

## Phonics: A New Approach

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Over the past few years we have used the popular Read, Write Inc. phonics programme to teach phonics across school. However, we are constantly evaluating our approach to teaching phonics and trying to improve all aspects of our provision. One issue we found both nationally and in our school is that while this old approach has worked well for around 80% of our children, it still leaves around 20% who struggle to enjoy success. As a Senior Leadership Team, we have looked closely at the challenges that face these children and what we can do to ensure that all children can succeed. We have worked closely with our educational psychologist and also considered the varied and rich experiences of knowledgeable staff to create our own synthetic phonics programme which is both exciting and engaging, while also being child friendly.

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### The Four Aspects of Our Daily Phonic Routine

**Each day we teach 4 short, snappy discrete phonic sessions.**

1. The Sound session (15 mins)
2. Formation Session (5-10 mins)
3. Meaningful Context Session (10 mins)
4. Tricky Ten Time (10 mins)

### What happens in each session?

#### 1 The Sound Session

In this session, we are primarily concerned with learning a new sound. We do this through reading exciting and interactive stories that culminate in a character making that sound. We use lots of movement and actions to reinforce this. Once we have the sound we move onto blending that sound into a simple word. After we have read that sound in a few different words, we read it in the context of a simple sentence.

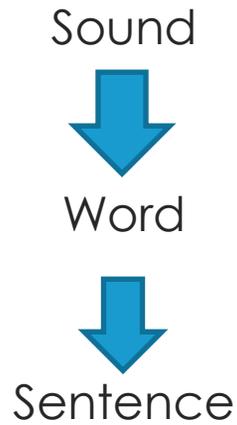


### Tricky Trevor!

This is 'Tricky Trevor'. We tell the children he is not happy that they are learning to read so 'Tricky Trevor' has made a list of words that cannot be easily blended. We call these 'Tricky Words'. We can defeat Tricky Trevor by developing our visual memory skills!

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## **2 The Formation Session**

In this session we focus on the correct formation of letters with emphasis on large-scale movements and muscle memory in the EYFS and clear handwriting development in KS1. We understand how essential this element is as 'practice makes perfect' so we want quality from the very beginning.

## **3 Meaningful Context Session**

In this short session we target specific children in guided reading sessions with books that have a special focus on the sound which the children are working on that day. This helps to take a sometimes abstract concept and place it in a friendly, colourful book, full of familiar and loved characters.

## **4 Tricky Ten Time!**

This session moves away from the familiar phonics lesson and deals with Tricky Words - words that make no sense when you blend them together e.g. said or my. Tricky Trevor has made a list of tricky words to try and catch us out. Luckily we can avoid that trap if we develop our visual memory skills through fun and varied activities each day that will build our memory skills. Each class focusses on learning one Tricky Word to learn each week and from then on, that word becomes a non-negotiable in our writing.

We teach phonics every day and we assess the children regularly to make sure that they are progressing and that we pitch our sessions at the correct level.