read or write at home.

Magic writing boards are great fun for children, both little and larger versions. It won't be long before they will be trying to write their names!

Write with your child – “think aloud” so they can hear the decisions you are making as you write. Make sure the writing is for a purpose, for example, a birthday message, shopping list, an address.

Talk about the words they see in everyday life – food packaging, signs in the supermarkets, captions on buses and lorries, messages on birthday cards and invitations.

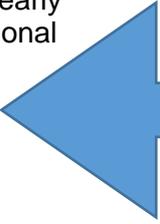
Write a shopping list together.

Send an email to a family member or friend – your child says the message, you write it!

Provide your child with a show box full of things to write with – writing tools of various sizes and thicknesses: gel pens, crayons, glitter pens, rainbow pencils, old birthday cards, coloured paper, sticky tape to make little books. Rolls of wallpaper can be attached to a table or wall to provide a large canvas for their writing or drawing.

Praise them for their play writing – those early squiggles and marks show that your child is beginning to understand writing.

Word	What does it mean?
blend	Saying the individual sounds that make up a word and then merging or blending the sounds together to say the word- used when reading
consonant	Most letters of the alphabet (excluding the vowels: a,e,i,o,u).
CVC words	<p>Abbreviation used for consonant-vowel-consonant words, used to describe the order of sounds. Some examples of CVC words are: cat, pen, top, chat (because ch makes one sound).</p> <p>Other similar abbreviations include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • VC words e.g. on, is, it. • CCVC words e.g. trap and black • CVCC words e.g. milk and fast.
digraph	<p>Two letters which together make one sound e.g. ee, oa, ea, ch, ay.</p> <p>There are different types of digraph:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vowel digraph: a digraph in which at least one of the letters is a vowel, for example; boat or day. • Consonant digraph: two consonants which can go together, for example shop or thin. • Split digraph: (previously called magic e): two letters, which work as a pair to make one sound, but are separated within the word e.g. e-e, e-e, i-e, o-e, u-e. For example cake or pine.
grapheme	Written letters or a group of letters which represent one single sound (phoneme) e.g. a, l, sh, air, ck.

Word	What Does It Mean?
<p>letters and sounds</p>	<p>A government document detailing the teaching of phonics. There are 6 phrases described:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Phase 1: This is split into 7 aspects, which focus on hearing and talking about environmental sounds and letter sounds. • Phase 2: Learning 19 letters of the alphabet, along with the first 5 'tricky words and using them to read and spell simple words and captions' • Phase 3: Learning the remaining letters of the alphabet, some 2 and 3 letter digraphs, along with the next set of 'tricky words'. Reading and writing captions and sentences. • Phase 4: Learning to blend and segment longer words, including words with adjacent consonants and more than one syllable. Reading and writing using these and the next 'tricky words', within sentences. • Phase 5: Learning alternative spellings and pronunciations for phonemes, including their common usage within words. Reading and writing using these and the next 'tricky words', within sentences. • Phase 6: Learning longer words and spelling rules. Children may work from another document from this point, called 'Support for Spelling'.
<p>phoneme</p>	<div data-bbox="411 954 1426 1189" style="border: 1px solid black; background-color: #4a90e2; color: white; padding: 10px; text-align: center;"> <p><u>Top tip!!</u></p> <p>When starting phonics, avoid using the letter names (see, ay, tee etc) and use the sounds instead (c, a, t)! This will help your child with spelling and recognising letter sounds when reading. Letter names can be introduced more gradually.</p> </div> <div data-bbox="858 1189 979 1301" style="text-align: center;">  </div> <p>A single sound that can be made by one or more letters – e.g. s, k, z, oo, ph, igh.</p>
<p>phonics</p>	<p>Phonics teaches children to listen to and identify the sounds that make up words. This helps them to read and write words.</p>
<p>pure sound</p>	<p>Pronouncing each letter sounds clearly and distinctly without adding additional sounds to the end e.g. 'f' not 'fuh'.</p> <div data-bbox="1050 1527 1474 1980" style="border: 1px solid black; background-color: #4a90e2; color: white; padding: 10px; text-align: center;"> <p><u>Top tip!!</u></p> <p>It is tricky to say some sounds without the 'uh' sounds at the end- like b,d,v and g! Try to emphasise the main letter sound when taking about these letter sounds. Some are easier to say by dragging the sound out e.g. fffffff rather than 'fuh' or mmmm rather than 'muh'</p> </div> <div data-bbox="826 1644 986 1868" style="text-align: center;">  </div>

Word	What Does it Mean?
segment	<p>This is the opposite of blending (see above). Splitting up a word up into individual sounds – used when spelling and writing.</p>  <div data-bbox="418 501 1409 775" style="background-color: #4a90e2; color: white; padding: 10px; text-align: center;"> <p>Play word games with your child that encourages them to build words and recognise individual sounds in words e.g. word jigsaw puzzles, Hangman style games, I-Spy and making collections of objects that contain the same letter sounds at either the beginning, middle or end.</p> </div>
tricky words	<p>Words that are difficult to sound out e.g. said, the, because</p>  <div data-bbox="991 844 1401 1151" style="background-color: #4a90e2; color: white; padding: 10px;"> <p><u>Top Tip!!</u> Have some tricky word flashcards around and use them to practise reading and word recognition.</p> </div>
trigraph	<p>Three letters which go together make one sounds e.g. ear, air, igh, dge, tch.</p>
vowel	<p>The letters a, e, i, o, u.</p>