

# Kings Norton Primary School

## *Guide to Phonics Teaching*



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## Introduction

At Kings Norton Primary School we know how important it is for teachers and parents to work together to give your child the best start. Reading together at home is one of the easiest but most important ways in which you can help your child. To support your child in becoming an effective and confident reader we hope to work with you to develop their knowledge of phonics (letter sounds) to enable them to decode different words they may come across. Each Reception and Key stage 1 class engages in a daily phonics teaching session.

Through this booklet we hope to give you an overview of phonics teaching with your child, and some ideas for how you can support your child at home.

## Letters and Sounds

We are following Government guidance with regards to 6 phases of phonics teaching. This six phase teaching programme focuses on high quality phonic work. The Intention is to equip children with the phonic knowledge and skills they need to become fluent readers by the age of 7. By the end of Year Two children should have completed phase 6. Which phase the children should be working on is assessed by the teacher, and appropriate teaching is planned for.

Below is information about the 6 phases, the progression between them and tips on ways you can support your child at home.

### Phase 1

This paves the way for systematic learning of phonics and usually starts in nursery or playgroup.

Teachers plan activities that will help children to listen attentively to sounds around them, such as the sounds of their toys and to sounds in spoken language. Teachers teach a wide range of nursery rhymes and songs. They read good books to and with the children. This helps to increase the number of words they know - their vocabulary - and helps them talk confidently about books.

Learning how to 'sound-talk'

The teacher shows children how to do this - c-a-t = cat. The separate sounds (**phonemes**) are spoken aloud, in order, all through the word, and are then merged together into the whole word. The merging together is called **blending** and is a vital skill for reading.

Children will also learn to do this the other way around - cat = c-a-t. The whole word is spoken aloud and then broken up into its sounds (phonemes) in order, all through the word. This is called **segmenting** and is a vital skill for spelling.

## Ways you can support your children 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 tall tin of tomatoes!' 'Tommy, the ticklish teddy!' 'A lovely little lemon!' This is called alliteration. Use names, for example, 'Gurpreet gets the giggles', 'Milo makes music', 'Naheema's nose'. 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.'

This is all oral (spoken). Your child will not be expected to match the letter to the sound at this stage. The emphasis is on helping children to hear the separate sounds in words and to create spoken sounds.

## 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 will be using pictures and hand movements to help them remember these.

### Graphemes

**Set 1:** s, a, t, p

**Set 2:** i, n, m, d

**Set 3:** g, o, c, k

**Set 4:** ck, e, u, r

**Set 5:** h, b, f, ff, l, ll, ss

### VC and CVC words

C and V are abbreviations for 'consonant' and 'vowel'. VC words are words consisting of a vowel then a consonant (e.g. *am, at, it*) and CVC words are words consisting of a consonant then a vowel then a consonant (e.g. *cat, rug, sun*). Words such as *tick* and *bell* also count as

CVC words - although they have four letters, they have only three sounds. For example, in the word *bell*, **b** = consonant, **e** = vowel, **l** = consonant.

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. Children will still be practising oral blending and segmenting skills daily. They need plenty of practice at doing this.

to	the	no	go	I
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### 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.

### Ways you can support your children at home

#### 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'.

**Both these activities help children to see that reading and spelling are reversible processes.**

### **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.

### **Writing in lower-case letters**

We shall be teaching lower-case letters, as well as capital letters. As most writing will be in lower case a good start is for your child to write their name correctly, starting with a capital letter followed by lower-case letters.

### **Ways you can support your children at home**

#### **Using their body**

For handwriting children need to be well co-ordinated through their whole body, not just their hands and fingers. Games that help co-ordination include throwing balls at a target, under-arm and over-arm, and bouncing balls - also skipping on the spot, throwing a Frisbee, picking up pebbles from the beach and throwing them into the sea. Have fun!

#### **Hand and finger play**

Action rhymes such as '*Incy wincy spider*', '*One potato, two potato*' and '*Tommy Thumb*' are great fun and get their hands and fingers moving. Playing with salt dough or clay really helps strengthen little fingers, as does cookery and using simple toolkits.

