

# Hillcrest Primary School - Phonics and Early Reading

A guide for parents and carers in EYFS and KS1 -



## What is synthetic phonics?

Synthetic phonics is a way of teaching reading. Your child will be taught two crucial things when they are learning to read using synthetic phonics:

1. How sounds are represented by written letters. For example, they will be taught that the letter 'm' represents an *mmm* sound.
2. How sounds can be blended together to make words. For example, they will be taught that the sounds of the letters 'c-a-t' blend together to make the word 'cat'.

Your child will be taught to read letters or groups of letters by saying the sound (or sounds) they represent. For example, they will be taught that the letter 'l' sounds like *llll* when we say it. Your child will then start reading by [blending](#) the sounds together to make words. Another word for this kind of blending is **synthesising**.

At school, you will probably hear teachers talking about blending, but you might also hear them talk about [sounding out](#). All these terms refer to the same idea: [synthesising sounds](#).

English is essentially a code that can be encoded (written) and decoded (read). We need to teach children this code with as much emphasis as possible on the rules and regularities of the written language. Written English is recognised as being a complex language. We have 26 letters but 44 phonemes (sounds) in the written language.

## Letters and Sounds Phonics Programme

Letters and Sounds is a government produced synthetic phonics teaching programme. The children are taught in six phases the 44 phonemes and alternative spellings to these graphemes.

### Phase 1 (Nursery and Reception Year)

In this phase, your child will be learning to:

- have fun with sounds

- listen carefully
- develop their vocabulary
- speak confidently to you, other adults and other children
- tune into sounds
- listen and remember sounds
- talk about sounds
- understand that spoken words are made up of different sounds.
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Phase 1 consists of seven interlinking parts:

- environmental sounds
- instrumental sounds
- body percussion
- rhythm and rhyme
- alliteration (words that begin with the same sound)
- voice sounds
- oral blending and segmenting.

Phase 1 is used in nursery. This recognises the central importance of developing speaking and listening skills as a priority. After all, the more words children know and understand, the better equipped they will be to succeed as they move through the school. Phase 1 provides a broad and rich language experience for children. Children engage in worthwhile learning activities that encourage them to talk a lot, to increase their stock of words and to improve their command of dialogue.

## **Phase 2 (Reception Year)**

By the end of Phase 2, the children should:

Know at least 19 sounds and letters (GPC – Grapheme Phoneme Correspondence)

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

Be able to read 5 tricky words...

the to l no go

They should be able to:

Orally blend cvc (consonant, vowel, consonant) words e.g. when you sound out the sounds c-a-t, they can tell you the word is cat, Orally segment cvc words e.g. when you say the word cat, they can pick out the sounds c-a-t.

## Tricky Words

to	the	no	go	l
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### **Phase 3 (Reception Year)**

Phase 3 builds on Phase 2 and by the end of Phase 3, the children should:

Know 25 new sounds and letters (GPC – Grapheme Phoneme Correspondence)...

j v w x y z zz  
qu ch sh th ng ai ee  
igh oa ar or ur oi ow  
er ear air ure oo (book/ boot)

Be able to read 12 more Tricky words...

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. (the, to, l, no, go)
- Blend and read CVC words

Begin to segment and spell CVC words

## Tricky Words

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

### **Phase 4 (Reception Year)**

Phase 4 builds on Phase 2 and 3 with children being able to blend phonemes to read CVC words and segment CVC words for spelling. They will also be able to read two syllable words that are simple and read all the tricky words learnt so far and spell most of them.

Tricky Words:

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

## **Phase 5 (Year 1)**

Children will be taught new graphemes and alternative pronunciations for these graphemes and graphemes they already know. They will begin to learn to choose the appropriate graphemes when spelling. The children will be automatically decoding a large number of words for reading at this point.

New graphemes for reading:

ay	oy	wh	a-e
ou	ir	ph	e-e
ie	ue	ew	i-e
ea	aw	oe	o-e
		au	u-e

Tricky Words:

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

By this phase children should be reading words fluently and no longer blending and segmenting familiar words.

The real focus throughout the phase in Year 1 is to not only learn the new graphemes for reading but also to learn words with alternative spellings for each phoneme.

