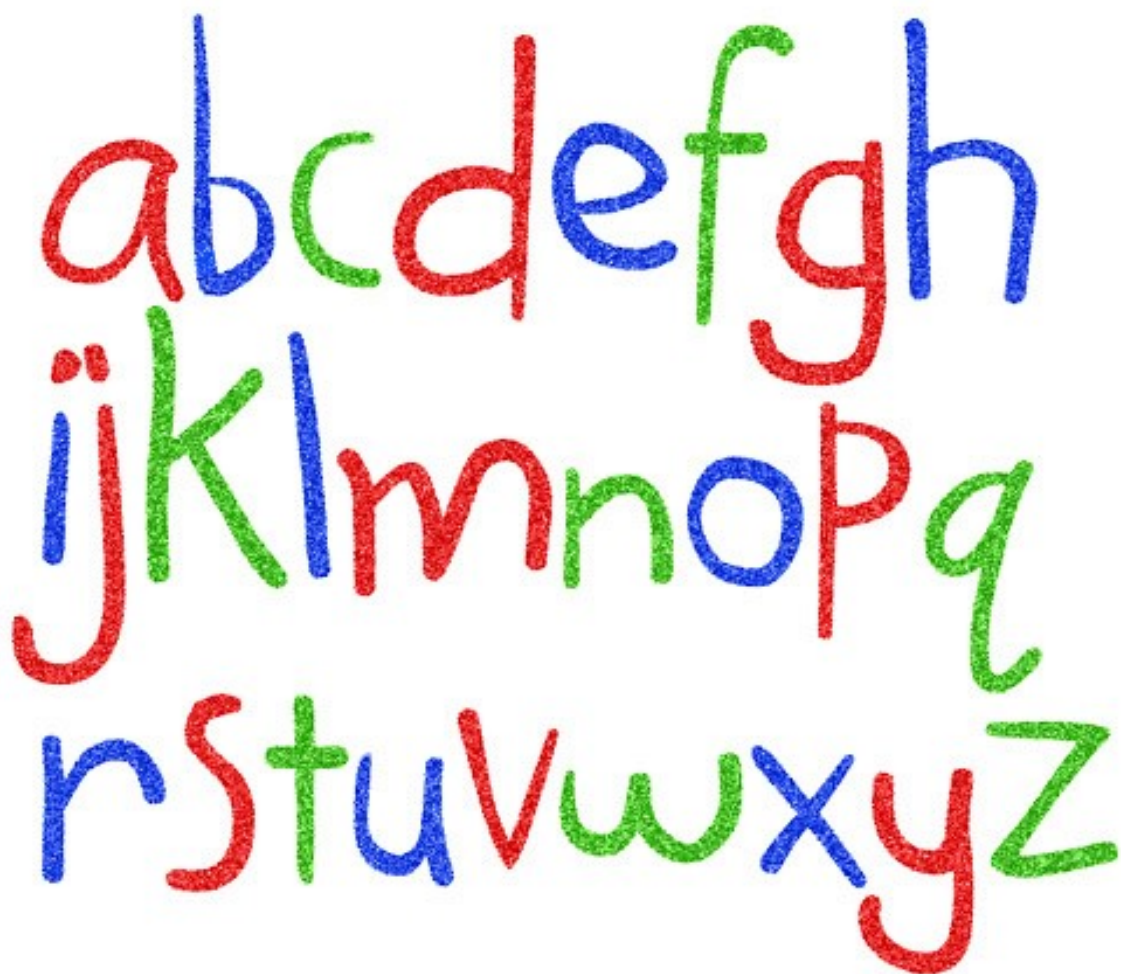


Letters and Sounds

A Guide to Phonics at Ramsgate Holy Trinity C.E. (Aided)

Primary School



What is Letters and Sounds?

Letters and Sounds is a phonics resource published by the Department for Education. It aims to build children's speaking and listening skills, as well as prepare children for learning to read by developing their phonic knowledge and skills. It sets out a detailed and systematic programme for teaching phonics, with the aim of all children becoming fluent readers by the end of Key Stage One. There are six phases altogether. Below is a brief outline of each phase.