#### **Hand-eye co-ordination**

Pouring water into jugs and cups of different sizes, sweeping up with a dustpan and brush, cutting, sticking, tracing, threading beads, completing puzzles, peeling off stickers and sticking them in the right place - these all help hand-eye co-ordination.

#### **Pencil hold**

The 'pincer' movement needs to be practised. This is important as it enables children to hold a pencil properly as they write. Provide them with kitchen tongs and see if they can pick up small objects. Move on to challenging them to pick up smaller things, for example, little cubes, sugar lumps, dried peas, lentils, first with chopsticks, then with tweezers.

Ask children to peg objects to a washing line.

Provide plenty of different types of pen and pencil; hold their hand to practise the correct grip.

### **Phase 3**

The purpose of this phase is to:

- teach more graphemes, most of which are made of two letters, for example, 'oa' as in **boat**
- practise blending and segmenting a wider set of CVC words, for example, **fizz, chip, sheep, light**
- learn all letter names and begin to form them correctly
- read more tricky words and begin to spell some of them
- read and write words in phrases and sentences.

## Graphemes

**Set 6:** j, v, w, x

**Set 7:** y, z, zz, qu

**Consonant digraphs:** ch, sh, th, ng

**Vowel digraphs:** ai, ee, igh, oa, oo, ar, or, ur, ow, oi, ear, air, ure, er

### **CVC words containing graphemes made of two or more letters**

Here are some examples of words your children will be reading: **tail, week, right, soap, food, park, burn, cord, town, soil**

### **Tricky words**

The number of tricky words is growing. These are so important for reading and spelling: **he, she, we, me, be, was, my, you, her, they, all.**

we	me	be	was	no	go
my	you	they	her	all	are

### **Ways you can support your children at home**

- Sing an alphabet song together.
- Play '**I spy**', using letter names as well as sounds.
- Continue to play with magnetic letters, using some of the two grapheme (*letter*) combinations:

**r-ai-n = rain** blending for reading **rain = r-ai-n** - segmenting for spelling

**b-oa-t = boat** blending for reading **boat = b-oa-t** - segmenting for spelling

**h-ur-t = hurt** blending for reading **hurt = h-ur-t** - segmenting for spelling

- Praise your child for trying out words.
- Ask teachers for a list of the tricky words.
- Set a timer. Call out one word at a time and get your child to spell it on a magic board or a small whiteboard, against the timer - remember, they can use magnetic letters.
- Play '**Pairs**', turning over two words at a time trying to find a matching pair. This is especially helpful with the tricky words: **the the, to to, no no, go go, I I**

## Phase 4

Children continue to practise previously learned graphemes and phonemes and learn how to read and write:

**CVCC** words: tent, damp, toast, chimp

For example, in the word 'toast', t = consonant, oa = vowel, s = consonant, t = consonant.

and **CCVC** words: swim, plum, sport, cream, spoon

For example, in the word 'cream', c = consonant, r = consonant, ea = vowel, m = consonant.

### Tricky words

They will be learning more tricky words and continuing to read and write sentences together

said	so	she
some	come	were
they	all	are
what	my	her

## Phase 5

Children will be taught new graphemes and alternative pronunciations for these graphemes and graphemes they already know. They will begin to learn to choose the appropriate grapheme when spelling.

### Tricky words:

oh	their	people	Mr	Mrs
called	asked	who	friends	through
water	where	many	again	looked
work	mouse	eyes	laughed	because
any	once	please	thought	different

### New graphemes for reading:

ay day	oy boy	wh when	a-e make
ou out	ir girl	ph photo	e-e these
ie tie	ue blue	ew new	i-e like
ea eat	aw saw	oe toe	o-e home
u-e rule	au Paul		

## Phase 6

In phase 6, the focus is on learning spelling rules for word endings or suffixes.



