

# Letters and Sounds



# Parents' Guide

# Overview

'Letters & Sounds' is the government programme for teaching phonics and high frequency words.

It is split into 6 phases:

*Phase 1: Children learn rhymes, keep rhythms and start to relate letter sounds to (starting in Nursery) words. E.g. b for bag.*

*Phase 2: Children learn initial letter sounds and build 3 letter words.*

*Phase 3: Children learn all 44 phonemes and blend sounds to read and write words*

*Phase 4: Children blend consonants together to read difficult words e.g. blue, grab.*

*Phase 5: Children learn how to spell letter sounds in more than one way e.g. rain, day, make.*

*Phase 6: Children learn how to spell word specific spellings. E.g. turned, beautiful, Shopping.*

The aim of this booklet is to give you a clear picture of how we approach the teaching of phonics and word recognition and how, as a parent or carer, you can support and encourage your child at home. Please note there is a glossary which explains some of the terminology.

# Glossary

Here's some of the technical vocabulary explained.

**Blend(ing)** - to draw individual sounds together to pronounce a word, e.g. s-n-a-p.

**CVC** - Consonant - Vowel - Consonant (*cat*)

**CCVC** - Consonant - Consonant - Vowel - Consonant (*pram*)

**Grapheme** - Written representation of the sounds

**Phoneme** - Smallest unit of speech sounds sh/i/p

**Segment(ing)** - to split up a word into its individual phonemes in order to spell it.

**Suffix(es)** - a unit of letters such as, 'ed' 'ing' that are added to a word to change its meaning e.g. play'ed'

# More 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.html](http://www.ictgames.com/literacy.html)

a great selection of games that link well with games in Letters and Sounds.

# Phase 1

This paves the way for systematic learning of phonics and usually starts in nursery or playgroup.

Teachers plan activities that will help children to listen attentively to sounds around them, such as the sounds of their toys and to sounds in spoken language.

Teachers teach a wide range of nursery rhymes and songs. They read good books to and with the children. This helps to increase the number of words they know - their *vocabulary* - and helps them talk confidently about books.

## Things to try at home:-

- Play games like 'I spy'
- Sing songs and rhymes together
- Make a 'junk band' with pots & pans
- Share lots of books together



# Phase 2

In Phase 2, they will also be taught the phonemes (*sounds*) for a number of letters (*graphemes*).

Your child will be taught how to pronounce the sounds (*phonemes*) correctly to make blending easier. Try to avoid saying 'buh', 'cuh' encourage your child to say the pure sound.

s a t p i n m d  
g o c k ck e u r  
h b f ff l ll ss

and be able to read 5 tricky words...

the to I no go

They should be able to **orally blend** (sound talk) cvc words e.g. when you sound out c-a-t, they can tell you the word is cat, and also **orally segment** cvc words e.g. when you say mum, they can pick out the sounds m-u-m.

Spelling is harder than reading. During this phase they will use lots of alternatives to pencil and paper (eg magnetic letters, writing in sand, using paint)

# Useful Websites

Below is a list of websites that can support you and your child with letters and sounds...

[www.educationcity.co.uk](http://www.educationcity.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. (School have log on details)

[www.bbc.co.uk/schools/wordsandpictures/phonics/](http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/wordsandpictures/phonics/)

mix of very good interactive games and worksheets covering most phonic phases. Recommend Sandcastle quiz for phase 3 and 5.

[www.bbc.co.uk/schools/ks1bitesize/literacy/](http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/ks1bitesize/literacy/)

a very good selection of interactive games focussing on phonics and sentence construction. Each is split into medium/hard/really hard and are short and fun.

## Next 200 Common Words cont...

miss	most	cold	park
lived	birds	duck	horse
rabbit	white	coming	he's
river	liked	giant	looks
use	along	plants	dragon
pulled	we're	fly	grow

All of these words and sounds form the basis of reading and writing and if they are known before the children go into key stage 2 then they will greatly benefit.