Phase 1

This is the beginning of the systematic learning of phonics and takes place in Nurseries and at the very beginning of the Reception year. It falls primarily within the Communication, Language and Literacy area of learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage Curriculum. During this phase, children will be exposed to a language-rich environment. Activities are mainly adult led and build up to teaching children the important basic elements such as oral segmenting and blending.

This phase is divided into seven strands:

Aspect 1: Environmental Sounds

Children are exposed to a variety of sounds in the environment, being encouraged to copy them.

Aspect 2: Instrumental Sounds

Children are encouraged to listen to and make sounds using different instruments.

Aspect 3: Body Percussion

Children use their body to accompany songs and rhymes, for example by clapping and tapping.

Aspect 4: Rhythm and Rhyme

Children are exposed to a range of books and rhymes. Children are encouraged to join in with repeated refrains and rhymes.

Aspect 5: Alliteration

Children are encouraged to listen to initial sounds within words. They are asked to think of other words beginning with the same sound.

Aspect 6: Voice Sounds

Children are asked to create different mouth movements and say a range of sounds.

Aspect 7: Oral Blending and Segmenting

This stage is vital before children are exposed to grapheme to phoneme correspondence (learning which letter represents each sound). It is all done orally and is to encourage children to hear the separate sounds within words.

Oral Blending

At first, the adult will show the children how this is done. The separate sounds (phonemes) are clearly spoken aloud, in order, fairly quickly and are then merged together into the whole word. For example: m-a-n man

The merging of the sounds is called blending. Initially, children may not be able to merge the sounds together independently and they will need frequent practice.

Oral Segmenting

This is the opposite to oral blending. Here, children hear the whole word before it is then broken into separate sounds (phonemes). For example: dog d-o-g

This skill is called segmenting and is vital in order for children be able to spell. Initially, children might only be able to hear the initial sound and they will need frequent practice. At first, the children will just listen and then with time, they will be able to join in, hearing the words that the sounds create.

Phase 2

This phase typically takes place in the Autumn term of Reception and it builds upon the oral blending and segmenting of the previous phase. Children will continue to practise what they have learnt. They will also be taught the grapheme-phoneme representations for the letters listed in the table below. Additionally, they will be taught that phonemes (sounds) can be represented by more than one letter. For example: **fin** and **huff** use the same sound, but this can be represented by 'f' on its own or double 'ff'.

The suggested order for teaching the sounds is as follows, with one set being taught each week.

<u>Set 1</u>	<u>Set 2</u>	<u>Set 3</u>	<u>Set 4</u>	<u>Set 5</u>
s a t p	i n m d	g o c k	ck e u r	h b f,ff l,ll ss

The process of learning a sound includes:

- saying a number of words with the same initial sound, exaggerating it. E.g. ssssnake, ssssssun.
- showing the children the grapheme (letter) that represents the sound.
- flashing a card with the grapheme on one side and a picture on the other. When the children see the grapheme side, they are to say the sound. When they see the picture side, they are to say the word that corresponds to the picture.

Useful Tip

Pure sounds should be used when children are saying sounds. For example, the sound 'f' should be pronounced 'ffff' rather than 'fuh'. A useful video demonstrating these pure sounds can be found on the school's website alongside this leaflet.

Tricky Words

During phase 2, the children will also be exposed to some of the tricky words; these are words that cannot be sounded out. A list of these words can be found at the end of this leaflet.

Phase 3

This phase is usually taught during the Spring and Summer term of Reception. The purpose of this phase is to teach the children the remaining letters of the alphabet and some sounds of which are made up of two or three letters. These are known as digraphs and trigraphs, for example 'ee' as in bee and 'igh' as in night. Children will also continue to practise blending and segmenting simple three letter words such as cat, bat, dog and log. They will also learn more of the tricky words and they will begin to practise spelling these.

The following sounds are taught in Phase 3.

