

Introduction

At Holy Cross Catholic Primary School we understand how important it is to work in partnership with families to provide children with the best possible start to learning. One of the most important things you can do with your child is to read with them at home to help them become effective and confident readers. To support you to do this we want to share with you how we teach children to read using phonics (letters and sounds) to decode and read words.

The aim of this booklet is to help you to understand the Letters and Sounds programme we use and to give you some fun ideas and activities that you can use at home to help you support your child's learning.

Let's Get Started!

Some definitions:

Phoneme: the letter sound

Grapheme: the letter shape

The children need to develop knowledge of both.

A letter consists of a sound; a shape and it has a capital form and a lower case form.

The letter sound is the first thing the children need to recognise.

Aa 

- Only use capital letters for names, and when the children are ready at the beginning of sentences.
- Use lower case letters for all other writing.

Handwriting Guide

a b c d e f g h i

j k l m n o p q

r s t u v w x y z

Letters and Sounds

We are following the Government guidance with regards to 6 phases of phonics teaching. This 6 phase programme focuses on high quality phonics work. The intention is to “...equip children who are 5 with the phonic knowledge and skills they need to become fluent readers by the age of 7.” By the end of Year Two children should have completed phase 6. The phase the children are working on is assessed by the teacher and appropriate teaching is then planned for.

For more information look online at:

<http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20110812183657/>

Some useful websites:

<http://www.letters-and-sounds.com/>

<http://mrthorne.com/home/phonics/letters-and-sounds/>

http://www.ictgames.com/phonemePopLS_v2.html

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/cbeebies/grownups/the-alphablocks-guide-to-phonics>

Phase 1

Children explore and experiment with sounds, differentiate between sounds and become familiar with rhyme, rhythm and alliteration, (from birth to the end of Nursery).

There are seven aspects:

- Environmental sounds
- Instrumental sounds
 - Body percussion
 - Rhythm and rhyme
 - Alliteration
 - Voice sounds
- Oral segmenting and blending

Activities to support Phase 1 at home:

- Go for a sound walk inside or outside your home. What different sounds can you hear? What do you think is making that sound?
- Sing nursery rhymes. Change the words in the rhyme to see if the children notice.
- Scavenger hunt: find as many things as they can that start with the sound 'a'
- Robot talk! For example, can you p-a-t your back?
h-o-p on one leg etc
- Enjoy singing songs together, listening to music and reading books!

Phase 2

Children are introduced to grapheme/phoneme (letter/sound) correspondence from the beginning of Reception class. Children know that words are constructed from phonemes and that phonemes are represented by graphemes. They have a knowledge of a small selection of common consonants and vowels (beginning with s,a,t,p,i,n) and begin to put these together to read and spell CVC (consonant, vowel, consonant) words.

In Phase 2, letters and their sounds are introduced one at a time. A set of letters are taught each week, 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

Alongside this children are introduced to tricky words. These are the irregular words. This means that phonics cannot be applied to the reading and spelling of these words.

The tricky words introduced in Phase 2 are:

to	the	no	go	I
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Activities to support Phase 2 at home:

- Practise the phoneme sounds. You could hide different letters and when the children find them they have to make the sound
- When sharing books with children model how to sound out the simple CVC words e.g. sat/top
- Involve your child when you are doing everyday writing e.g. writing a message, birthday card and a shopping list. This will help them to develop awareness that writing is meaningful and purposeful.

Phase 3

The purpose of this phase is to teach children, one grapheme for each of the 44 phonemes, in order to read and spell simple regular words.

Children link sounds to letters, naming and sounding the letters of the alphabet. They hear and say sounds in the order they occur in the word and read simple words by blending the phonemes from left to right. They recognise common digraphs (e.g. 2 letters together making 1 sound like sh) and read some high frequency words.

By the time they reach Phase 3, children will already be able to blend and segment words containing the 19 letters taught in Phase 2.

Over the twelve weeks which Phase 3 is expected to last, 25 new graphemes are introduced (one at a time).

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 tricky words introduced in Phase 3 are:

we	me	be	was	no	go
my	you	they	her	all	are

Activities to support Phase 3 at home:

- Listen to your child reading books appropriate to their level. The teacher will send home books matched to their current reading level.
- <https://www.oxfordowl.co.uk/>
- Practise the consonant and vowel digraph sounds, these are tricky and can take some time to learn
- Praise your child when they have made attempts to use these sounds in their own writing.

Phase 4

The purpose of this phase is to teach children to read and spell words containing adjacent consonants, (end of Reception).

Children will be able to blend and segment adjacent consonants in words and apply this skill when reading and spelling.

Children will move from CVC words (pot, sheep) to CVCC words (pots) and CCVC words (spin).

This phase consolidates all the children have learnt in the previous phases.

The tricky words introduced in Phase 4 are:

said	so	she	he	have	like	some
come	were	there	little	one	they	all
are	do	when	out	what	my	her

By this point children would be expected to be reading CVC words at speed along with the tricky words from the previous phases. It is important that children are taught that blending is only used when a word is unfamiliar.

Phase 5

The purpose of this phase is for children to broaden their knowledge of graphemes and phonemes for use in reading and spelling. They will learn new graphemes and alternative pronunciations for these and graphemes they already know, where relevant. Some of the alternatives will already have been encountered in the high-frequency words that have been taught.

Children will become quicker at recognising graphemes of more than one letter in words and at blending the phonemes they represent. When spelling words they will learn to choose the appropriate graphemes to represent phonemes and begin to build word-specific knowledge of the spellings of words.

New graphemes for reading:

ay - day	oy - boy	wh - when	a-e - make	ou - out	ir - girl
ph - photo	e-e - these	ie - tie	ue - blue	ew - new	i-e - like
ea - eat	aw - saw	oe - toe	o-e - home	au - Paul	u-e - rule

The tricky words introduced in Phase 5 are:

oh	their	people	Mr	Mrs
looked	called	asked	water	where
who	again	though	through	work
mouse	many	laughed	because	different
any	eyes	friends	once	please

Phase 6

By the beginning of Phase Six, children should know most of the common grapheme–phoneme correspondences (GPCs). They should be able to read hundreds of words, doing this in three ways: reading the words automatically if they are very familiar; decoding them quickly and silently because their sounding and blending routine is now well established; decoding them aloud. Children’s spelling should be phonemically accurate. During this phase, children become fluent readers and increasingly accurate spellers

Reading

To become successful readers, children must understand what they read. They need to learn a range of comprehension strategies and should be encouraged to reflect upon their own

understanding and learning. Many of the texts children read at this stage will be story books, through which they will be developing an understanding of the author's ideas, plot development and characterisation. It is important that children are also provided with opportunities to read a range of non-fiction texts, which require a different set of strategies. In reading simple poems, children need to adapt to and explore the effects of poetic language, continuing to develop their understanding of rhythm, rhyme and alliteration.

Links with handwriting

Developing a fluent joined style is an important part of learning to spell and the teaching of spelling and handwriting should be closely linked.

Knowledge of the spelling system

In Phase Six children still need to segment words into phonemes to spell them, but they also learn that good spelling involves choosing the right grapheme from several possibilities. In some cases, word-specific spellings (e.g. sea/see; goal/pole/bowl/soul; zoo/ clue/flew/you) simply have to be learned. It is important to spend time learning common words with rare or irregular spellings (e.g. they, there, said) as the quantity children write increases and without correction they may practise incorrect spellings that are later difficult to put right.