## Phase 3

The purpose of this phase is to teach 25 graphemes (letters) most of them comprising of two letters (e.g. oa) so the children can represent each of the 42 phonemes (sounds). Your child will continue to blend and segment for reading and spelling (e.g. pool)

j	v	w	x	y	z	zz	qu	ch
jug	van	wig	box	yes	zip	buzz	quit	rich
sh	th	ng	ai	igh	oa	oo	oo	ar
shop	moth	king	rain	high	loaf	look	moon	park
or	ur	ow	oi	ear	air	ure	er	
port	burn	town	boil	hear	pair	pure	hotter	

and 12 more tricky words to read...

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

They should now, also, be able to spell the 5 tricky words from phase 2.

# Phase 4

In Phase 4, children continue to practise previously learned graphemes and phonemes and learn how to read and write:

**CVCC** words: **tent, damp, toast, chimp**

For example, in the word 'toast',

**t** = consonant, **oa** = vowel, **s** = consonant,

**t** = consonant.

and **CCVC** words: **swim, plum, sport, cream, spoon**

For example, in the word 'cream', **c** = consonant,

**r** = consonant, **ea** = vowel, **m** = consonant.

and 14 more tricky words are added too...

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

The children should now be able to write the Phase 3 tricky words. During Phase 4, sounds with adjacent

consonants or initial & final **blends** are taught e.g. **bl, dr, sc, ft, sp**. These can be sounded out but recognising them

because	even	am	before
gran	clothes	tell	key
fun	place	mother	sat
boat	window	sleep	feet
morning	queen	each	book
its	green	different	let
girl	which	inside	run
any	under	hat	snow
air	trees	bad	tea
top	eyes	fell	friends
box	dark	grandad	there's
looking	end	than	best
better	hot	sun	across
gone	hard	floppy	really
wind	wish	eggs	once
please	thing	stopped	ever



## Next 200 Common Words cont...

red	door	right	sea
these	began	boy	animals
never	next	first	work
lots	need	that's	baby
fish	gave	mouse	something
bed	may	still	found
live	say	soon	night
narrator	small	car	couldn't
three	head	king	town
I've	around	every	garden
fast	only	many	laughed
let's	much	suddenly	told
another	great	why	cried
keep	room	last	jumped

## Phase 5

The purpose of this phase is for children to broaden their knowledge of graphemes and phonemes for use in reading and spelling.

ay    ou    ie    oe    ea    oy    ir    ue  
play    soup    tried    goes    heat    boy    shirt    value/  
blue

au    aw    wh    ph    ew    ey  
author    lawn    when/  
who    Phillip    blew    honey

a\_e    e\_e    i\_e    o\_e    u\_e  
same    these    pine    bone    cube

They will learn new graphemes and alternative pronunciations for these and graphemes they already know, where relevant. E.g. the phoneme 'a' can have alternative phonemes: hat/acorn/was

Also, 'y' can have alternative phonemes: yes/by/gym/very

There are many alternatives which the children will investigate during this phase.

# First 100 High Frequency Words

the	and	a	to
said	in	he	I
of	it	was	you
they	on	she	is
for	at	his	but
that	with	all	we
can	are	up	had
my	her	what	there
out	this	have	went
be	like	some	so
not	then	were	go
little	as	no	mum
one	them	do	me

# Next 200 Common Words

water	away	good	want
over	how	did	man
going	where	would	or
took	school	think	home
who	didn't	ran	know
bear	can't	again	cat
long	things	new	after
wanted	eat	everyone	our
two	has	yes	play
take	thought	dog	well
find	more	I'll	round
tree	magic	shouted	us
other	food	fox	through
way	been	stop	must



# Phase 6

In Phase 6, the focus is on learning spelling rules for word endings or **suffixes**.

They learn how words change when you add certain letters. There are 12 different suffixes taught...

The children are also expected to be able to read and write the 'next 200 common words'.

-s	-es	-ing	-ed
-er	-est	-y	-en
-ful	-ly	-ment	-ness

down	dad	big	when
it's	see	looked	very
look	don't	come	will
into	back	from	children
him	Mr	get	just
now	came	oh	about
got	their	people	your
put	could	house	old
too	by	day	made
time	I'm	if	help
Mrs	called	here	off
asked	saw	make	an