

Withnell Fold
Primary School

Phonics: A guide for
parents

Letters and sounds



Phase 1-6

*An overview of Synthetic Phonics using the
'Letters and Sounds' Programme.*

Synthetic Phonics is a method of teaching reading and writing the English language by developing children's phonemic awareness - this is the ability to hear, identify and manipulate phonemes in order to teach the correspondence between these sounds and the spelling pattern (graphemes) that represent them.

English spelling is based on the alphabetic principle.

Letters are used to represent speech sounds - phonemes. For example, the word *p a t* is spelled with 3 letters each representing a phoneme.

Synthetic Phonics involves examining every letter within the word as an individual sound in the order which they appear and then blending those sounds together to produce a spoken word.

The 'Letters and Sounds' Programme comprises 6 phases of phonics teaching. They focus on high

quality phonic work, which begins in Foundation Stage. Which phase your child will be working on is assessed by the class teacher and appropriate teaching is planned.

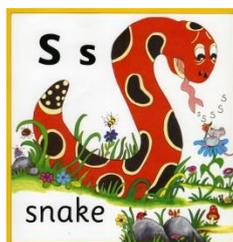
This booklet will give you information about the 6 phases and the progression between them.

All children are individuals and therefore develop at different rates.' Department for Education, 2012.

With this in mind, we are passionate about meeting the individual needs of your child with regards to phonics teaching.

THE SIX PHASES OF PHONICS

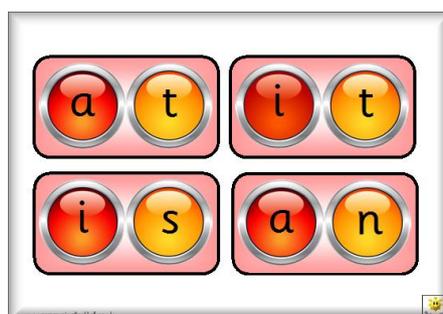
Phase 1: During this phase, children explore and experiment with sounds and become familiar with rhyme, rhythm and alliteration.



The 7 aspects of Phonological awareness during Phase 1 are:

- Environmental sounds
- Instrumental sounds
 - Body percussion
- Rhythm and rhyme
 - Alliteration
 - Voice sounds
- Oral blending and segmenting

Blending and segmenting are vital skills for learning to read and write. The 'letters and sounds' phonics programme focuses heavily on these skills during all phases.



Phase 2: When children are ready, they are introduced to grapheme - phoneme correspondence. Children are taught how to write a letter and the sound that it makes.

s a t p (set 1)

i n m d (set 2)

g o c k (set 3)

ck e u r (set 4)

h b f,ff l,ll ss (set 5)

The letters of the alphabet are not taught in alphabetical order and neither are the letter names at this stage. In order to learn the sound that a letter makes, it is not yet necessary to know the name; this comes later during Phase 3, however, if your child wishes to talk about letter names, of course do so with them.

By using the set 1 & 2 letters, your child will learn simple VC and CVC words. E.g at, in, pat, pin, sat, tap, din, mat

Pure Sounds

Synthetic Phonics pays particular attention to pure sounds bearing in mind the many regional accents of spoken English. (Later in the booklet is a list of all the letters in the alphabet and their 'action') We pronounce 'c a t' in its pure sound, rather than cuh-ah- tuh.

Phase 3: During this phase, children are taught the remaining letters of the alphabet, and are introduced to vowel and consonant digraphs. These are sounds with 2 or 3 letters that make one sound, for example,

'sh' 'ai' 'igh' 'air'

j v w x (set 6)

y z,zz qu (set 7)

ch sh th ng (consonant digraphs)

ai ee oa oo igh oi (vowel digraphs)

ar or ur ow (clown) not yet 'show'

ear (year, fear) air (pair, fair)

ure (sure, pure) er (hammer, dinner)

In regards to the vowel digraphs, children are now taught the letter names of the alphabet, and will therefore learn that 'a' in *cat*, can be pronounced like its letter name in *rain*. We teach the children that, 'when 2 vowels go walking, the first does the talking' Other examples of this rule:

bed tree dog coat

Children will also further practise CVC blending and segmenting and will apply their knowledge to reading and spelling simple 2 syllable words and captions.

High-Frequency Words

Often referred to as *sight* or *key* words, these are common words that children will learn throughout the phases, as they build their knowledge of different sounds.

For example, during Phase 2, children are introduced to simple VC and CVC words, it, at, an, dad, mum, got.

Some words in English have an irregular spelling and therefore cannot be read by blending - the, was, said, one. These are known as the tricky high-

frequency words, which children have to learn and remember.

As children progress through the phonics phases, their knowledge of these words will increase and by the time they are at phase 4, they will be reading and spelling words such as *have, some, what, little*.

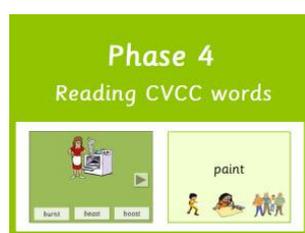
Phase 4: Government guidelines suggest that, this phase is taught toward the end of Foundation Stage. However, we will use our professional judgement to decide if children are ready sooner.

The purpose of this phase is to consolidate children's knowledge of graphemes in reading and spelling words containing adjacent consonants and polysyllabic words

- st ar

ch e st

l u n ch-b o x



Phase 5: In Year 1, children are taught to recognise and use alternative ways of pronouncing the graphemes and spelling the phonemes already taught. In the summer term of Year 1, children undergo the National Phonics Check. More details will be given nearer the time.

Alternative Spelling

For example, in Phase 3, children were taught the vowel digraph 'ai' (rain, wait) The 3 alternative ways to spell this sound will be taught at this stage: ay (day) a (bacon) a_e (name, made, snake) 'a_e' is known as a split digraph or magic 'e'.

Alternative pronunciation

In Phase 2 and 3, children were taught the sound that 'g' makes as in dog, get. They are now taught that it can sound as a 'j' in giant, gem, gym.

In general, Phase 5 will last for most of Year 1, but some children may be ready to progress to Phase 6 before the end of Year 1.

At the end of this booklet, there is a list of fantastic websites and Apps for iPhone and iPad that children can play on at home.

Phase 6: In year 2, children will have a good vocabulary and be able to read and spell hundreds of words. During this phase, there is an emphasis on automatic reading where children will further practise previously learned blending and segmenting skills.

The past tense is introduced and taught, along with the rules and spelling patterns when adding suffixes. For example, when adding 'ing' to a verb, there are 3 rules:

1. Do nothing draw - drawing
2. Double the final consonant run - running
3. Drop the 'e' like - liking

There is also a focus on grammar and punctuation.

We hope that you find this information useful, and we look forward to working with you and your child in the Phonics learning. Thank you for your time.

Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 team. Sept 2013.

List of Apps and websites for your child to enjoy Phonics.	
Websites	Apps for ipad/iphone
www.phonicsplay.co.uk www.espresso.co.uk www.educationcity.co.uk www.bbc.co.uk/literacy	abc pocket phonics Hooked on phonics Phonics genius

