



Phonics, Early Reading and Early Writing Information for Parents

Phonics

Phonics is the relationship between a sound and the letter/s that represent it.

In Foundation Stage, phonics is taught daily through short interactive sessions. At Ely St Johns Primary we use the Jolly Phonics scheme which supports learning by matching a picture cue and action to each letter sound. The key learning in the Autumn term is set out below.

Phase 1: Developing Phonological Awareness

- Showing an awareness of rhyme and alliteration (words that start with the same sounds)
- Distinguishing between sounds in the environment and phonemes
- Exploring and experimenting with sounds and words
- Beginning to orally blend and segment phoneme

Phase 2: Learning GPCs

- 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

The letters are taught out of alphabetical order so that the children are very quickly able to begin reading and recording simple words. Letter names are taught at the same time, we explain that each letter has a name and a sound that it makes.

It is important that pure sounds are pronounced during all phonics activities, for example 'c' rather than a long 'cuh' and 'mmm' rather than 'muh'.

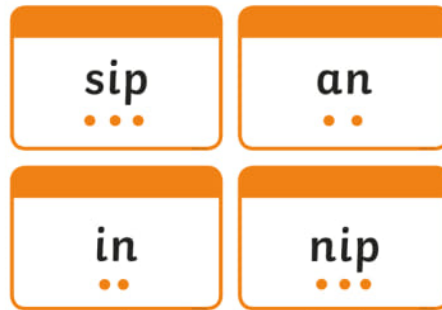
A video demonstrating the pronunciation of each sound can be found here:
<https://www.oxfordowl.co.uk/for-home/reading/phonics-made-easy>

The Jolly Phonics songs for each letter/sound correspondence can be found here:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z1Ql0tD0dcl>

This link takes you to YouTube, please remember e-safety and supervise use of this website.

Phonics for Reading - Decoding

Sound buttons are used to teach the children how to read phonetic words. One button is placed under each sound in the word, encouraging the child to say each sound in order and then blend them.



Tricky Words

Some common words are not phonetic so cannot be decoded. They have to be learnt so that your child can sight read them and we use letter names to spell them out. The tricky words taught in the Autumn term are:

I to the no go into

We teach these words during phonics sessions using lots of games such as bingo to develop instant recognition. People's names are often tricky words too.

Comprehension

Language comprehension is equally important as decoding. Make reading an interactive, shared experience to develop these skills. You can support this development by:

- Encouraging your child to retell stories in their own words.
- When reading rhyming stories, encourage your child to predict the rhymes.
- Checking your child understands new vocabulary. Give the meaning and look for context in the illustrations.
- Modelling making predictions using clues in the text – “I think.... because...”
- Making links to other familiar stories.
- Use the question prompts below to start a discussion about the story.



Reading Books

The children will begin to bring reading books home once they are confident decoding words and short captions. This means that the children will start to bring books home at different times – we plan for each child's individual next steps so don't worry if your child's friend brings home a book before they do. Before books, we will send home games and word lists that you and your child can use together to practise decoding words. Look out for these in book-bags over the next few weeks.

Top Tips for Reading

- Make sure your child is reading left to right, model this when reading to them by running your finger under the words as you say them.
- If your child says the sounds but finds it difficult to blend into a word, say the sounds back to them and give them an opportunity to blend before saying the word for them.
- Any text is reading practice. Labels, shop signs, letters on car number plates....
- Find a quiet space to read and make time to listen.
- Little and often – we wouldn't read 'Great Expectations' in one go!

Phonics for Writing – Encoding

In the Autumn term we teach segmenting words, listening for each sound within the word and saying them in order. We use phoneme frames to begin recording the words, placing one sound in each box. You may also hear your child talk about 'robot arms' and 'phoneme fingers', actions we use to help the children segment sounds in a word.

1	2	3	4
sh	ee	p	
c	r	a	b
ea	t		



Magnetic letters, letter cards, letters on stones and other practical resources are used to make words at this early stage in the year.

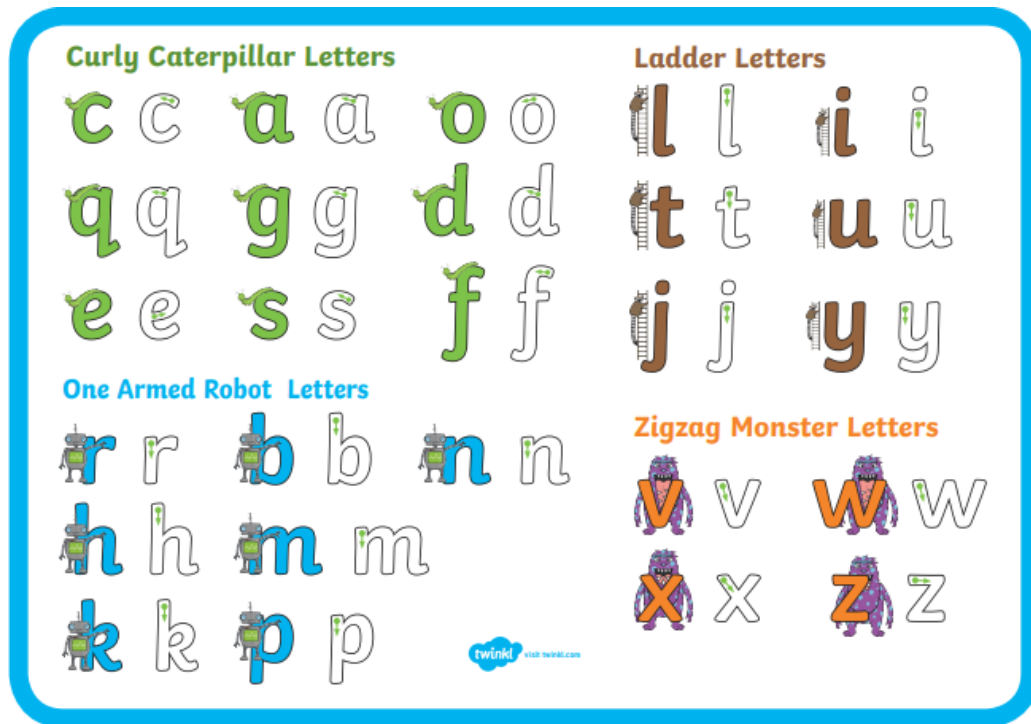
You can support your child's learning at home by:

- Encouraging them to listen for sounds in words, sounding words out for them to blend, e.g. 'Can you get your c-oa-t?'
- Asking them to help you sound out words when you are writing, e.g. 'What sounds can you hear in pasta?' when writing a shopping list.
- Playing i-spy with letter sounds rather than letter names

Letter formation

In the Autumn term we introduce letter formation and practise this on a large scale so that the children can focus on the shape they are making rather than on holding a pencil. Ideas you could

try at home are air writing, making the letter with a ribbon in the air, using paint brushes and water on a pavement or wall and using chunky chalk and bath crayons.



Useful Websites

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/cbeebies/shows/alphablocks>

<https://www.oxfordowl.co.uk/for-home>

<https://www.phonicsplay.co.uk/InteractiveResources.htm>

<https://www.ictgames.com/phonicsPop/index.html>

<https://www.teachyourmonstertoread.com/>