

In the EYFS and KS1, the emphasis for reading and spelling is on phonics.

The Teaching of Phonics

Phonics is taught in Phases.

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 One 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).

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

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

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 blend the sounds s-a-t to make the word **sat**. They will also start learning to segment words. For example, they might be asked to find the letter sounds that make the word **tap** from a small selection of magnetic letters. In Reception, the children are taught these sounds using the synthetic phonics scheme, **Jolly Phonics**.

Jolly Phonics uses a multisensory method used to introduce the children to the letter sounds. There is a storyline, action and song for each sound. By doing an action associated with the sound, e.g., rub tummy and say "mmmmm" for the /m/ sound, the children remember it more easily. The order in which the letters are introduced to the children through the Jolly Phonics Scheme enables them to practise blending simple words within the first 2 weeks.

By the time they reach **Phase 3**, children will already be able to blend and segment words containing the 19 letters taught in **Phase 2**.

Over the twelve weeks which **Phase 3** is expected to last, twenty-five new graphemes are introduced (one at a 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, air, ure, er

During **Phase 3**, children will also learn the letter names using an alphabet song, although they will continue to use the sounds when decoding words.

In **Phase 4**, no new graphemes are introduced. The main aim of this phase is to consolidate the children's knowledge and to help them learn to read and spell words which have adjacent consonants, such as trap, string and milk.

In **Phase Five**, the children will already be able to read and spell words with adjacent consonants, such as trap, string and flask. They will also be able to read and spell some polysyllabic words. The children will learn more graphemes and phonemes. For example, they already know ai as in rain, but now they will be introduced to ay as in day and a-e as in make. Alternative pronunciations for graphemes will also be introduced, e.g. ea in tea, head and break.

At the start of **Phase Six** of Letters and Sounds, children will have already learnt the most frequently occurring grapheme-phoneme correspondences (GPCs) in the English language. They will be able to read many familiar words automatically. When they come across unfamiliar words they will in many cases be able to decode them quickly and quietly using their well-developed sounding and blending skills. With more complex unfamiliar words they will often be able to decode them by sounding them out.

At this stage children should be able to spell words phonemically although not always correctly. In **Phase Six** the main aim is for children to become more fluent readers and more accurate spellers.

Reading Schemes

The children use a broad and balanced range of reading books to practise and develop their phonics decoding skills. The main reading schemes that the children use are:

- Oxford Reading Tree – Biff, Chip & Kipper stories, Songbirds Phonics, Floppy's Phonics, Snapdragons, Traditional Tales and Fireflies, All Stars Fiction
- Project X – Project X Phonics and Project X Code

There are a small number of books from other reading schemes which the children are able to choose. All of the books in the reading scheme are banded in colours linked to an age-related expectation.

Once the children have reached the Yellow Book Band, they take part in guided reading sessions. For these teaching sessions, the children read a range of 'real' picture books, guided reading books from the Oxford Reading Tree schemes and the Pearson Lighthouse guided reading scheme.