

# Phonics and Reading Information For Parents Early Years and Key Stage 1



Castle Carrock School  
Autumn Term 2021  
Mrs Grayson and Mrs Helliwell

# **Did You Know.....?**

**The English alphabet is made up of:**

**26 letters**

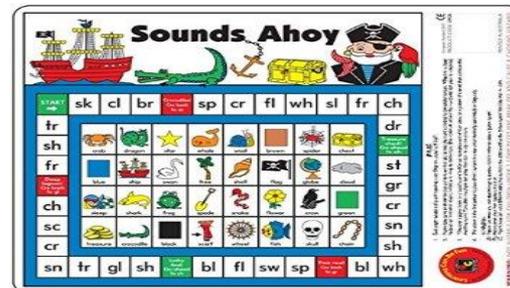
**44 sounds**

**Over 100 ways to spell those sounds**

**It is one of the most complex languages to learn to read and spell**

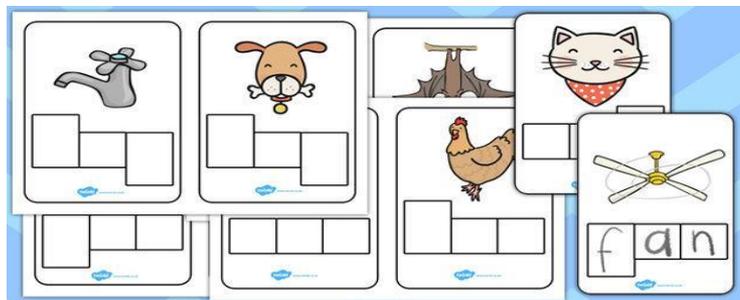
# What is Phonics?

- Phonics is a method for teaching reading and writing
- It helps children to hear, identify and use the sounds within words
- Think of written language as a code. If a child knows what sounds each individual letter makes in a word and what sounds they make when they are joined together, children will have cracked the code.
- Understanding this sound letter correspondence will also help children to know what letters to choose when writing words.
- Children are taught other skills such as whole word recognition (tricky words), reading and comprehension skills and a love and enjoyment of reading.



# The Jargon

- **Phoneme** – Any one of the 44 sounds which make up words in the English Language.
- **Grapheme** – How a phoneme is written down. There can be more than one way to spell a phoneme. For example, the phoneme 'ay' is spelt differently in each of the words 'way', 'make', 'fail', 'great', 'sleigh' and 'lady.'
- **Blending** – Putting together the sounds in a word in order to read it e.g. 'f-r-o-g' – 'frog'
- **Segmenting**- Breaking a word into its constituent sounds in order to spell them e.g. 'frog' – 'f-r-o-g'
- **Digraph** – Two letters making one sound e.g. ch as in chin
- **Trigraph** – Three letters making one sound e.g. air as in hair
- **Split – digraph** – A digraph - usually a long vowel sound that is split up by a consonant e.g. a-e as in cake, i-e as in five
- **Decoding** – the process used in reading. Children look at the graphemes in a word, identify them as phonemes and blend them together to read words.



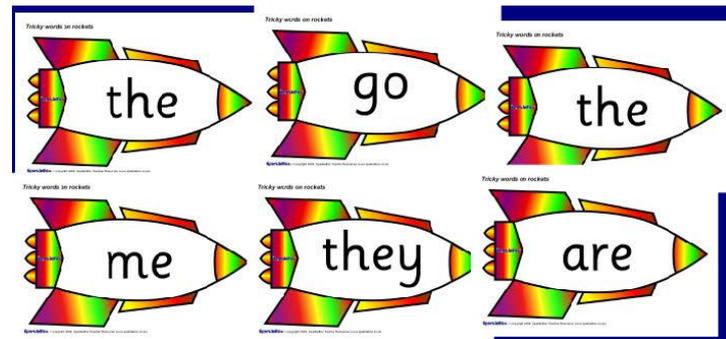
## How to pronounce the sounds

- 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, mmm, fff)
- 'Uh' sounds after consonants should be reduced where possible (try to avoid saying 'b-uh', 'c-uh')



# The Importance of Listening Skills

- Phonics learning relies on children being able to hear and distinguish the sounds within words
- Children with poor listening and/or attention skills can struggle with learning phonics
- Children are taught listening and attention skills during their early years education
- The first phase of formal phonics (Phase 1) focuses on key listening skills – environmental sounds, instrumental sounds, rhythm and rhyme, alliteration, voice sounds, oral blending and segmenting.
- Phase 1 is crucial to lay secure foundations and continues throughout the early years alongside the other phases



## Sequence of Learning

Our phonics programme is systematic and synthetic meaning there is a clear plan of progression and the children are taught to break up words into sounds. They begin with Phase One in nursery and the scheme ends with Phase Five which is usually completed in Year 2. Once the children have successfully completed the sequence, they move on to spelling rules and patterns.



**However, we strongly believe phonics does not end at KS1.**

If all children are to access the school curriculum fully, they need to be competent, confident readers and writers so we model and refer to phonics daily whenever reading and writing is used. This is for all our children up to, and including, those in Year 6.

Staff across the school will use the same terminology, same strategies, same resources (rhymes, actions, hook words) and so on to reinforce learning.

