



# Phonics workshop Reception

Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> October 2025



# What are we going to cover?

- Terminology
- Phase 2 and phase 3 sounds- examples and pronunciation
- Different stages of learning to read
- How you can support your child at home
- Questions



# End of year expectations:

## **Comprehension ELG**

- - Demonstrate understanding of what has been read to them by retelling stories and narratives using their own words and recently introduced vocabulary;
- - Anticipate – where appropriate – key events in stories;
- - Use and understand recently introduced vocabulary during discussions about stories, non-fiction, rhymes and poems and during role-play.

## **Word Reading ELG**

- - Say a sound for each letter in the alphabet and at least 10 digraphs;
- - Read words consistent with their phonic knowledge by sound-blending;
- - Read aloud simple sentences and books that are consistent with their phonic knowledge, including some common exception words

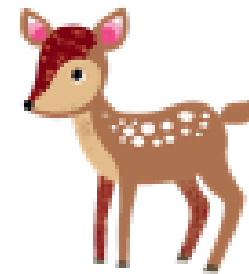
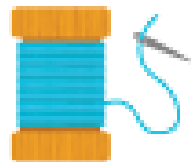
## **Writing ELG**

- - Write recognisable letters, most of which are correctly formed;
- - Spell words by identifying sounds in them and representing the sounds with a letter or letters;
- - Write simple phrases and sentences that can be read by others.

## What is Phonics?

A method of teaching beginners to read and pronounce words by learning to associate letters or letter groups with the sounds they represent.

There are 44 main sounds in the English Language. Each sound is represented by a grapheme (the written representation of a sound).



# What is Phonics?

**Phoneme:** the smallest single identifiable sound in a word.  
For example, in the word 'cat' there are three phonemes c/a/t.

**Grapheme:** the written representation of a sound.

**Digraph:** two letters making one sound. For example, /sh/ in the word 'shop'.

**Trigraph:** three letters making one sound. For example, /igh/ in the word 'night'.

**Split digraph:** two vowel letters split but are split by one or more consonants. For example, /a-e/ in the word 'cake'.



CVC word- consonant,  
vowel, consonant  
E.G. cat/dog/sat/pin

CVCC word-  
consonant, vowel,  
consonant, consonant  
E.G. best/ help

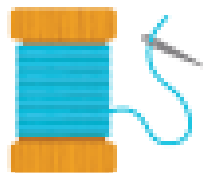
CCVC word- consonant,  
consonant, vowel,  
consonant  
E.G. frog/drip



## What is ELS?

Essential Letters and Sounds (ELS) is our chosen phonics programme

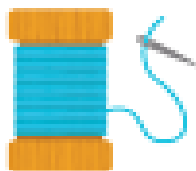
Children will experience the joy of books and language whilst rapidly acquiring the skills they need to become fluent independent readers and writers.





## How do we teach phonics?

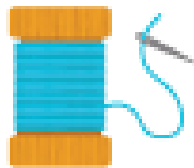
- We use a simple, consistent approach to teaching phonics.
- We have mnemonics and rhymes to support learning and recall
- We teach phonics every single day from the first days of Reception





## How do we teach phonics?

- Phonics throughout the day to review new sounds & graphemes taught
- Lots of opportunities for oral blending- /c/ /oa/ /t/
- We teach the 'code' for reading, alongside teaching vocabulary.





# Phase 2 and 3 phonemes

## How do we teach phonics?

**ELS** Essential Letters and Sounds

### Teach

These objects all have the /ng/ sound in.

ng



ng .. ng .. ring  
ng .. ng .. wing  
ng .. ng .. sing



We teach a new sound 4 days a week. The fifth day is seen as a review day.

We also teach and review 'harder to read and spell' words. These are words which are NOT decodable. We cannot sound these out, we have to learn to recognise these by sight.

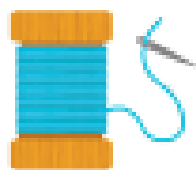
# How do we teach phonics?

