

St Edward's Phonics Guide for Parents



A guide to how phonics will help
your child to read and spell

Letters and Sounds is a fun and interactive way to support children in learning how to read and write. We use Phonics Bug and Jolly Phonics to support the teaching of 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. 's' or 'h') or a group of letters (e.g. 'th' or 'ear').



Once children begin learning sounds, they are used quickly to read and spell words. This leaflet provides an overview of the teaching of phonics at St Edward's, to help you support your child.

There are six phases of letters and sounds taught from Reception to Year 2.

What do all the technical words mean?

What is a phoneme?

It is the smallest unit of sound and a piece of terminology that children like to use and should be taught. At first it will equate with a letter sound but later on will include the digraphs. For example 'rain' has three phonemes; /r /ai/ n.

What is a grapheme?

A grapheme is a letter or a number of letters that represent a sound (phoneme) in a word. Another way to explain it is to say that a grapheme is a letter or letters that spell a sound in a word. E.g. /ee/, /ea/, /ey/ all make the same phoneme but are spelt differently.

What is a digraph?

This is when two or more letters come together to make a phoneme, /oa/ makes the sound in boat.

What is blending?

Blending is the process that is involved in bringing the sounds together to make a word or a syllable and is how /c/ /a/ /t/ becomes cat.

To learn to read well 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 from an early age is imperative. Showing your child how to blend is important. Model how to 'push' sounds smoothly together without stopping at each individual sound.

What is segmenting?

Segmenting is a skill used in spelling. In order to spell the word cat, it is necessary to segment the word into its constituent sounds; c-a-t.

Children often understand segmenting as 'chopping' a word. Before writing

a word young children need time to think about it, say the word several times, 'chop' the word and then write it. Once children have written the same word several times they won't need to use these four steps as frequently. Children will enjoy spelling if it feels like fun and if they feel good about themselves as spellers. We need, therefore, to be playful and positive in our approach - noticing and praising what children **can** do as well as helping them to correct their mistakes.

What are tricky words?

Tricky words are words that cannot be 'sounded-out' but need to be learned by heart. They don't fit into the usual spelling patterns. Examples of these words are attached under each phase. In order to read simple sentences, it is necessary for children to know some words that have unusual or untaught spellings. It should be noted that, when teaching these words, it is important to always start with sounds already known in the word, then focus on the 'tricky' part.

What are high frequency words?

High frequency (common) are words that recur frequently in much of the written material young children read and that they need when they write.

What are CVC words?

CVC stands for consonant- vowel- consonant, so and word such as map, cat is CVC. In phase 4 we talk about CCVC words such as clip, stop.

Phase 1

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

In Phase 2, letters and their sounds are introduced one at a time. A set of letters is taught in the following sequence:

Set 1: s,a,t,p

at	sat	pat	tap	sap
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Set 2: i,n,m,d

(+i)	(+n)	(+m)	(+d)
it	an	am	dad
is	in	man	sad
sit	nip	mat	dim
sat	pan	map	din
pit	pin	Pam	did
pip	tan	Tim	Sid
sip	nap	Sam	and
tip	tin		dip

Set 3: g,o,c,k

(+g)	(+o)	(+c)	(+k)
tag	got	can	kid
gag	on	cot	kit
gig	not	cop	Kim
gap	pot	cap	Ken
nag	top	cat	
sag	dog	cod	
gas	pop		
pig	God		
dig	Mog		

Set 4: ck,e,u,r

(+ck)	(+e)	(+u)	(+r)
kick	get	up	rim
sock	pet	mum	rip
sack	ten	run	ram
dock	net	mug	rat
pick	pen	cup	rag
sick	peg	sun	rug
pack	met	tuck	rot
ticket	men	mud	rocket
pocket	neck	sunset	carrot

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

(+h)	(+b)	(+f and ff)	(+l and ll)	(+ss)
had	but	of	lap	ass
him	big	if	let	less
his	back	off	leg	hiss
hot	bet	fit	lot	mass
hut	bad	fin	lit	mess
hop	bag	fun	bell	boss
hum	bed	fig	fill	fuss

hit	bud	fog	doll	hiss
hat	beg	puff	tell	pass
has	bug	huff	sell	kiss
hack	bun	cuff	Bill	Tess
hug	bus	fan	Nell	fusspot
	Ben	fat	dull	
	bat		laptop	
	bit			
	bucket			
	beckon			
	rabbit			

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 Phase2

the	to	I
go	into	no

Phase 3

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.

In Phase 3 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

Tricky words introduced in Phase 3:

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

Phase 4

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

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	a-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.

The real focus throughout the phase is to not only learn the new graphemes for reading but also to learn to read words with alternative pronunciations. Children also will need to learn alternative spellings for each phoneme.

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 and answer questions about the texts they are reading, construct mental images during reading and summarise what they have read.

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

Strategy	Explanation
Syllables	To learn a word by listening to how many syllables there are so it can be broken into smaller bits. (e.g. Sep-tem-ber)
Root Words	To learn a word by finding its root word. (e.g. jumping- root word jump +ing)
Prefixes	un-, pre-, dis- , re- eg re-write, dis-agree, re-play
Suffixes	-ly, -er, -est, -ness, -ed, -ing, -es, -y, -en, -ment, -ful, -s,
Analogy	To learn a word use a word that is already learnt. (e.g. could, would, should)
Mnemonics	To learn a word by making up a sentence to help remember them. (e.g. BECAUSE - Big Elephants Can Always Understand Small Elephants)
Homophones	Homophones are words that sound the same but have different spellings/meanings. For example sail/sale, see/sea.
Contractions	A contraction is one word that is made by putting together two separate words and shortening them. Most contraction are made by leaving out two letters. E.g. He is - he's will not- won't Did not - didn't they have - they've
Silent letters	To learn words which have silent letters and cannot be phonetically "sounded out" e.g whole, knife, sword, comb, scissors, sign, whisper.

What can I do at home?

A great way to engage children at home with phonics is to play games. Matching pairs, snap, sorting words or letters can all be ways to help teach your children.

If you have a computer at home then below is a list of websites that have fun interactive games for children to play.

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.ictgames.com/phonemeFlop_v4.html

<http://www.oxfordowl.co.uk/welcome/home/reading-owl/fun-ideas>

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/ks1/literacy/phonics/play/pop-up.shtml>