They will learn how words change when you add certain letters. There are 12 different suffixes taught:

-s	-es	-ing	-ed
-er	-est	-y	-en
-ful	-ly	-ment	-ness

### Ways you can support your children at home

- Practise reading and spelling some *CVCC* and *CCVC* words but continue to play around with *CVC* words. Children like reading and spelling words that they have previously worked with, as this makes them feel successful.
- Make up captions and phrases for your child to read and write, for example, *a silver star, clear the pond, crunch crisps*. Write some simple sentences and leave them around the house for your child to find and read. After they have found and read three, give them a treat!
- Look out for words in the environment, such as on food packaging, which your child will find easy to read, for example, *lunch, fresh milk, drink, fish and chips, jam*.
- Work on reading words together, for example, a street name such as *Park Road*, captions on buses and lorries, street signs such as *bus stop*.

### Jolly Phonics

Alongside Letters and Sounds we also teach an action and song to the 42 phonemes. This is taught through Jolly Phonics. You may find your child comes home with lots of these actions in the early stages of their phonics learning!

Below is the 42 phonemes and their actions....

**s** Weave hand in an s shape, like a snake, and say ssssss

**a** Wiggle fingers above elbow as if ants crawling on you and say a, a, a.

**t** Turn head from side to side as if watching tennis and say t, t, t.

**i** Pretend to be a mouse by wriggling fingers at end of nose and squeak i, i, i.

**p** Pretend to puff out candles and say p, p, p.

- n** Make a noise, as if you are a plane - hold arms out and say nnnnnn.
- ck** Raise hands and snap fingers as if playing castanets and say ck, ck, ck.
- e** Pretend to tap an egg on the side of a pan and crack it into the pan, saying eh, eh, eh.
- h** Hold hand in front of mouth panting as if you are out of breath and say h, h, h.
- r** Pretend to be a puppy holding a piece of rag, shaking head side to side, and say rrrrrr.
- m** Rub tummy as if seeing tasty food and say mmmmmm.
- d** Beat hands up and down as if playing a drum and say d, d, d.
- g** Spiral hand down, as if water going down the drain, and say g, g, g.
- o** Pretend to turn light switch on and off and say o, o; o, o
- u** Pretend to be putting up an umbrella and say u, u, u.
- l** Pretend to lick a lollipop and say l l l l l.
- f** Let hands gently come together as if toy fish deflating, and say f f f f f.
- b** Pretend to hit a ball with a bat and say b, b, b.
- ai** Cup hand over ear and say ai, ai, ai.
- j** Pretend to wobble on a plate and say j, j, j.
- oa** Bring hand over mouth as if you have done something wrong and say oh!
- ie** Stand to attention and salute, saying ie ie.
- ee** or Put hands on head as if ears on a donkey and say eeyore, eeyore.
- z** Put arms out at sides and pretend to be a bee, saying zzzzzz.
- w** Blow on to open hand, as if you are the wind, and say wh, wh, wh.
- ng** Imagine you are a weightlifter, pretend to lift a weight above your head, saying ng...
- v** Pretend to be holding the steering wheel of a van and say vvvvvv.
- oo oo** Move head back and forth as if it is the cuckoo in a cuckoo clock, saying u, oo; u, oo.
- y** Pretend to be eating a yogurt and say y, y, y.
- x** Pretend to take an x-ray of someone with an x-ray gun and say ks, ks, ks.

**ch** Move arms at sides as if you are a train and say ch, ch, ch.

**sh** Place index finger over lips and say shshsh.

**th th** Pretend to be naughty clowns and stick out tongue.

**qu** Make a duck's beak with your hands and say qu, qu, qu.

**ou** Pretend your finger is a needle and prick thumb saying ou, ou, ou.

**oi** Cup hands around mouth and shout to another boat saying oi! ship ahoy

## **Further information**

<http://www.letters-and-sounds.com/>

<http://jollylearning.co.uk/overview-about-jolly-phonics/>

<http://www.phonicsplay.co.uk/>

<http://www.ictgames.com/literacy.html>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/phonics-screening-check-sample-materials-and-training-video>

**Please do not hesitate to myself or your child's class teacher if you require any further information or guidance regarding the teaching of phonics.**

**Thank you for all your continued support.**

**L. Byers September 2014**