Practice

Quit activity

Read the word. Click on the icon to reveal the picture.

net

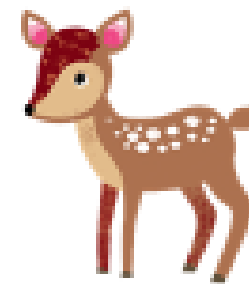
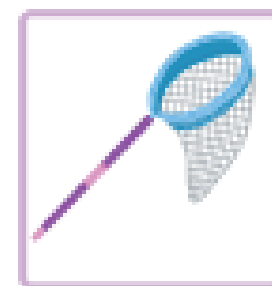


Practice

Quit activity

Read the word. Click on the icon to reveal the picture.

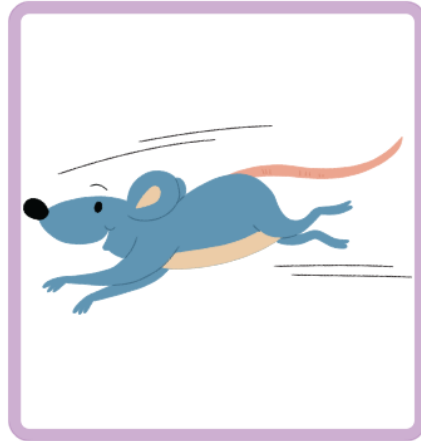
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# How do we teach phonics?

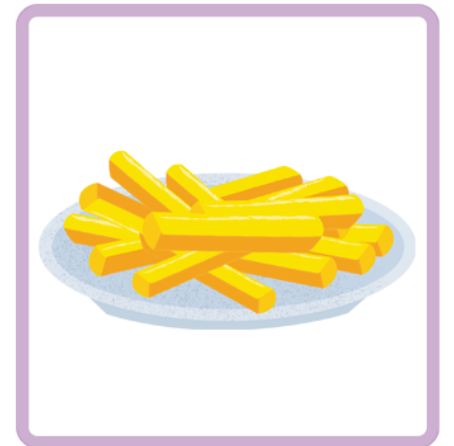
Read the sentence. Click on the icon to reveal the picture.

The rat ran.



Read the sentence. Click on the icon to reveal the picture.

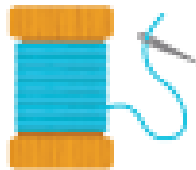
He had hot chips  
at lunch.





# ELS Progression

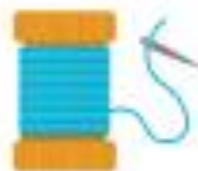
Phase 1*	Phase 2	Phase 3**
<p><i>Nursery/Pre-School</i></p> <p>Seven aspects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Environmental sounds</li> <li>• Instrumental sounds</li> <li>• Body percussion</li> <li>• Rhythm and rhyme</li> <li>• Alliteration</li> <li>• Voice sounds</li> <li>• Oral blending</li> </ul>	<p><i>Reception Autumn 1</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Oral blending</li> <li>• Sounding out and blending with 23 new grapheme-phoneme correspondences (GPCs)</li> <li>• 12 new harder to read and spell (HRS) words</li> </ul>	<p><i>Reception Autumn 2, Spring 1 and Spring 2</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Oral blending</li> <li>• Sounding out and blending with 29 new GPCs</li> <li>• 32 new HRS words</li> <li>• Revision of Phase 2</li> </ul>





# ELS Progression

Phase 4**	Phase 5 including alternatives and lesser-known GPCs	Beyond Phase 5
<p>Reception Summer 1</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Oral blending</li> <li>• No new GPCs</li> <li>• No new HRS words</li> <li>• Word structures – cvcc, ccvc, cvcc, ccvcc, ccvcc</li> <li>• Suffixes</li> <li>• Revision of Phase 2 and Phase 3</li> </ul>	<p>Reception Summer 2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduction to Phase 5 for reading</li> <li>• 20 new GPCs</li> <li>• 16 new HRS words</li> </ul> <p>Year 1 Autumn 1 and 2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Revision of previously taught Phase 5 GPCs</li> <li>• 2 new GPCs</li> <li>• 9 new HRS words</li> </ul> <p>Year 1 Spring 1 and 2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Alternative spellings for previously taught sounds</li> <li>• 49 new GPCs</li> <li>• 4 new HRS words</li> <li>• Oral blending</li> <li>• Revision of Phase 2, Phase 3 and Phase 4</li> </ul>	<p>Year 1 Summer, Year 2 and Key Stage 2</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• With ELS, phonics teaching does not stop at the end of Year 1, but continues as children move through the school, with links being made between their GPC knowledge and spelling</li> <li>• Revision of all previously taught GPCs for reading and spelling</li> <li>• Wider reading, spelling and writing curriculum</li> </ul>



