Tubbenden Primary School

Phonics and Reading in the Early Years





What is Phonics?

> **Phonics is:**
>
> making connections between the sounds of our spoken words and the letters that are used to write them down.





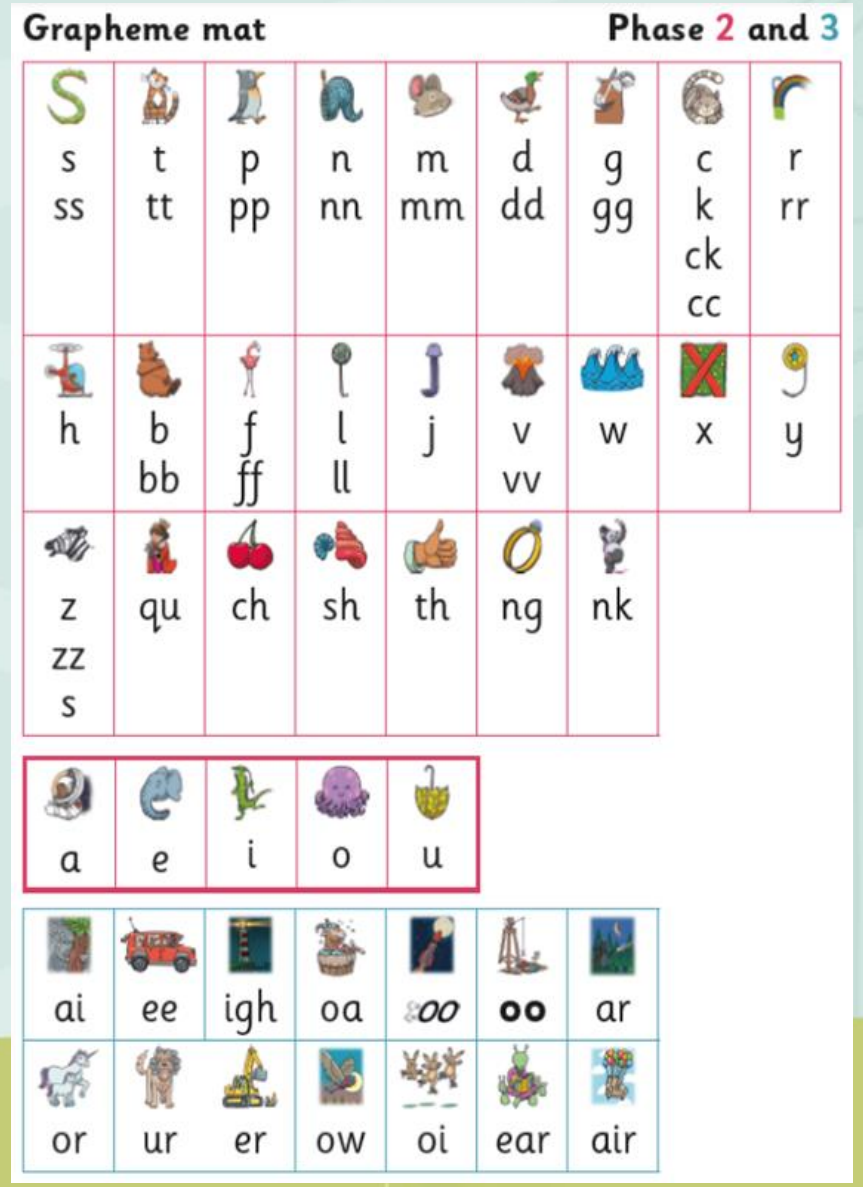
Our school uses **Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised** systematic, synthetic phonics (SSP) programme to teach early reading and spelling.

Children are taught the correspondences between

phonemes (single unit of sound) in speech and

graphemes (letter or group of letters) used to represent sounds in writing. This makes up the alphabetical code.

Alphabetical code



Digraph

"Two letters, one sound."

sh – shop

ck – sock

Trigraph

"Three letters, one sound."

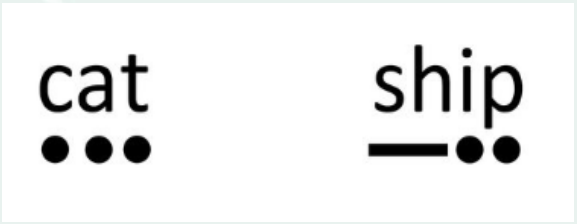
igh – light

ear - tear



Near the end of Phase 2, children learn that some phonemes are represented by more than one letter.

