

Phonics and reading  
at  
Saint Luke's

# Reading

Learning to read does not start with a reading book and the children do not learn to read by reading books. They learn to read using a structured scheme where it is essential that each stage is mastered before moving on to the next. Our highly trained staff will teach your child to read but we need your help

# What is phonics?

Phonics is a body of knowledge, skills and understanding that is needed in order to master an alphabetic language

The relationships between the sounds of a language and the letters used to represent those sounds - a way of teaching reading and spelling that stresses symbol sound relationships

You have an important part to play. Reading with your child and talking about the stories helps them to understand that words have meaning and this is a crucial part of learning how to become a reader and a writer.

In the EYFS your child will bring home a book for you to read with them. We call this the 'comfy sofa' time as it is when you both snuggle up together and share the book, talking about the characters, what is happening and why.

There are two essential strands that go together in making your child a confident reader; the love and understanding of books and stories, which you are developing in the comfy sofa time.

The other is the ability to decode words, which we teach in the phonics sessions. Every child has a 20 minute session of phonics every day and children are grouped to the phase they are working in.

# Phase 1

- Sound discrimination
- Rhythm & rhyme
- Alliteration
- Voice sounds
- Oral blending & segmenting



# Segmenting and blending

***Blending*** – merging phonemes together to make a word.

***Segmenting*** – identifying the individual phonemes within a word.

Before being introduced to letters it is important that the children can hear the sounds in the words, first the initial and then all the sounds that make up the word.

For example

c- a- t is cat.

Cat is c – a - t .

To move on to phase 2 the children need to be able to blend and segment cvc words independently.

## Ways you can support your child at home

Play **'What do we have in here?'** Put some toys or objects in a bag and pull one out at a time. Emphasise the first sound of the name of the toy or object by repeating it, for example, 'c c c c – car', 'b b b b – box', 'ch ch ch ch – chip'.

Say: 'A **t**all **t**in of **t**omatoes!' 'Tommy, the **t**icklish **t**eddy!' 'A lovely **l**ittle **l**emon!' This is called alliteration. Use names, for example, '**G**urpreet **g**ets the **g**iggles', '**M**ilo **m**akes **m**usic', '**N**aheema's **n**ose'.

Teach them ***'Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled peppers'***.

# Sound-talking

Find real objects around your home that have three phonemes (*sounds*) and practise 'sound talk'. First, just let them listen, then see if they will join in, for example, saying:

- 'I spy a p-e-g – peg.'
- 'I spy a c-u-p – cup.'
- 'Where's your other s-o-ck – sock?'
- 'Simon says – put your hands on your h-ea-d.'
- 'Simon says – touch your ch-i-n.'
- 'Simon says – pick up your b-a-g.'

# Phase 2

- In this phase children will continue practising what they have learned from phase 1, including ‘sound-talk’. They will also be taught the phonemes (*sounds*) for a number of letters (*graphemes*), which phoneme is represented by which grapheme and that a phoneme can be represented by **more than one letter**, for example, /ll/ as in **b-e-ll**. They may be using pictures or hand movements to help them remember these.

Now the children will be *seeing* letters and words, as well as hearing them. They will be shown how to make whole words by pushing magnetic or wooden letters together to form little words, reading little words on the interactive whiteboard and breaking up words into individual sounds, which will help their spelling. These will be simple words made up of two phonemes, for example, *am*, *at*, *it*, or three phonemes, for example, *cat*, *rug*, *sun*, *tick*, *bell*.

# Tricky words

- They will also learn several tricky words: **the, to, I, go, no.**
- Children will still be practising oral blending and segmenting skills daily. They need plenty of practice at doing this.