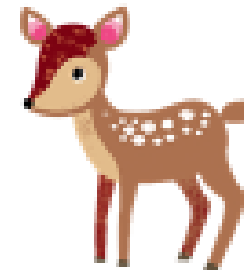
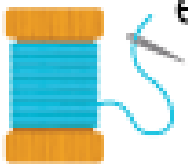
## Supporting your child with reading at home

- Children are only reading from books that are entirely decodable
- Your child should be able to read their book confidently
- We only use pure sounds when decoding words (no 'uh' after the sound)
- We want them to practise reading their book 4 times across the week working on these skills:

decode

fluency

expression



Decodable- they should recognise every sound in the book.

When we read individually with your child we read the next set, which should be more challenging, in order to assess them. If they have learnt the next set of sounds we will move them on.

We do whole class teaching every day so all children are getting taught and exposed to the new sounds.

Individual intervention is given if needed.

**Please write in their reading records.**

## Pronouncing pure sounds

**ELS** Essential  
Letters and  
Sounds

We must use pure sounds when we are pronouncing the sounds and supporting children in reading words.

**c a t**

**not**

**cuh a tuh**

If we mispronounce these sounds we will make reading harder for our children.

There are videos for this on our school website where you can hear the correct pronunciation of the sounds.



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**Click on this link to watch the pronunciation videos. You can find these on the school website:**

**English**

Home >> Parents >> Useful Information >> English





# How to support your child with reading:

- Consider which stage your child is at.
- It is important not to push your child on until they have grasped the earlier set of skills- this can lead to reluctant and demotivated readers.
- Phase 1/oral blending skills are essential skills that children **must** have before they can read words independently.
- Consider the time of day and length of time.
- Promote reading for enjoyment. Comprehension and discussion is so important.

# How to support your child with reading:



## Stage 1: Oral blending

### Option 1:

You read the story and pick a word on each page to orally sound out and blend for your child. You then say the whole word. Ask the children to repeat back with you.

Adult: c-a-t, cat, let's do that together

Adult and child: c-a-t cat.

### Option 2:

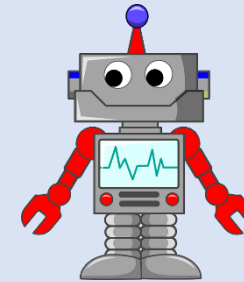
You sound out the word- they blend it together

Adult: c-a-t?

Child: cat

- Point to the letters when doing this to help them make the connection between the phoneme and grapheme.

\* If your child is still grasping oral blending play lots of games to promote this. (see website)



Try using robot arms and blending hands as this may help your child.

# How to support your child with reading:



**Stage 2: Blending for reading** <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vqvqMtSNswo>

## **Option 1:**

You read the story and pick an easy CVC word for your child to try and sound out. They may be able to recognise the sounds and say them but need support to blend.

Child: c-a-t tap? at?

Adult: Let's try that together.

Adult and child repeat together: c-a-t

Adult: cat.

## **Option 2:**

Your child recognises the sounds and can blend them together independently.

Please note if your child has just learnt to blend you may need to build up the amount of words/pages you expect them to read. This can vary depending on the book. A couple of pages is plenty at this stage. It is better to do small amounts every day to be getting regular practise at this skill.

## **Option 3:**

Once your child is confidently blending all words in a book we can encourage them to sound out in their head and say the whole word aloud. This technique will develop their fluency. This is also a good opportunity to talk about and explore expression.