Sound buttons



Sound buttons can help children recognise the separate phonemes in a written word. A dot is placed under single graphemes, and a short line is placed under groups of letters which make digraphs and trigraphs.

Pronunciation and Formation Phrases

It is really important that children pronounce the phonemes correctly.

Learn how to pronounce the phonemes clearly and precisely:

https://youtu.be/-ZtjFlvA_fs
https://youtu.be/qDu3JAjf-U0
https://youtu.be/DvOuc7cWXxc



Phase 2 sounds taught in Reception Autumn 1



Phase 2 sounds taught in Reception Autumn 2



Phase 3 sounds taught in Reception Spring 1

(Tip: learn to say the pure sounds without an "uh" on the end e.g. sssssssss not suh.)



Once children have completed Phase 2, they learn to recognise and form **capital letters** as well.

Pictures and memorable **catchphrases** are used to support children in remembering how to pronounce the phonemes and write the graphemes.

Grapheme and mnemonic	Picture card	Pronunciation phrase	Formation phrase
s S	 snake	Show your teeth and and let the **s** hiss out **ssssss ssssss**	Under the snake's chin, slide down and round its tail.

or	 born with a horn	Make an 'o' with your mouth, push your tongue down and say **or or or**



Speaking and Listening



Phonics learning relies on children being able to hear and distinguish sounds within words.

Through speaking and listening activities, children learn to distinguish between different sounds and hear how language is put together into sentences for a purpose. They hear words in context and develop their vocabulary.



TIP: There is a close link between difficulty with phonics and hearing, so if your child is making slower progress than expected, it may be worth having their hearing checked.



Blending

Children learn to read words by joining individual phonemes together in sequence (from left to right) to make a word.

Teaching how to blend:
https://youtu.be/IL5YUCPyC5I

Sound talking

Help your child practise blending orally, by saying aloud the phonemes in a word, and getting them to blend them together.

"Go and get your c-oa-t."

"Simon says, touch your h-ea-d."

Point and Sweep

Pointing to each phoneme in a written word, and then sweeping a finger underneath the sequence, can help children blend.





Silent blending

As children become more confident, they start to blend silently in their heads, which builds their fluency.

Segmenting

Identifying individual phonemes in a word and writing the corresponding graphemes in sequence, enables children to spell words.

Phoneme Fingers

Counting the phonemes in a word is often helpful in reinforcing this process and sequence.

As children progress to writing a sentence, saying the sentence aloud and counting the number of words to write, is also a helpful strategy.



Say the word.

Segment the sounds.

Count the sounds.

Write them down.

Grapheme mat

Tip: Always have the grapheme mat available for children to refer to when writing.



Multi-syllabic words

In Phase 4 children learn to read and write words with more than one syllable. Children learn to recognise syllables by counting or clapping them aloud.

chim-pan-zee

Compound words

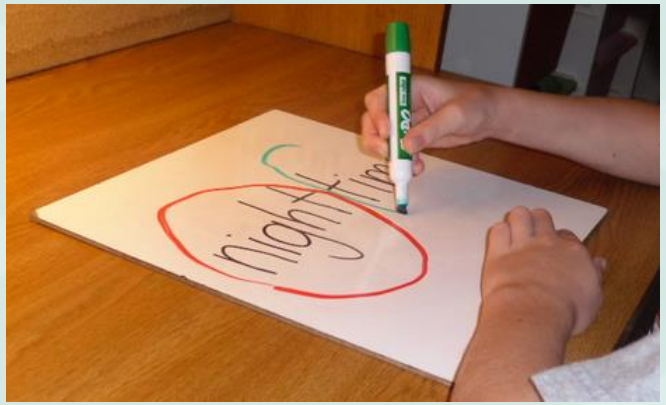
Compound words are multi-syllabic words where each part can exist as a separate word.