<u>Set 6</u>	<u>Set 7</u>	<u>Digraphs</u>	<u>Trigraphs</u>
j v w x	y z,zz qu	ch sh th ng ai ee oa oo ar or ur ow oi er	igh ear air ure

Words Containing Digraphs and Trigraphs

Below are some examples of the words your child will be reading in this phase:

ship chair cook fork high beard chair rain cow soil sure

Useful Tip

It is important children quickly learn to recognise digraphs and trigraphs as one sound, rather than as separate letters, for example rain should be read as r-ai-n not r-a-i-n. Frequent practice will allow your child to become more fluent.

Phase 4

This phase is taught at the very beginning of Year One and is used to consolidate the sounds already taught. Children are also exposed to adjacent consonants and multisyllabic words, for example 'nt' as in tent, 'st' as in toast, 'pl' as in plum and 'sp' as in spoon. You can support your child's learning at home by using the sounds they have been exposed to to complete some of the following activities:

- practise sounding out a range of words.
- continue using flashcards with the sounds already taught.
- ask your child to make a word using magnetic letters or to write it down.

Phase 5

Typically, phase 5 is taught in Year One. The purpose of this phase is to broaden a child's knowledge of graphemes and phonemes for use in reading and spelling. When spelling words, children will now need to choose the appropriate graphemes to represent phonemes. Listed on the next page are the phase 5 graphemes that will be taught.

Diagraphs

ay ou ie ea oy ir ue aw wh ph
ew oe au

Split digraphs

a-e e-e i-e o-e u-e

Split Digraphs

Split digraphs are also introduced in Phase 5; these are listed below in the table.

a-e

e-e

i -e

o-e

u-e

Children will learn that the 'e' on the end causes the initial vowel to make the longer vowel sound rather than the shorter one, for example ay, ee, igh, ow and oo.

Phase 6

When children enter this phase, they should know most of the common grapheme-phoneme correspondences. As a result of this, they should be able to read hundreds of words.

This will be in one of three ways:

- reading the word on sight when they are very familiar.
- decoding the word quickly and/or silently.
- decoding the word aloud.

During this phase, the aim is for children to become fluent readers and increasingly accurate spellers. Using the sounds the children have been exposed to, the following games and/or activities could be completed at home.

- Ask your child to make or spell words. Support them whilst they figure out how the sound needs to be represented.
- Focus on different suffixes, adding them to root words. Ask children to read and write the words.
- Encourage children to write as many sounds/words as possible in a set amount of time.
- Expose children to a wider range of stories which include longer texts.

Year One 'Phonics Screening Check'

During the Summer term, Year One children will be assessed on whether they are able to phonically decode. This is called the Year One 'Phonics Screening Check' and it is completed by the class teacher. The children are asked to read forty words, twenty real and twenty nonsense words. The check is not about passing or failing, but checking appropriate progress is being made. At Ramsgate Holy Trinity we understand that all children progress at different speeds, so not reaching the threshold score does not necessarily mean there is a problem. Instead the class teacher will be in touch to discuss plans and offer additional, tailored support to ensure that your child can catch up. Your child will then take the check again the following Summer term.

What Else Can I Do At Home?

Promoting a love for reading is paramount. There are many different ways this can be done from an early age:

- Sing nursery rhymes from an early age. When your child is old enough, they can join in.
- Share books regularly. Buy books or go to the local library. Read books by the same author and re-read your child's favourites.
- Listen to your child read and remember to continue to read to them. It is important they are exposed to vocabulary beyond their reading ability.
- Allow your child to see you reading for pleasure. It may be fiction or non-fiction.
- Allow your child to practise their reading skills. Encourage blending aloud, as well as in their heads.
- Talk about books. Ask the children what is happening, how the characters are feeling and what they have enjoyed.
- Use props and puppets to tell stories. Allow their imaginations to run wild!
- Use ambitious vocabulary, explaining its meaning.
- Listen to songs and add actions.
- Practise reading and spelling the 'Tricky Words' listed below.
- Read rhyming books together. Ask the children to fill in missing parts and join in with repeated refrains.
- Make reading a pleasure, not a chore!

Tricky Words Phase 2 to 5

Phase 2	Phase 3	Phase 4	Phase 5
I no the to go into	he she we me be you are her was all they my	said have like so do some come little one were there what when out	oh Mrs people their called Mr looked asked could