

Our Approach To Teaching Phonics

2019-2020



Lilycroft Primary School

At Lilycroft Primary School, we follow the DfE 'Letters and Sounds' programme for teaching phonics in school. This is a systematic synthetic phonics programme. Children are taught to read letters or groups of letters by saying the sound(s) they represent. Children can then start to read words by blending the sound together to make a word. Children are taught to apply the skill of segmenting words into phonemes to spell and that blending and segmenting is a reversible process.

In Reception, Years One and Two, we do this through a 20-30 minute teaching session per day, alongside integrating phonics in cross curricular activities throughout the day and throughout the areas of classroom provision.

We work through six phases from Reception to Year Two. Phonics teaching continues in Year Three and beyond for children who have been identified as needing additional phonics teaching.

'Letters and Sounds' consists of six phases.

Teachers must refer to the full 'Letters & Sounds' guidance. A copy of this can be viewed online at: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/190599/Letters_and_Sounds_-_DFES-00281-2007.pdf

Phase One- This begins in the very early years and never stops! The activities develop children's speaking and listening skills, phonological awareness, rhyming and oral blending (merging sounds together) and segmenting (sounding out).

Phase Two - This begins in the first few weeks in Reception. The purpose of Phase Two is to move from oral blending and segmenting to blending and segmenting with graphemes (written phonemes). The children will learn 19 letters and should be able to read and write words with three sounds e.g. cat, tip, rock.

Phase Three- This continues in Reception. The children will learn 25 more sounds including digraphs (two letters that make one sound e.g. sh) and trigraphs (three letters that make one sound e.g. air). The children will continue to practise how to blend and segment along with learning to read and write two syllable words. The children also begin to learn the letter names. Children should have learnt all 44 phonemes and graphemes and be secure in Phase Three by the time they leave Reception.

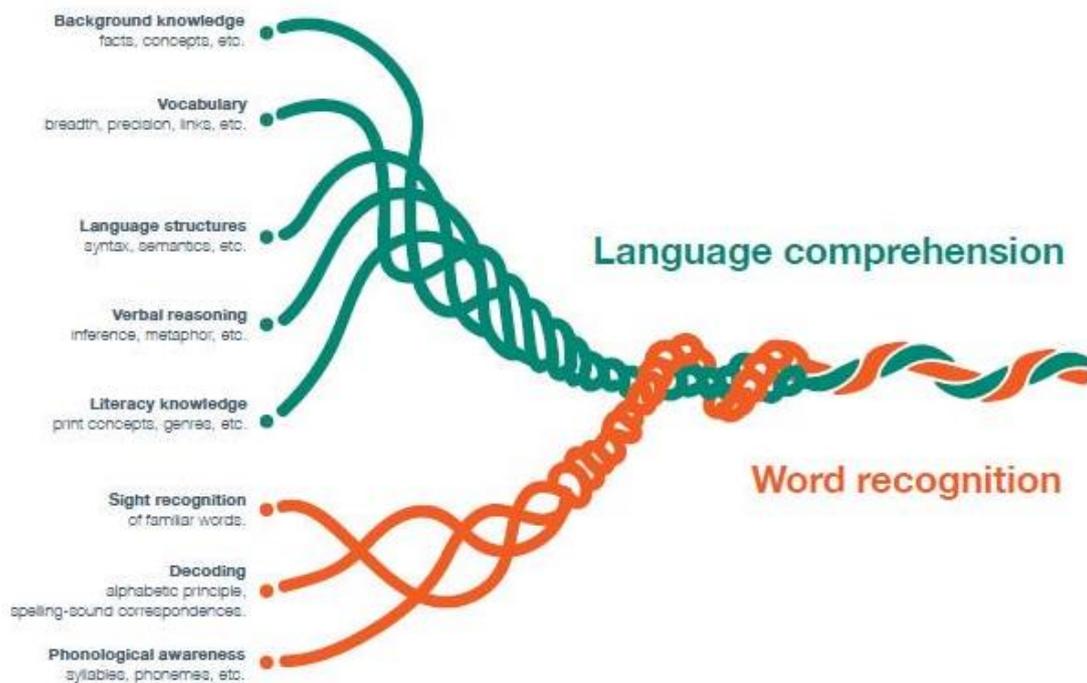
Phase Four- If children are ready they will begin Phase Four towards the end of the Reception year or at the beginning of their time in Year One. The purpose of Phase Four is to practise children's knowledge of sounds and to read and spell words with adjacent consonants that contain four sounds e.g. skip, boost, float.