# Digraph/trigraph spotting:

**Digraph:** two letters making one sound. For example, /sh/ in the word 'shop'.

**Trigraph:** three letters making one sound. For example, /igh/ in the word 'night'.

**Split digraph:** two vowel letters split but are split by one or more consonants. For example, /a-e/ in the word 'cake'.



I had fish and chips for my dinner.

The goat and the sheep are on the farm.

It is too dark at night.



Harder to read and spell word examples:



I	the
no	put
of	is

to	go
into	pull
as	his

push	was
her	my
you	they

# Comprehension:



## Comprehension activities

Story time:

\* Read daily with your child and talk about the pictures

- What is happening?
- How are the characters feeling?
- Can they predict what might happen next?
- Can they suggest an alternative ending?
- Can they talk about the structure of the story and recall information? What happens at the beginning/middle/end?
- Have you read a story like this before? Can you make comparisons and relate it to your own experiences?

\* Have fun making up your own stories!

Think about the following:

WHERE- What is the setting for your story?

WHO- Who are the main characters? Is there a good/bad character?

WHAT? What is going to happen? What is the problem? E.g. someone gets lost/comes across an evil character/finds treasure

END- How will your story end/be resolved?

\*Vocabulary

- What does this word mean? Can you use it in a sentence?
- Can you make an action to show what it means?



Visit your local library to enjoy reading together!



Try out some story telling books to help you make up your own stories!



# Other tips:



- When reading story books, involve your child- can they spot any harder to read and spell words? Can they spot any of the digraphs we have learnt? Or are there any words in the book they could have a go at reading? (This makes them feel very grown up!)
- Comprehension
- Little and often. Aim for 3-4 times a week, even if this is one page.
- **Please write in the reading record book.**
- Keep it fun- remember to talk about the story, characters, make predictions, suggest alternative endings.
- Use the environment to promote reading: signs, shops, menu's.

# Fine and gross motor activities



**Gross motor skills: involve the large muscles in the arms, legs and torso**

Examples: running, climbing, jumping, ball skills such as throwing and kicking

**Fine motor skills: involve activities which use the small muscles in the hands and wrists**

Examples: using tweezers, buttoning, cutting with scissors, pinching and rolling playdough, large scale mark making and painting. If mark making, practise making anti-clockwise movements and retracing vertical lines.

It is essential that children develop and strengthen these muscles through these activities *before* being able to effectively hold a pencil and form letters.



## Fine motor activities:



Threading, pinching,  
pouring, squeezing, pushing



# Mark making and writing



- Make it fun and give it a purpose!



# What we do at school to promote these skills?



- Climbing
- Digging
- Building
- Mark making opportunities in all areas
- Line dancing
- Busy fingers

Have a discussion on your tables about what sort of things you do/could do at home or outside of school to support their fine and gross motor skills?



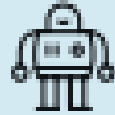
# Example of the progression of writing:



 <p>1. Pictures</p>	 <p>2. Random Scribbling</p>	 <p>3. Scribble Writing (Written in linear fashion)</p>	 <p>4. Symbols That Represent Letters</p>
 <p>5. Random Letters (No relationship between sounds of letters and what the child is trying to say.)</p>	 <p>6. Letter Strings (Progresses from left to right and top to bottom when the child "reads" his writing.)</p>	 <p>7. Letter Groups (The groups have spaces in between to resemble words.)</p>	 <p>8. Environmental Print (Child copies print found in the room, often without knowing what the words are.)</p>
<p>Thehcarr (The horse can run.)</p> <p>9. Beginning Sounds (Child begins to write simple sentences using sight words and just the beginning sounds of words.)</p>	<p>We wn to the s (We went to the store.)</p> <p>10. Early Inventive Spelling (Includes the same elements as the previous level, but with more consonant sounds represented and spaces between words.)</p>	<p>To daye i wot to play withf the white board and the shapex and I won to play with My feh (Today I want to play with the white board and the shapex, and I want to play with my friend.)</p> <p>11. Inventive Spelling (Has the same elements as the previous level, but with more sounds per word written, including the vowels. Some conventional spelling patterns may appear.)</p>	<p>One day I saw my Frid it was Israel and Antonio and They got lost I fad Them. The end (One day, I saw my friends. It was Israel and Antonio and they got lost. I found them. The end.)</p> <p>12. Transitional Writing (Includes all of the previous elements, plus some real spellings of words with silent letters and other spelling patterns. Punctuation is beginning to appear.)</p>



