

# *Letters and Sounds*

*Phonics Based Programme*

Milborne St Andrew First School



# What is phonics ?

- ▶ Phonics teaching involves teaching children the sounds of letters (not just the names) and how to segment and blend them together to make words, e.g. c - a - t can be blended to make cat



# Phonics consists of :

- ▶ \* identifying sounds in spoken words e.g. sat, pin
- ▶ \* recognising the common spelling of each phoneme e.g. sh, ay
- ▶ \* blending words into phonemes for reading eg ship
- ▶ \* segmenting words into phonemes for spelling e.g. sh-i-p.



# How it works ..

- ▶ In Reception the Letters and Sounds Programme is implemented 5 days per week for a 20 minute block each morning.
- ▶ Currently Key Stage 1 (Years 1 – 2) are involved 4 days per week and Key Stage 2 (Years 3 – 4) 3 days per week for a 20 minute block each morning .
- ▶ Children are grouped according to individual needs and work in different areas of the school with Teachers and Teaching Assistants.



# Letters and Sounds Phases

- ▶ Phonics and reading skills are taught in six distinct phases
- ▶ These phases are set out in the Letters and Sounds Program.
- ▶ Phases are taught sequentially.



# Overview of Phases

- ▶ Phase 1 : Rhyming , keeping rhythms and start to relate letter sounds to words e.g. b is for bag      **Preschool/ Reception**
- ▶ Phase 2 : Learn initial letters sounds and build 3 letters words      **Reception**
- ▶ Phase 3 : Learn all 44 phonemes and blend sounds together to read words  
**Reception**
- ▶ Phase 4 : Blend consonants together to read difficult words e.g. blue , grab  
**Reception/ Year 1**
- ▶ Phase 5 : Learn how to spell letter sounds in more than one way e.g rain, day , make      **Year 1/ 2**
- ▶ Phase 6 : Learn how to spell word specific spelling e.g turned , beautiful      **Year 2**



# The spoken language

- From a very early age, children develop an awareness of the different sounds in our spoken language(s).
- They learn how to use their voices:
  - to make contact with you
  - to let you know what they need
  - to show how they are feeling
- As parents and carers, you best understand your child's communications; you are key in helping them to develop their speaking and listening skills.





# How can you help?

- Provide your child with lots of different opportunities to speak and listen with others:
  - Preparing meals
  - Tidying up
  - Putting shopping away
  - Getting ready to go out
- Switch off the TV, radio and mobile phones
- Show you are interested in their conversation
- Read stories
- Use puppets and toys





# The importance of speech sounds

- As children grow older, they will begin to understand the different sounds in languages, and join in with stories, songs, rhymes by clapping, stamping and skipping.
- This is an important stage, as the ears are beginning to tune into the important sounds they can hear, and discriminate.
- Over time, your child will begin to distinguish between different speech sounds (phonemes), and they will match sounds to letters (graphemes). This is called phonic knowledge.





# Phase 1

- Your child will be learning to:
  - Have fun with sounds
  - Listen carefully
  - Develop their vocabulary
  - Speak confidently to you, other adults and children
  - Tune into sounds
  - Listen and remember sounds
  - Talk about sounds
  - Understand that spoken words are made up of different sounds





# Phase 1

- Phase 1 is made up of 7 different areas:
  - Environmental sounds
  - Instrumental sounds
  - Body percussion
  - Rhythm and rhyme
  - Alliteration (words that begin with the same sound)
  - Voice sounds
  - Oral blending and segmenting





# Phase 2

- This is begun in the Reception year
- Children begin to formally learn the sounds in the English language
- Phonics sessions are fun sessions involving lots of speaking, listening and games





# Not all children will learn at the same rate!

- Your child should be supported *whatever* their rate of learning
- There is a very close link between *difficulty with phonics* and *hearing*, so if your child is making progress more slowly than expected, it is worth having their hearing checked.





# Sound talk

- The separate sounds (phonemes) are spoken aloud, in order, all through the word, and are then merged together into the whole word.
- The merging is called **blending**, and is a vital skill for reading.
- Eg: c-a-t = cat





# Sound talk

- Children will also learn to do this the other way round. Eg: cat = c-a-t
- The whole word is spoken aloud and then broken up into its sounds (phonemes) in order, through the word.
- This is called **segmenting**, and is a vital skill for spelling.





# Learning the phonemes

- Children will learn the phonemes (sounds) for a number of letters (graphemes)
- They will also learn that some phonemes are made up of more than one letter,  
eg: /ll/ as in b-e-ll
- We use actions to help to remember the phonemes





# Saying the sounds

- Your child will be taught how to pronounce the sounds (phonemes) correctly to make blending easier
- Sounds should be sustained where possible (eg, sss, mmm, fff)
- If not, 'uh' sounds after consonants should be reduced where possible (eg, try to avoid saying 'b-uh', 'c-uh')





# VC and CVC words

- C = consonant, V = vowel
- VC words are those consisting of a vowel and then a consonant, eg: *at, in, up*
- CVC words follow the pattern consonant, vowel, consonant, eg: *cat, dog, pet*
- Words such as *tick* or *bell* also count as CVC words; although they contain four letters, they only have three sounds





# Making words

- Now the children will be *seeing* letters and words, as well as hearing them
- They will be shown how to make whole words by:
  - pushing magnetic letters together to form little words
  - Reading little words on the board
  - Breaking up words into individual sounds





# Tricky words

- Your child will also learn several tricky words; those that cannot be sounded out
- Eg: **the, to, I, go, no**





# Sequence of each session

- ▶ 1. RECALL - Revisit and review previous sound and word building
- ▶ 2. TEACH - A new phonic skill
- ▶ 3. PRACTISE - the new skill
- ▶ 4. APPLY - in a new situation e.g reading or writing in a sentence



# How you can help at home

- ▶ Encourage and model correct pronunciation of sounds
- ▶ Reading daily to your child OR with your child OR listen to them read
- ▶ Encourage sounding out as one strategy when they are having trouble reading a word
- ▶ PRAISE all attempts



# Useful Websites

- [www.topmarks.co.uk](http://www.topmarks.co.uk)

Search engine designed for schools where you can find a wide range of resources and activities with a phonics focus.

- [www.espresso.co.uk](http://www.espresso.co.uk)

Has a wide selection of games and activities for all letters and sounds elements. You will need a password to enter the site but you can get this from us at school.

- [www.bbc.co.uk/school/wordsandpictures](http://www.bbc.co.uk/school/wordsandpictures)

- Games with some printable activities too particularly for the phase 4 blends.



# Useful Websites

- [www.phonicsplay.co.uk/freeIndex](http://www.phonicsplay.co.uk/freeIndex)

Lots of free games for each phase, especially good for reading non-words. You can also subscribe to access more games.

- [www.letters-and-sounds.com](http://www.letters-and-sounds.com)

Includes further information on each phase as well as printable resources and links to online games.

- [www.ictgames.com/literacy](http://www.ictgames.com/literacy)

Wide range of games for sounds, words and rhyming.



# Useful definitions

- ▶ PHONEME - smallest unit of sound
- ▶ GRAPHEME - written representation of the sound
- ▶ DIGRAPH - two letters making one sound e.g ee
- ▶ TRIGRAPH - three letters making one sound e.g igh
- ▶ SPLIT DIGRAPH - where two letters are not adjacent e.g a-e as in have
- ▶ PHONEME FRAME – sound boxes in which the word can be segmented to aid spelling
- ▶ SOUND BUTTONS – a spot underneath each sound in a word to aid blending for reading (tap each sound button with finger and they slide to say word).