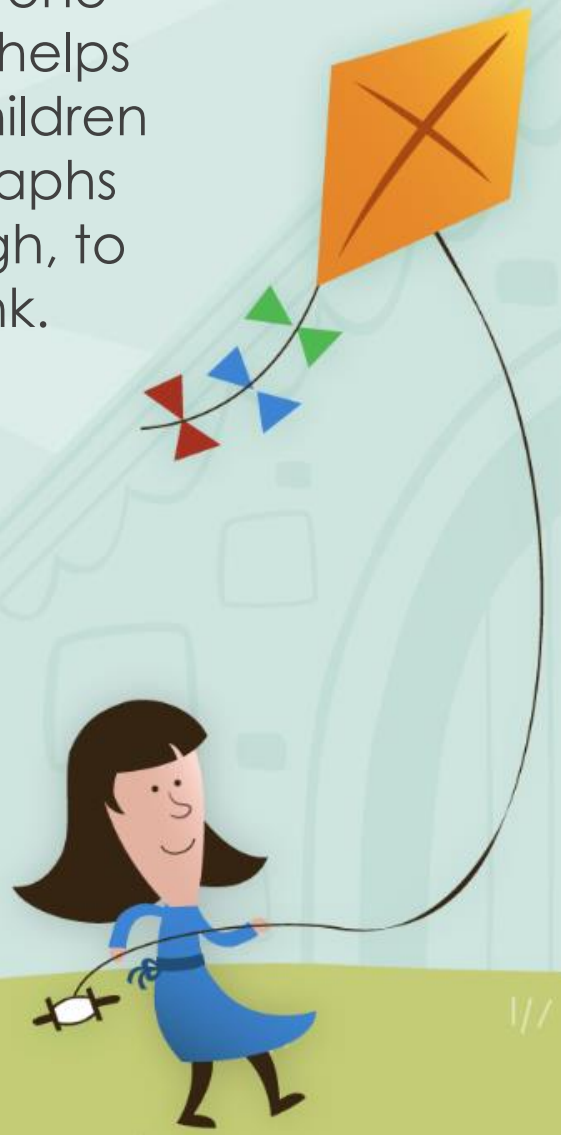
sun + hat = sunhat



Chunk it up

Breaking up a longer word and reading or writing one part (chunk) at a time, helps to ease the process. Children are taught to spot digraphs and trigraphs first though, to know where to chunk.





Tricky Words

Tricky Words

Phase 2		
is	has	push
I	his	he
the	her	of
put	go	we
pull	no	me
full	to	be
as	into	
and	she	

Tricky Words

Phase 3		
was	my	are
you	by	sure
they	all	pure

Phase 4		
said	love	there
so	do	when
have	were	what
like	here	one
some	little	out
come	says	today



How we teach tricky words:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NTC0PbtmeUA

Some words are not phonetically plausible using the sounds we learn in Phase 2 and 3. These are known as tricky words and are taught by identifying the **tricky part** in the word, and teaching children what sound to use instead. As children progress through the programme and learn alternative spellings, they can decode more themselves.

*e.g. The tricky part in 'g**o**' is the '**o**', which is taught as 'o' as in '**o**-ctopus' in Phase 2.*
*But in the word g**o** the 'o' makes an '**oa**' sound as in 's-**oa**-p'.*

Reading Practice Sessions

- Taught in small groups.
- Timetabled three times a week.
- The same book is read but with a different reading focus each time.

We use assessment to match your child to the right level of book





This means that your child should:

- Know all the sounds and tricky words in their phonics book when they bring it home.
- Only need to stop and sound out about 5% of the words.
- If children have not yet learnt the necessary sounds at the beginning of the scheme, they will start on wordless books. Encourage your child to describe the things they see, use new vocabulary, make up their own sentences.

Five important things to know about print:

1. Print has meaning;
2. Print can have different purposes;
3. We read English text from left to right and from top to bottom;
4. The names of different parts of a book;
5. We read pages in story books one at a time.



Read 1: Decoding



Focus:

- Sound talk and blend words.
- Look at the "I spy sounds" pages and find examples in the pictures that contain the focus sound(s).
- Identify and read tricky words.

How we learn to read: decoding
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r0i7Plew1WA



Children learn to decode the text by applying their phonic knowledge to sound out and blend words. Repeated practise is crucial to develop children's fluency so eventually they can read words automatically.





Read 2: Prosody



Focus:

- Children change their voice to portray characters' emotions and feelings.
- They look for and respond to punctuation.
- They change their voice when reading as the narrator.
- They learn what words mean.



Children practise reading with meaning, expression, and intonation, which helps to convey meaning and add 'life' to reading!



Read 3: Comprehension



Focus:

- Children use their vocabulary knowledge to understand texts.
- They identify and explain the sequence of events.
- They predict what might happen.
- They use skills of inference and deduction.
- They identify/explain key aspects of fiction and non-fiction texts.



By the third session, the children should be automatically applying their decoding skills to read with greater accuracy and fluency, enabling them to focus on answering questions and finding evidence in the text.



Reading together at home

Choice Book (Creative reading)

Children can choose a book from the class library every day for **YOU** to share with them. This promotes reading for pleasure. It also allows you to model the reading process, introduce new and exciting vocabulary, make the story sound exciting by changing your voice, and encourage your child to use prediction and comprehension skills.