## **Phase 6 (Year 2)**

In phase 5 children will be reading longer and less familiar texts independently and fluently. It is less crucial that at this point children are now reading to learn and reading for pleasure instead.

Children should be able to read the 300 high frequency words. At this point it is important that comprehension strategies are developed so that children clarify meaning, ask and answer questions about the texts they are reading, explore vocabulary within the text and summarise what they have read.

In spelling children are introduced to the adding of suffixes and how to spell longer words. Throughout the phase children are encouraged to develop strategies for learning spellings.

### **Useful website to support you and your child's journey or early reading:**

What is phonics?

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=42jb6PopZCI>

Phonics – How to pronounce pure sounds

<https://youtu.be/UCI2mu7URBc>

How to blend sounds

<https://youtu.be/vqvqMtSNswo>

Phonics audio guide

[https://cdn.oxfordowl.co.uk/2016/05/05/20/22/32/561/20097\\_content/index.html?id=ae](https://cdn.oxfordowl.co.uk/2016/05/05/20/22/32/561/20097_content/index.html?id=ae)

Reading with your child – Booktrust

<https://www.booktrust.org.uk/books-and-reading/tips-and-advice/reading-tips/>

Oxford Owl Press <http://www.oxfordowl.co.uk>

Wordsforlife.org.uk <http://www.wordsforlife.org.uk/>

A Story For Bedtime [www.astoryforbedtime.com](http://www.astoryforbedtime.com)

BBC Parenting website [www.bbc.co.uk/parenting](http://www.bbc.co.uk/parenting)

Booktrust [www.booktrust.org.uk](http://www.booktrust.org.uk)

The Child Literacy Centre [www.childliteracy.com](http://www.childliteracy.com)

DfES Parents Centre [www.parentscentre.gov.uk](http://www.parentscentre.gov.uk)

Help them read [www.helpthemread.co.uk](http://www.helpthemread.co.uk)

Parent Link [www.parentlink.co.uk](http://www.parentlink.co.uk)

Read Together [www.readtogether.co.uk](http://www.readtogether.co.uk)

Silly Books [www.sillybooks.net](http://www.sillybooks.net)

## **Ways you can support your children at home**

Keep up the conversations, book-sharing and trips to the library.

Look for alphabet books and books of poems and rhymes. Point out letters and simple, familiar words in books and signs.

Help your child read his name or write it with crayons or magnetic letters.

Encourage him/her to tell you stories, to put happenings into a logical order.

Read books and sing songs with rhymes.

Play rhyming games. For instance, as you're reading or singing, stop before a rhyming word and ask your child to fill in the blank.

Join your child in simple activities that involve talking, reading or writing, such as following a recipe or writing a note.

Keep that special time each day for reading aloud together.

Keep sessions short.

Keep sessions relaxed – find a comfortable place where you and your child can settle down

Give lots of praise, progress may not always be fast – children do not always find the skill of reading and understanding easy to grasp

Talk about the book before you begin to read – look at the front cover, and the pictures (if any) and ask your child to think about or even guess what the book may be about.

Ask questions to check your child's understanding e.g. What might happen next? Why did something happen?

Talk about the book afterwards – did your child enjoy it? Why? What was the best bit?

If your child struggles over a particular word, try to find ways to help them remember it e.g. by looking at the 'shape' of the word, or by guessing the word from the meaning of the sentence.

Don't give up on the bedtime story, even if your child is a good reader. The more stories and books your child hears, the more they will want to read.

Be a good model for your children – let them see you reading – anything and everything – newspapers, magazines, catalogues, books etc. – let them know that reading is a valuable skill.

Telling them about a book or story you liked when you were a child. You may still be able to find a copy of it on the internet!

Making up a story or telling them about when you were a child or something that happened to you at school, remember you don't always need a book to tell a good story.

Taking it in turns to read parts of the story.

Telling them one thing you really enjoy about listening to them read.

And don't forget...**PRAISE PRAISE PRAISE!!!!**

### **KEY FACTS:**

Reading increases intellect

Children who enjoy reading are more academically successful

Reading increases vocabulary

Children who read more produce better pieces of writing

Reading improves spelling