# Saying the sounds

- Your child will be taught how to pronounce the sounds (*phonemes*) correctly to make blending easier.
- Sounds should be sustained where possible (e.g. sss, fff, mmm) and, where this is not possible, 'uh' sounds after consonants should be reduced as far as possible (e.g. try to avoid saying 'buh', 'cuh'). Teachers help children to look at different letters and say the right sounds for them.
- [https://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player\\_detailpage&v=MOW3pB2KwGA](https://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_detailpage&v=MOW3pB2KwGA)

# Purpose of phase 3

- Teach another 25 sounds and their letters to go with them.
- Learn letter names – the alphabet
- Continue to practise blending and segmenting using new phonemes and two syllable words

## By End of Phase 5

- Children broaden their knowledge of letters and sounds for use in reading and spelling
- Learn new letter combination and alternative pronunciations some of which they will have already encountered in high frequency words
- Learn to choose the appropriate letters when spelling and begin to build up word specific knowledge

# Purpose of phase 6

## **Reading**

Learn some of the rarer sounds

Develop automaticity in reading. In particular, reliably recognising letters as representing one sound.

Children should become fluent readers during this phase and develop a range of comprehension strategies.

# Ways you can support your child at home

## Phases 2 - 6

- **Magnetic letters**
- Buy magnetic letters for your fridge, or for use with a tin tray. Find out which letters have been taught – have fun finding these with your child and place them on the magnetic surface.
- **Making little words together**
- Make little words together, for example, *it, up, am, and, top, dig, run, met, pick*. As you select the letters, say them aloud: '*a-m – am*', '*m-e-t – met*'.
- **Breaking words up**
- Now do it the other way around: read the word, break the word up and move the letters away, saying: '*met – m-e-t*'.

# Don't forget the writing box!

- Spelling is harder than reading words – praise, don't criticise. Little whiteboards and pens, and magic boards, are a good way for children to try out spellings and practise their handwriting.
- Your child might be trying to use letters from their name to write; this shows that they know that writing needs real alphabet letters.
- Make or buy an alphabet poster.

# Getting ready for writing

- Teachers will model how to form letters (*graphemes*) correctly, so that children can eventually acquire a fluent and legible handwriting style. These skills develop over a long period of time. A child's ability to form a letter correctly is a separate skill from phonics. Holding a pen or pencil needs considerable co-ordination and practice in making small movements with hands and fingers.
- In the early phonic phases children can use letter cards or magnetic letters to demonstrate their knowledge of phonics.

# Letters and phonemes

**Letters:** 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

**Phonemes:**

- /b/ /d/ /f/ /g/ /h/ /j/ /k/ /m/ /n/ /p/ /r/ /s/ /t/ /v/ /w/  
/wh/ /y/ /z/ /th/ /th/ /ch/ /sh/ /zh/ /ng/ /a/ /e/ /i/ /o/  
/u/ /ae/ /ee/ /ie/ /oe/ /ue/ /oo/ /ar/ /ur/ /or/ /au/ /er/  
/ow/ /oi/ /air/ /ear/

# Phoneme spotter

My mate is always late. Every day I wait for him at eight on the corner of the estate. It never fails; half an hour he trails along like a snail. Every day I'm waiting for ages. It's not safe and it's starting to frustrate me. It's my fate to be late for school every day. I'm even getting worse grades.

## **ABC To Read Top 10 Tips...Let us help in getting every child in the UK reading well!**

1. Read anywhere and everywhere. While you are out with your children doing daily activities, read signs, letters, numbers and logos –

so they know that writing means something.

2. Don't just read books. Read anything – newspapers, comics, magazines, emails, mobile texts, electronic devices, road signs or even

shop posters.

3. Be positive. Praise your child for trying hard at their reading. Let them know it's all right to make mistakes. Turn off the TV! It's easier

for your child to concentrate if there are no distractions.

4. Children love to copy adults. If you sit down with a book or magazine for ten minutes, it doesn't just give you a break, it sets a

great example for your kids too.

5. Don't read for too long. A good ten minutes is better than a difficult half hour.

- 6. Chat – talk about things you see in the book – who’s in it, what they did and where they went.
- 
- 7. Let them read their favourites. It’s good practice to read the same books over and over again.
- 
- 8. Act it out. Children can act out stories, this will help them to learn to tell stories based on what they’ve read and heard.
- 
- 9. Ways with words. Talk about what different words mean and tell your child the name for anything they don’t know. This is how children
- learn new words and helps them to become better readers.
- 
- 10. Tell stories together. Talking about your day and what you did means sharing time with your child. We tell stories all the time, both
- real and made up and these stories can help your child become a reader and a writer of stories.