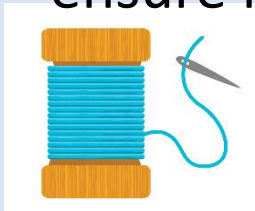
# Supporting your child with writing at home



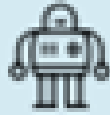
You can use the spelling sequence with your children at home to support them with their writing.

Let's try this with the word: rain

We also practise saying our sentences before we write them to make sure we write the sentence we have planned and to ensure it makes sense!



## Supporting your child with writing at home



### Segmenting and writing longer words

As your child develops their segmenting skills they will begin trying to spell longer words. These words do not have to be spelt accurately, as long as they are phonetically plausible.

unicorn  
planet



# Examples of writing in EYFS:

## Context

Ben is in the role play area which is a hospital

## Observation

a packet of tablets  
and a can of medicine.  
This is all.

A packet of tablets and medicine and a can of medicine. This is all.



I went to  
London I saw dinosaur  
bones I went to  
the museum

I went to London I  
saw dinosaur bones  
I went to the  
museum.

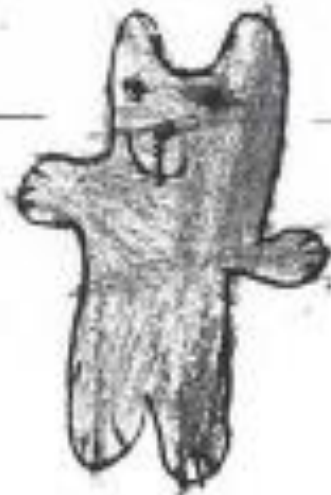
# LOST HONEY BEAR

He is fluffy and

goldish yellow. He looks

old and a bit dirty with a

sewn on nose.



about  
bear-  
posters  
and v

LOST Honey Bear  
He is fluffy and  
goldish yellow. He looks  
old and a bit dirty with  
a sewn on nose.



Caterpillars eat leaves. They have lots of legs. He makes a cocoon.

It is crawling  
and is moving  
and is crawling  
everywhere and  
it's got five legs.

is crawling  
is moving  
is crawling  
walk  
is got five



It is crawling  
and is moving  
and is crawling  
everywhere and  
it's got five legs.

caterpillars eat

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# Resources for parents

- Sound cards-amazon [https://www.amazon.co.uk/Essential-Letters-Sounds-Grapheme-Reception/dp/1382032919/ref=asc\\_df\\_1382032919/?tag=googshopuk-21&linkCode=df0&hvadid=606577469952&hvpos=&hvnetw=g&hvrnd=6034962102326414368&hvpone=&hvptwo=&hvqmt=&hvdev=c&hvdvcmdl=&hvlocint=&hvlocphy=1006512&hvtargid=pla-1793108378283&psc=1&th=1&psc=1](https://www.amazon.co.uk/Essential-Letters-Sounds-Grapheme-Reception/dp/1382032919/ref=asc_df_1382032919/?tag=googshopuk-21&linkCode=df0&hvadid=606577469952&hvpos=&hvnetw=g&hvrnd=6034962102326414368&hvpone=&hvptwo=&hvqmt=&hvdev=c&hvdvcmdl=&hvlocint=&hvlocphy=1006512&hvtargid=pla-1793108378283&psc=1&th=1&psc=1)
- Phase 3 and Phase 5 phonics sheet
- Harder to Read and Spell word overview
- Comprehension sheet
- 'Top Tips' page on the website
- Website- ELS videos

# Questions?



EYFS Transition  
Feedback Questionnaire:

