

New to Reception Phonics

A quick start guide to help our new
families

What are Phonics?

- ▶ Words are made up from units of sound called ‘phonemes’. ‘Phonics’ teaches children to be able to listen carefully and identify the phonemes that make up each word.
- ▶ Knowing the sounds of individual letters and how those letters sound when they’re combined will help children decode words as they read.
- ▶ Understanding phonics helps children know which letters to use when they are writing words.

Phase 1 Phonics

Your child will be learning to:

- ▶ have fun with sounds
- ▶ listen carefully
- ▶ develop their vocabulary
- ▶ speak confidently to you, other adults and other children
- ▶ tune into sounds
- ▶ listen and remember sounds
- ▶ talk about sounds
- ▶ understand that spoken words are made up of different sounds

Ways to help at home

- ▶ **Make time to listen to you child talking** - as you meet them from school, as you walk or travel home by car, in the supermarket as you shop, at meal times, bath times, bedtimes ... any time!
- ▶ **Show that you are interested in what they are talking about** - look at your child, smile, nod your head or ask a question to show that you are listening.
- ▶ **Listen at home** - switch off the TV and listen to the sounds both inside and outside the home. Can your child tell you what sounds they heard, in the order in which they heard them?

Ways to help at home

- ▶ **Make sounds:** using a range of props, such as running a stick along a fence or tapping the bin lid. Talk about those sounds.
- ▶ **Music:** Play some music or commercially produced CD-roms. Clap along with familiar rhymes and learn new ones.
- ▶ **Body sounds:** Listen to the sounds your feet make when walking, running or skipping: slowly, softly, fast or stomping hard.
- ▶ **Try different types of clapping:** Clap your hands softly, quickly and make a pattern for your child to follow. Do the same stamping your feet or tapping your fingers.

Ways to help at home

- ▶ Try breaking down simple short words when you are giving instructions or asking questions, such as:
 - “*Can you find your h-a-t (hat)?*”
 - “*Where is the c-a-t (cat)?*”
 - “*Eat your f-oo-d (food).*”
- ▶ Find real objects around your home 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.*”
- ▶ It is really important to say the sounds (phonemes) aloud, in order, all through the word.

Ways to help at home

▶ Reading:

- ▶ Make sure your child sees you reading.
- ▶ Read to your child. Show you like the book. Bring stories to life - let yourself go!
- ▶ Let your child choose what they would like to read - books, comics, catalogues.
- ▶ Read favourite books over and over again. Enjoy!

▶ Writing:

- ▶ Make sure your child sees you writing.
- ▶ Compose an email together to a friend.
- ▶ Make up a story together about a toy. Write for them, say the sentences as you write. They can draw pictures to go with it.

Useful weblinks to help with phonics

- ▶ https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCP_FbjYUP_UtldV2K_-niWw/featured?disable_polymer=1
- ▶ <https://www.readwithphonics.com/parents-phonics-guide#point-4>
- ▶ <https://literacytrust.org.uk/parents-and-families/>
- ▶ <https://www.booktrust.org.uk/books-and-reading/tips-and-advice/reading-tips/>