Reading Scheme Book (Word Reading)

When sharing their 'learning to read' book, please go to the inside front cover and get your child to:

- Recap the sounds that they will be practising in that particular book.
- Decode the words in the first box.
- Read the tricky words underneath.
- Decode the words in the vocabulary box and talk about their meaning.
- Your child should then be able to read their book without your help.
- If they can't read a word read it to them.
- Talk about the book and celebrate their success.







TIP: *reading record books need to be signed and a comment would be useful against the book that has been read/shared. New books can then be issued.*

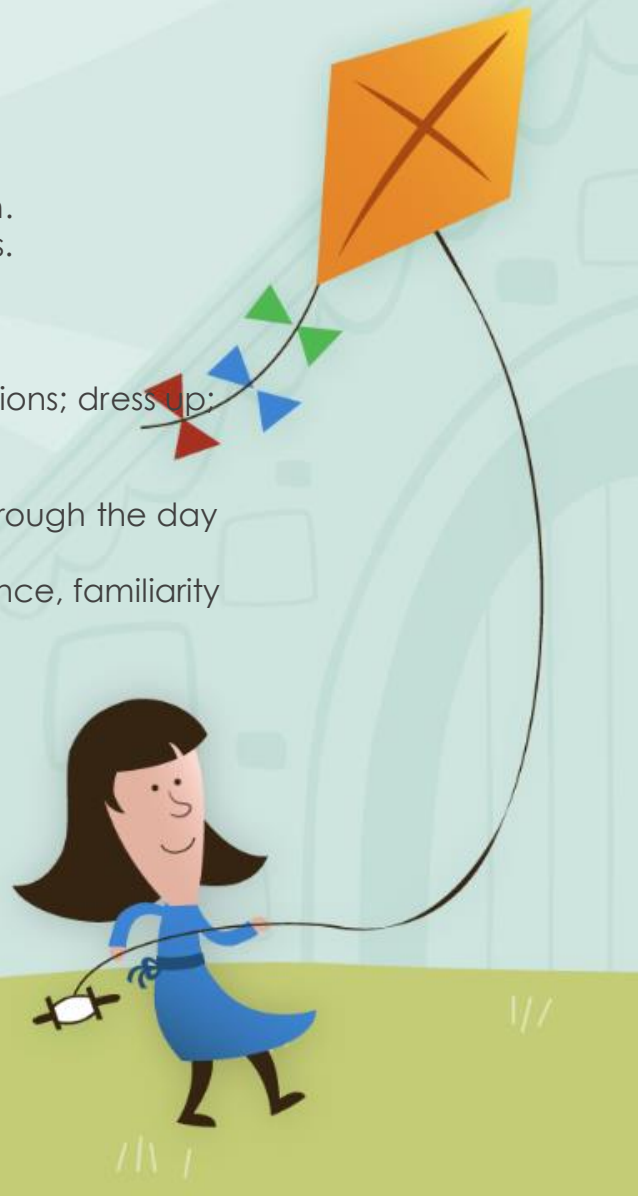
Other ways you can help at home?



- Sing lots of nursery rhymes, action rhymes and counting songs.
- Sing songs that require repetition and response, e.g. 'Old MacDonald'.
- Deliberately leave out words in rhyming stories for your child to fill. Think of other words that rhyme with a word.
- Clap the rhythms, syllables in words.
- Play 'I spy…' using phonemes.
- Practise 'sound talk'. *"Shall we go to the sh-o-p?" "It's time to brush your t-ee-th."*
- Make up silly sentences with initial sounds "Tommy, the ticklish teddy!" "A lovely little lemon!" This is called alliteration.
- Use flashcards or write the sounds down so your child can recognise written sounds as well as hearing them in words.
- Play 'Pairs' - turn over two tricky words at a time trying to find a matching pair.
- Go on a word hunt.
- Draw attention to environmental print and its purpose e.g. warning signs, tickets, menus, logos.
- Engage your child in the whole book and have fun together! Use silly voices; act things out using toys, puppets, actions; dress up; make up new stories with similar characters!
- Make up your own stories together!
- Explain the meaning of new words to develop your child's vocabulary. Repeat and consolidate new vocabulary through the day and in other contexts.
- Children love to hear and read their favourite books. Remember reading books more than once, develops confidence, familiarity and understanding and encourages children to retell stories in their own words.







Our Workshop Resources







