



Saltaire Primary School
- OUR LEARNING JOURNEY -

Our approach to teaching Phonics

A guide for all staff & parents

March 2019

At Saltaire 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 (synthesising) the sound together to make a word. Children are taught to apply the skill of segmenting (breaking up) words into phonemes to spell and that blending and segmenting is a

reversible process. We do this through a 20 minute teaching session per day in Reception, Years One and Two alongside integrating phonics in cross curricular activities throughout the day.

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

Letters and Sounds consists of six phases to be delivered from Nursery to Year 2. Teachers must refer to the full 'Letters & Sounds' guidance. A hardcopy is available in school or can be downloaded 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 (pre school) 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). We try to foster children's curiosity in print and letter shapes

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- 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 by the end of Autumn term in Reception.

Phase Four- Continues in Reception to the end of the Reception year. 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. Children should be Phase Five ready by the time they leave Reception.

Phase Five- This begins in the first few weeks of Year One. Children will learn alternative ways of spelling the sounds e.g 'oi' in coin and 'oy' in boy. Children 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, add suffixes - ended.

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

Teaching Reading

Decoding (D) x Language Comprehension (LC) = Reading Comprehension (RC)

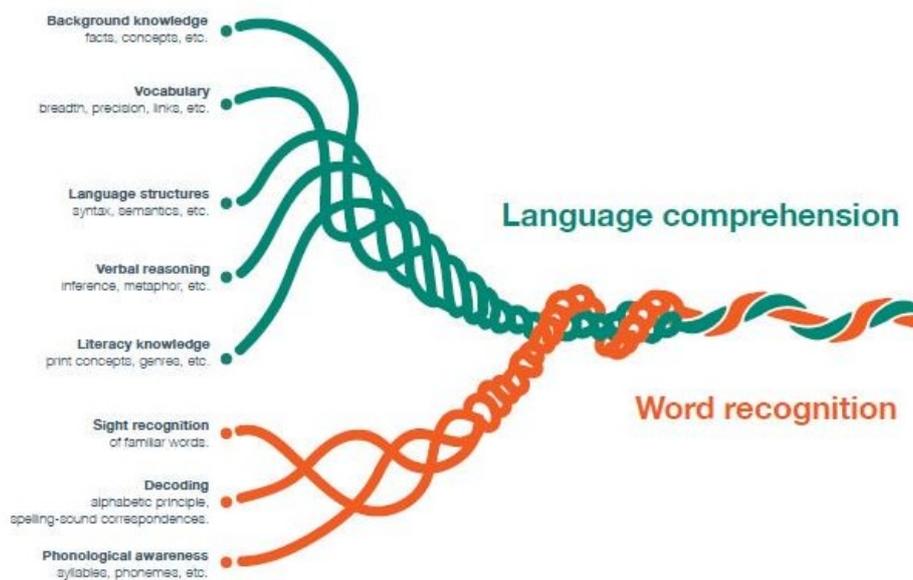
'The Simple View of Reading formula' Gough & Tunmer 1986

Synthetic Phonics has been proven to be effective in teaching decoding to read as long as the programme is followed with rigour and fidelity.

‘The use of a systematic synthetic phonics programme was shown to give children a flying start with their reading, writing and spelling, it was effective for catch-up, it reduced special educational needs across the schools and it enabled higher numbers of children to transfer to their secondary schools well equipped to access the curriculum. Children were reading more fluently which encouraged a love of books.’

‘The Effects of a Systematic Synthetic Phonics Programme on Reading, Writing and Spelling’ Marlynne Grant, 2014

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 below). Language comprehension teaching takes place in English lessons and through the use of ‘core’ texts in Reception and KS1. We provide a literacy rich curriculum and promote a love of reading. Please see the school Reading guidance for further information.



Scarborough’s reading rope (2001)

Terminology

It is crucial that staff use consistent terminology 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. | Sound or phoneme |
| Grapheme | A written letter or group of letters | Grapheme |

| | | |
|------------------------|--|--|
| | representing one sound e.g. t, ck, igh | <i>Say 'See the graphemes and say the sounds'.</i> |
| Digraph | A combination of two letters representing one sound, as in 'ai' and 'ph'. | digraph |
| Consonant digraph | Two consonants which make one sound e.g. sh, ch, th | Consonant digraph (From Year One) |
| Vowel digraph | A digraph in which at least one of the letters is a vowel e.g. oa, ar | Vowel digraph (From Year One) |
| 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 |
| 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 <i>Say-' look at it, sound it & blend it.'</i> |
| Segmenting | Separating words into their constituent phonemes to spell. | Segmenting |
| 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 <i>Action- fingers on head as antennae</i> |
| 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 |

Consistent approach

Fidelity to the 'Letters and Sounds' programme is imperative. Everyone in the school follows the same programme, using the same terms 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. If teachers need support materials these can be found at phonics play or in the 'Letters & Sounds' folder on the S drive. |
| Introducing a new sound | Children encouraged to listen and repeat several times. Children are shown the letter with an action to accompany the new sound and also listen to a song. |
| When blending words | look at it, sound it and blend it. |
| When segmenting words | Robot arms- phonics fingers |
| Sound buttons | Buttons for single sounds and longer buttons for digraphs and trigraphs. cat boat frame ●●● ●●● ●●● |
| 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. For a demonstration see: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EYx1CyDMZSc |
| 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 'practise and apply' section of the phonics lesson. 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. Parents are also encouraged to help their children learn these and we provide activities to use at home to support this.

Once children have learnt to read the most common 'tricky' words by heart they receive a certificate in assembly.

Children begin to learn tricky words in Reception. These are sent home in sets of five words at a time to learn. There are 14 sets in total. If children have not learnt to read these words by the time they leave Reception they will continue to learn these in Year 1. It is expected that the children will have learnt to read all the tricky words by the end of Year 1. 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. could/would/should- oh you lucky duck

what- has a hat

when- has a hen

said- silly ants in dresses

because- big elephants can actually understand small elephants

they- they had eggs yesterday

with- worms ignore terrible hedgehogs

was- worms are slimy

who- worms have oranges

Assessment

Formative assessment should be occurring in daily phonics sessions and children should be given appropriate challenge at the correct phonics level. Children are not set in groups and challenge should be flexible. Children who are falling behind should be quickly identified and strategies put in place to ensure they catch up.

Summative assessment using the 'Letters and Sounds' assessment booklet (found on teachers s drive) should be used termly and this should be used to inform planning and raise any concerns with senior leaders.

Phonics screening practise tests should occur at the end of the Autumn term in Year 1 and again at the end of Spring 2. The results of these will be discussed at Pupil progress meetings. Phonics screening practise test for the first 20 words should also be completed at the end of Reception.

Assessment booklets and phonics trackers should be handed up to the next teacher when a child moves year groups.

Handwriting

Correct orientation of letters should be taught each time a new grapheme is introduced. Correct letter formation should be encouraged when children are undertaking writing activities as part of the phonics lesson. Additional handwriting exercises should also take place.

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 must allocate books according to Letters & Sounds Phase children are working at rather than the old colour band system.
- 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 be put on the 'Accelerated Reader' scheme. This usually begins in Year 2 and continues until Year 6.

Supporting Resources

Guidance and support can be found in the 'Letters and Sounds' document.

Further resources and assessment information can be found on the secure teacher drive in the 'Letters and Sounds' folder.

Specific phonics resources and games can be found in the KS1 meeting room which have been organised in phases and have a signing out sheet.

We have a 'Phonics play' subscription <https://www.phonicsplay.co.uk>

The login details are:

If you would like further support and information please see Rachel Abbott, phonics leader.