



Phonics at Botley

What is Phonics?

The English language is a rich language consisting of thousands of words. This is a result of the history of the English language and the influence of many languages over many years (Anglo-Saxon, West Germanic, North Germanic, Latin, Norman French, etc.) The written form of the English language is therefore not straightforward and can be problematic because the relationship between sounds of speech and letters is complicated. The letters act as a 'code' for the sounds of speech. The aim of teaching 'Phonics' is to help children to decode written language.

At present we have a coherent and structured phonics programme which is consistently sequenced against the Letters and Sounds framework. The current scheme for phonetically matched books is Junior Learning, which children access through the SeeSaw App. This is used both at home and at school. There are also a range of colour banded books available to give children the opportunity to read for pleasure and experience a wider variety of texts and genres.

We are however transiting to a new phonics scheme. Our approach to learning phonics is through using a programme of phonics called Success for All.



How do we learn phonics?

Children first learn to identify the sounds all through the spoken word. Then they learn to select the correct letters and letter groups which are code for the sounds. Early handwriting is taught as part of the multi-sensory approach to phonics teaching.

Hear the sound, say the sound, write the letter shape or letter group.

Learners are taught at 'word level' at first – and then they apply their knowledge and skills to sentences and texts – and reading books and texts which match the code knowledge taught to date. The focus is on learning to 'break the code' which is why there are no pictures in texts aimed at learning a particular phonics skill. This way, children learn to apply their growing phonics knowledge and skills to cumulative words, sentences and texts for reading, spelling and writing.

The alphabetic code

When we teach early reading and spelling, we don't use the alphabet's letter names (ay, bee, see...) but we use the sounds; /a/ (as in 'apple' or 'Annie'); /b/ (as in 'bat' or 'Ben'); /k/ (as in 'cat' or 'car') and so on.

Letters and letter groups are the alphabetic code for the sounds in our speech. Decoding the letter symbols into sounds is the basis for reading: the child sees the printed word 'soap', decodes the sounds /s/ /oʌ/ /p/ (not - /suh/ /oʌ/ /puh/!) and then blends the sounds to read "soap".

If you are unsure of the pure sounds, please find a video demonstrating the sounds.

<https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=lwJx1NSineE>

Sometimes letters (graphemes) need to be decoded with different sounds, depending on the actual word e.g. 'a' could be /a/ as in 'apple'; /ɑ:/ as in 'father'; /aɪ/ as in 'angel'; /o/ as in 'want'.

Other times one sound is represented by more than one letter: /aɪ/ in 'eight'. The sound /or/ can be written as: or, aw, our, au, al, oar, oor, ore, augh, ough, (w)ar, (qu)ar~, (w)a~.

Sometimes the same letter group has more than one sound: ‘ea’ as in eat or bread because the system is so complex, we need to teach the children their phonics in tiny systematic steps and not everything at once!

The alphabetic code is a reversible code, which means that we can start with the sound and encode to print (for spelling/writing) or we start with the print and decode to sound (for reading). In our phonics lessons we always include both ways.

The sounds are introduced in the following order:

	Phase	Teaching focus and GPC progression	Decodable Shared Readers	Common Exception Words (CEWs)
Nursery & Reception	Phase 1	Phonological awareness and rhyming	n/a	n/a
Reception Term 1	Phase 2/3	s, a, t, p, i, n, m, d, g, o, c, k, ck, e, u, r, h, b, f, ff, l, ll, ss, j, v, w, q, x, y, z CVC words Words with -s ending	1 to 8	the, I, he, she, is, to, go, of, as, we, are, you, into
Reception Term 2	Phase 3	zz, qu, ch, sh, th, ng, ai (train), ee (tree), igh (light), oa (goat), oo (zoo), oo (book), ar (car) Blend CVC words (including with -s and -ing endings), double-consonant words with endings, limited CCVC and CVCC words. Two-syllable words.	9 to 20	be, me, his, no, so, has, do, her, my, by, ask*, our, says, they, said, was, were, put, all, like, there
Reception Term 3	Phase 3/4	or (corn), ur (purple), ow (cow), oi (boil), ear (clear), air (hair), ure (pure), er (batter) Common Phase 3/4 alternative spellings such as: or, ore; s, se; z, ze, se; v, ve Blend CVC words (including with -es and -ed endings) CCVC, CVCC, CCVCC, CCCVC, CCCVCC words. Nouns and adjectives with -er ending.	21 to 32	here, where, today, what, when, come, some, push, pull, friend, school, out, once, once, your, love, house, full, little
Year 1 Term 1	Phase 5	ay (play), ou (cloud), ie (dried), ea (cream), oy (boy), ir (girl), ue (blue), aw (jaw), ew (new) Common Phase 5 alternative spellings: ai, a; i, le; el; al; il; s, st; ee, e; igh, i; w, wh; oa, o; or, au Words with prefix un- Nonsense words Nouns and adjectives with -est ending	33 to 44	again, oh, their, last*, poor, money, thought, should, class*, Mr, Mrs, work, great, break, pass, fast, climb, people, after, path
Year 1 Term 2	Phase 5	a-e (cake), e-e (delete), i-e (crocodile), o-e (bone), u-e (flute), -y (happy), -y (fly), ow (snow), soft c (ice), soft g (gem) Common Phase 5 alternative spellings: ai, ey, ei, eigh; ee, ey; ie; or, a, al, oor, our; oa, ou; oo, ui, ou; yoo, u; oo, u, oul; r, wr; s, sc, ce; e, ea Endings on split digraph and -y words Words with suffix -ly	45 to 56	beautiful, plant*, every, whole, only, move, father, grass*, eye, busy, pretty, half, parents, everybody, sugar, prove, improve
Year 1 Term 3	Phase 5/6	ire (fire), are (share), tch (fetch), oe (toe), ph (photo) Common Phase 5/6 alternative spellings: ear, eer, ere; er, ear; air, ear, ere; aw, ar; u, o; m, me; n, ne; sh, ch, ti, ci, ssi; oo, ou, u, ou; n, gn, kn; m, mb; c, que; zh, s, si Words with suffix -ful, -less, -ness, -ment Less common GPCs to be covered and Shared Readers contain all GPCs taught to date Spelling consolidation Homophones Words ending in -tion / -cious	57 to 68	

*These words may be Tricky Words according to regional accent

How can parents help?

Phonics

Firstly, please take an interest in your child’s phonics work. It may be helpful to practise some of it again at home as ‘little and often’ learning helps children to remember. Give your child plenty of praise for his or her work whatever the level of the knowledge and skill of the child. If you have any worries about the phonics work, or any questions, please don’t hesitate to contact your child’s teacher.

Reading

As we transition to the new scheme, your child will have a book on Seesaw which directly reflects the phonic teaching in school. They will also bring home a reading for pleasure book. This book will be within their reading capability but it will not be directly matched to their phonics knowledge. Please listen to your child read to you every day and support as needed (and talk about the story). Reading books aloud to your child and sharing the reading of books with your child are also important. Please continue to hear your child read aloud, even when he or she can read independently and chatter about everything,

Phonics is a lifelong skill

Using phonics for reading and spellings are skills that even adult proficient readers and spellers need to draw on regularly. For instance, when we want to read an unknown Latin plant name, a medicine or the name of a place we haven't heard before. By teaching phonics rigorously, we aim to set up children for lifelong reading and spelling.

Glossary of Phonics Terms

Phoneme - The smallest unit of sound (the sound you can hear)

Grapheme - A way of writing down a phoneme (The written letters that we read and write)

GPC - This is short for Grapheme Phoneme Correspondence. Knowing a GPC means being able to match a phoneme to a grapheme and vice versa.

Digraph - A grapheme containing two letters that makes just one sound (phoneme).

Trigraph - A grapheme containing three letters that makes just one sound (phoneme).

Oral Blending - This involves hearing phonemes and being able to merge them together to make a word. Children need to develop this skill before they will be able to blend written words.

Blending- This involves looking at a written word, looking at each grapheme and using knowledge of GPCs to work out which phoneme each grapheme represents and then merging these phonemes together to make a word. This is the basis of reading.

Oral Segmenting – This involves being able to hear a whole word and then being able to split it up into the phonemes that make it. Children need to develop this skill before they will be able to segment words to spell them.

Segmenting - This involves hearing a word, splitting it up into the phonemes that make it, using knowledge of GPCs to work out which graphemes represent those phonemes and then writing those graphemes down in the right order. This is the basis of spelling.