

# Letters and Sounds

The teaching of phonics at



**Godmanchester Community  
Academy**

**A guide to how we teach reading and writing in  
the Early Years Foundation Stage**

## Reading

**At Godmanchester Community Academy and we want to foster a love of reading.**

**Books stimulate imagination** - when you share a book with your child allow your child to talk about the book. Can they relate it to their own experiences? How would they feel if they were the main character?

**Favourite books** - when the children select their own books don't be surprised if your child brings the same book home more than once. Use it as an opportunity to encourage him/her to read it and give lots of praise for the words they can read or pictures they can describe.

**Within your child's ability** - sharing the book with you should give your child a sense of achievement it should not be a laborious chore.

**Allow the children to hear/observe you reading. Modelling is extremely beneficial for them.**

## Meaning



When we read, the meaning of the story helps us to work out unknown words.

When reading with or to your child-

Look at and talk about the pictures - what do you think the story is about, how do you think the characters are feeling, where is the story set, if you could name the characters what would they be called? Therefore lots of 'book talk' about the story is key to helping you understand fully the books that they share with you.

Wordless books - Initially we use wordless books, this will allow your child to use their imagination fully to tell the story of the book, remember the story can be different every time they read it.

Worded books - When your child progresses to worded books, if they 'sound out' a word make them re-read the sentence after they have finished it so that the meaning of the sentence isn't lost.

## Visual clues

- **Visual clues** - are very important, please don't cover the pictures. It is fine for your child to look at the picture to help them make the sentence they are reading meaningful.
- **Finger point** - when reading worded books, encourage your child to finger point and follow their finger with their eyes.

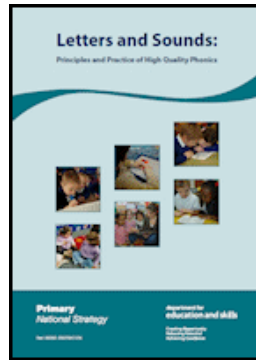
Often we hear the statement, "My child can read the book without looking at it!" If a child does this he/she is not reading.

- If this happens to your child - point to different words on the page does your child know them?
- Copy a sentence from the book onto paper and cut it into words. Ask your child to rearrange the sentence so that it makes sense.

## **Letters and Sounds**

Information on the letters and sounds programme:

- Phonics and reading skills are taught in 6 distinct phases.
- These phases are set out in the Letters and Sounds document.
- It has been proven to be a very successful tool in helping children to read and write.



Please use the following link to find the video clip on you tube.

This video will allow you to check the pronunciation of sounds.

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BqhXUW\\_v-1s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BqhXUW_v-1s)

or you can (search - phonics pronunciation letters and sounds)

The separate phonics phases:

### Phase 1

Phase one was introduced at pre-school and we continue to build on this in Foundation. It includes:



- The awareness of rhyme
- Sounds in the environment
- Experimenting with making sounds

The key elements of phase 1 are ongoing and the skills acquired will continue to be developed in KS1 and KS2. The phase is split into 7 aspects which are:

Environmental, instrumental sounds, body percussion, rhythm and rhyme, alliteration, voice sounds and oral blending and segmenting.

## Phase 2

- Understanding that words are constructed from phonemes and represented by graphemes.
- In this phase we will begin to work on GPC - grapheme/phoneme correspondence.

Phonemes within phase 2:

All sounds are taught across the autumn term in the following sequence-

**Set 1:** s, a, t, p

**Set 2:** i, n, m, d

**Set 3:** g, o, c, k

**Set 4:** ck, e, u, r

**Set 5:** h, b, f, ff, l, ll, ss

The correct pronunciation of each phoneme is vital because if children start to say them wrongly they will find blending difficult.

When each sound is introduced we say the sound and the letter name, we discuss words that begin with that sound and we practise forming the letter correctly - in the air, in lentils, on the palm of our hand, all before trying it on paper or a whiteboard.

When each set of letters has been introduced the children will be encouraged to use their knowledge of the letters and sounds to blend the letters together to read simple three letter words. CVC (consonant-vowel-consonant) words e.g sat - s-a-t or pin - p-i-n

Within phase 2 we also introduce a set of tricky and high frequency words -

Tricky words: I, to, go, no, into, the

High frequency words include - as, an, and, if, it, off, big



### Phase 3

Phase 3 introduces new phonemes and follows the same teaching pattern as phase 2. We will introduce the new sets of sounds, looking at words using them and will practise segmenting and blending to read and write.