Phase Five- This begins at the start of Autumn Term Two in Year One, after the children have consolidated Phase Three and worked through Phase Four. Children will learn alternative ways of spelling the sounds e.g. 'oi' in coin and 'oy' in boy. They will practise spelling a range of two and three syllable words phonetically. Children should be Phase Six ready by the time they leave Year One.

Phase Six- This begins in the first few weeks of Year Two. Children apply their phonic knowledge to recognise and spell complex words. They read increasing numbers of high frequency words independently and automatically. They also learn spelling conventions e.g. when using past tense, adding suffixes - ended.

*Please note that the teaching of spelling does not stop after Year Two. It continues rigorously throughout school.

Teaching Reading



Scarborough's Reading Rope (2001)

Our vision is for the children in our school to become enthusiastic, independent and reflective readers that grow to foster a real love of reading.

A child's reading journey begins with "learning to read" and moves on to "reading to learn".

Phonics is a big part of a bigger picture. It is a necessary tool in learning to read and is interwoven with other aspects of literacy as can be demonstrated by Scarborough's Reading Rope (see above).

We are committed to teaching our children to become skilled readers who develop a comprehensive understanding of words, language and texts as they move through school. We provide a literacy rich curriculum and promote a love of reading.

Terminology

It is vital that staff use consistent terminology (and actions) with children so that children do not become confused and their working memory is at optimum use.

Term	Definition	Term used with children
Pure sounds	The correct pronunciation of phonemes so that children can more easily blend to read words.	Pure sounds
Phoneme	The smallest unit of sound in a word.	Phoneme Say "It's a sound".
Grapheme	A written letter or group of letters representing one sound e.g. t, ck, igh	Grapheme Say "See the graphemes and say the sounds".
Digraph	A combination of two letters representing one sound, as in 'ai' and 'ph'.	Digraph show 2 fingers then 1 finger
Consonant digraph	Two consonants which make one sound e.g. sh, ch, th	Consonant digraph show 2 fingers then 1 finger
Vowel digraph	A digraph in which at least one of the letters is a vowel e.g. oa, ar	Vowel digraph show 2 fingers then 1 finger
Split digraph	A digraph that is split by a consonant. Usually a long vowel sound e.g. 'a-e' (cake), u-e (rule).	Split digraph marked with a curve under the split digraph 
Trigraph	Three letters which together make one sound e.g. igh	Trigraph show 3 fingers then 1 finger
Blending	The process of using phonics for reading. Children identify and synthesise the phonemes in order to make a word. E.g. s-n-a-p, blended together, reads snap.	Blending Say- "look at it, sound it & blend it". robot arms to sound out / rub hands together to blend sound buttons 
Segmenting	Separating words into their constituent phonemes to spell.	Segmenting use 'phoneme fingers' to segment the word
Adjacent consonant	Two or three letters making two or three sounds. E.g. the first three letters of strap are adjacent consonants. Previously known as the consonant cluster.	n/a
Nonsense words	Tool to assess phonetic decoding - shows that the word hasn't been memorised or learnt by sight.	Alien words fingers on head as antennae
High frequency words	The most common words used in English. A combination of phonetically decodable words and common exception words.	High frequency words
Common exception words	Words in which the English spelling code works in an unusual or uncommon way e.g. the, you, was.	Tricky words
cvc, ccvcc	The abbreviations used for consonant- vowel consonant and consonant- consonant-vowel - consonant-consonant words, used to describe the order of sounds.	n/a
Morphology	An understanding that prefixes and suffixes can be added or taken away to change the meaning of a word. Can make spelling of complex words or spelling exceptions easier for students to remember. It enables children to identify root words and build word families effectively.	Morphology
Etymology	Study of history of words.	Etymology

A Consistent Approach

Fidelity to the 'Letters and Sounds' programme is imperative. Everyone at Lilycroft Primary School follows the same programme, using the same terminology and actions, and tracks progress in the same way to ensure pupils do not fall through any gaps. Consistency is key so that children are given a clear approach from all staff and year groups so that children retain learning and working memory is not overloaded. The following methods should be used:

Concept	Method
Lesson structure	Staff follow the four-part lesson sequence: revisit, teach, practise, apply
Introducing a new sound	The 'hear it, say it, see it' approach is used. Children are encouraged to listen and repeat the phoneme (sound) several times before seeing the grapheme (letter).
When blending words	Children are encouraged to look at the word, sound out each letter using robot arms and blend the sounds together using the blending action (two hands rubbed together). Sound buttons can be used for additional support.
When segmenting words	Children are encouraged to use 'phoneme fingers' to segment the sounds in a word.
Sound buttons	Buttons for single sounds and longer buttons for digraphs and trigraphs. <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; align-items: center; margin-top: 10px;"> <div style="text-align: center;"> <p>cat</p>  </div> <div style="text-align: center;"> <p>boat</p>  </div> <div style="text-align: center;"> <p>frame</p>  </div> </div>
Pure sounds	All staff must pronounce the letters in the correct way e.g. 'mmm' not 'muh'. This makes it easier for children to blend words to read.
Frequency and duration	Each class in Reception and Key Stage One will have a 20-30 minute phonics lesson per day.
Tricky words	Include teaching of these in the weekly consolidation session on Fridays. Following Letters & Sounds At least sets 1-6 in Reception Sets 7-14 in Year One

Tricky words

Sight recognition of non decodable common exception words (tricky words) is taught explicitly as part of the phonics programme.

Children begin to learn tricky words in Reception.

There are seventeen tricky words to learn in Reception - **I, no, go, to, the, he, she, we, me, be, was, you, my, her, they, all, are**

If children have not learnt to read these words by the time they leave Reception they will continue to learn these in Year One.

The rest are to learn in Key Stage One - **some, one, said, come, do, so, were, when, have, there, out, like, little, what, 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**

It is expected that the children will have learnt to read all the tricky words by the end of Year One.

When children have learnt to read all the words by heart they are encouraged to learn to spell the words by heart.

Some tricky words have mnemonics- consistent through school.

e.g. **was**- **w**orms **a**re **s**limy

one - **o**range **n**osed **e**lephants

said- **s**illy **a**nts **i**n **d**resses

when- has a **h**en

what- has a **h**at

because- **b**ig **e**lephants **c**an **a**lways **u**nderstand **s**mall **e**lephants

who- **w**orms **h**ave **o**ranges

people - **p**eople **e**at **o**melettes **p**eople **l**ike **e**ggs

laughed - **l**augh **a**nd **u**nicorns **g**et **h**appy **e**very **d**ay

once - **o**range **n**osed **c**razy **e**lephants

any - **a** nice **y**o-yo

could/would/should- **o**ld **u**ncle **l**oves **d**ancing

Decodable Books

Children practise early reading with fully decodable books that:

- are matched to phonic knowledge and which do not require use of alternative strategies.
- are closely matched to 'Letters and Sounds'. Staff allocate books according to the Letters & Sounds phase that children are working at.
- are decodable at the child's current level and not mixed with non-decodable books for independent reading.
- include a small number of 'tricky words' which have been taught.
- are continued in the progressive sequence of 'Letters and Sounds' phases until a child can confidently decode words involving most common grapheme representations of all phonemes.

Once a child can read with fluency they will access a book appropriate to their reading level from the class library. This usually begins towards the end of Year Two and continues until Year Six.

Parents are encouraged to complete a Home Reading Record and make comments on their child's reading.

Supporting Resources

Guidance and support can be found in the 'Letters and Sounds' document - link on the website.

If you would like further support and information please contact Leanne Holdsworth, Phonics leader.