Phase 3 will be introduced during the Spring term.

**Set 6:** j, v, w, x

**Set 7:** y, z, zz, qu

**Consonant digraphs:** ch, sh, th, ng

**Vowel digraphs:** ai, ee, igh, oa, oo, ar, or, ur, ow, oi, ear, air, ure, er

The following tricky words (words that can't be decoded) are introduced during phase 3:

- he
- she
- we
- me
- be
- was
- you
- they
- all
- are
- my
- her

## Phase 4

Phase 4 is the final phase introduced during the Foundation Stage.

In phase 4 no new sounds are introduced. By this stage the children should be confident when recognising and using the taught phonemes and should be comfortable when blending to read and segmenting to write.

The main aim of this phase is to consolidate the children's knowledge and to help them to read and spell words that have adjacent consonants such as trap, string and milk.

There are further tricky words introduced during phase 4 which are:

- said
- have
- like
- so
- do
- some
- come
- were
- there
- little
- one
- when
- out
- what

## Reading and your child's school book

- Please give your child lots of reading opportunities not just school books - own story books, road names, at the supermarket, signs and labels etc.
- Children will bring home three books each week in a zip bag. Please send the zip bags back each Monday so that we can change the books over. From time to time they may also bring other resources home for their folders e.g. phonics flashcards
- Teachers will change the book level when the child shows signs in class that they are ready. Remember this is a reinforcement activity as a follow up to school reading. It will allow your child to further succeed and build up their confidence when reading.
- We have an open door policy - just send a note or phone and we will see you as soon as possible if you have any concerns.
- Reading should be a special time with parents.
- We need to work in a partnership with you, your child will need your support and help at home as well as ours at school.

## How you can help your child at home

- . Read as regularly as you can with your child, read a range of texts so they experience different fiction and also non fiction books.
- . As well as reading your child's school reading book, read aloud to them too. Children will benefit from hearing you read out loud - hearing different voices and expression and the skills required to bring a story to life.
- . Practise saying the sounds together - talking about words that start with each phoneme.
- . Read words in the environment when out and about together.
- . Practise the formation of the taught phonemes - talking about where we start when writing the letter, do we take our pencil off the page to form it correctly?
- . Encourage the children to say the sounds out loud and to segment and blend unknown words to help themselves work it out with more independence.

Games to play - I-spy, musical statues, place phonemes around the room- on furniture etc;

Supermarket visits- Please get me the fruit beginning with.....  
(particular phoneme)

Useful websites that you can use to help

[www.phonicsplay.co.uk](http://www.phonicsplay.co.uk) - has a range of fun games to help the children to practise

[www.letters-and-sounds.com](http://www.letters-and-sounds.com) - lists each of the phonics phases, there are resources to use and it also has links to fun phonics games.

## Glossary

(Useful terms we may use during our phonics teaching)

. **Phoneme** - the smallest unit of sound. There are approximately 44 phonemes in the English language (it depends on different accents) Phonemes can be put together to make words.

. **Grapheme** - How the phoneme is written. Graphemes can be made up of 1 letter e.g. 'p', 2 letters 'ch', 3 letters 'igh' or four letters 'ough'.

. **Digraph** - a grapheme containing two letters that make just one sound (phoneme) e.g. ow, th.

. **Trigraph** - a grapheme containing three letters that make just one sound (phoneme) igh, oar.

. **GPC** - grapheme phoneme correspondence. Being able to match a phoneme to a grapheme and vice versa.

. **Blending** - this is where we use our knowledge of GPC. Working out which phoneme each grapheme represents and then merging these phonemes together to read a word.

. **Segmenting** - This means hearing a whole word and splitting it up into the separate phonemes that make it in order to spell the word. Children will do this orally as well to hear the sounds to write.

Key terms we may use at school -

**Dot and Dash** - this is a way we show the children the individual phonemes/graphemes within a word. We dot for one letter/1 sound and dash for 2 or more letters but still one sound.

**Sound buttons** - sound buttons are dots that are drawn under each sound. We pretend to press the sound button and children say the sound when we are segmenting a word out loud to read.

**Robot talk/finger talk** - we may do a robot arm action or show the number of fingers that match the number of individual sounds within a word.

**Tricky words** - Words that can't be sounded out - we say 'we just have to learn them' e.g. the, no, was.

**High frequency words** - Words that occur frequently in written texts e.g. and, in, off.