Daily interventions will also take place for any child who moves on to KS2 without having successfully completed the phonics programme. Weaker readers also received additional support.

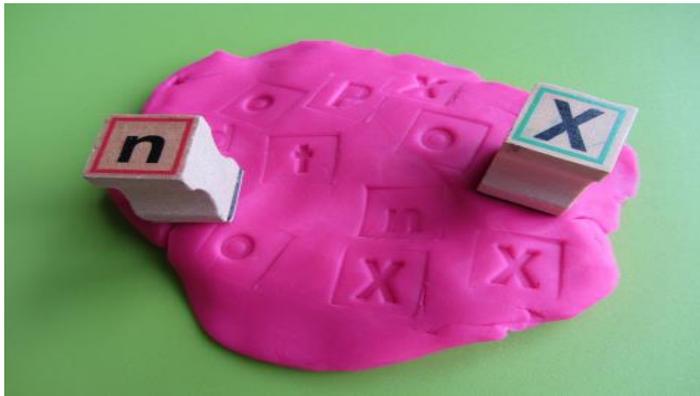
# Phonics Screening Check Year 1

- In June, all Year 1 children complete a phonics screening check
- The aim is to check that a child is making progress in phonics. The check will contain a mix of real words and nonsense words
- Nonsense words such as 'vap' or 'jound' are included because children cannot read them by using their memory or vocabulary. They have to use their decoding skills
- School will provide additional support to those children that require it



# How Can You Help?

- Work on listening skills
- Practise segmenting and blending
- Look for familiar sounds and words in the world around you
- Support your child to complete any homework. This may be learning letters sounds or tricky words
- Practise new sounds and graphemes
- Read to and with your child every day



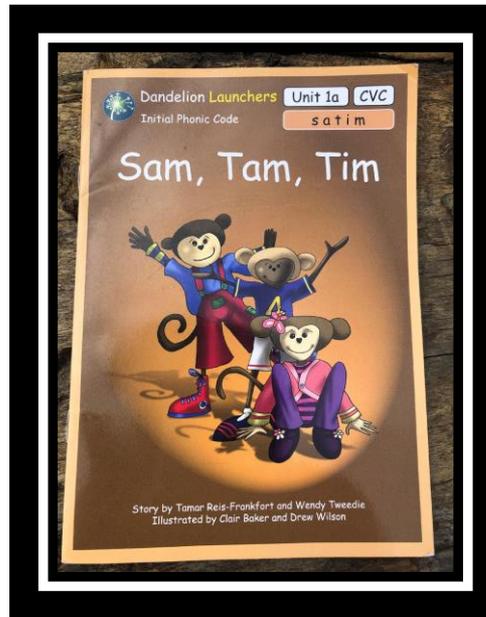
## Teaching Phonics in the Classroom

- Phonics is taught daily, using first thing in the morning, and lessons last between 15 to 25 minutes.
- Sessions are fast paced and challenging
- Each session follows a structured format so that the children become familiar with what is coming next. They follow this cycle:
  - Recap and rehearse
  - Learn
  - Apply
  - Challenge
- Children are taught actions when learning new phonemes and how to form letters using chants/rhymes





- Children are taught to read words using sound buttons to help them blend sounds together
- We also encourage them to use 'sound fingers' to count phonemes or when rehearsing for writing.
- We teach the children 'hook' words for each grapheme to help them hold on to new sounds. And we also encourage them to Ask the Question for example, is 'ai' as in rain or 'a-e' as in cake, when they begin to learn alternative spellings for the same sound.
- Children are also taught rhymes to help them remember how to write down a grapheme.



The children learn to read using fully decodable phonics books and our main source is the Phonics Books scheme for beginner and catch up readers. These books are highly structured and sequenced to match the progression of phonics ensuring reading success from the off. The children work their way systematically through the books which feature appealing characters and imaginative stories. Once they have finished our phonics programme in its entirety, they will move on to our colour-banded book scheme which is used higher up in the school.

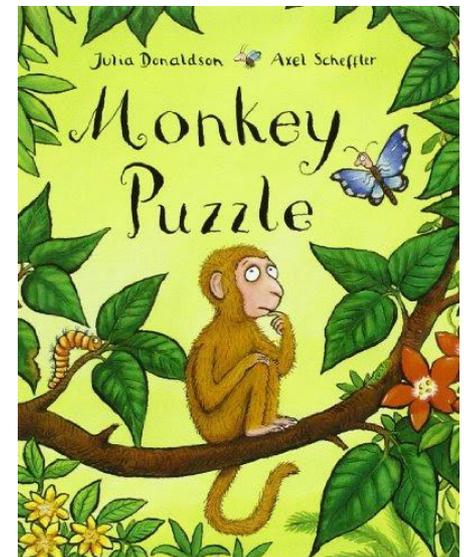
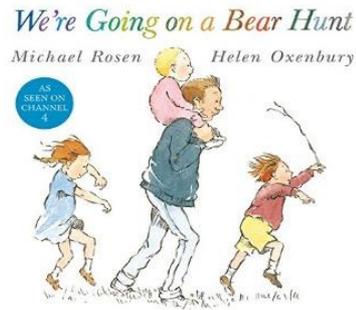
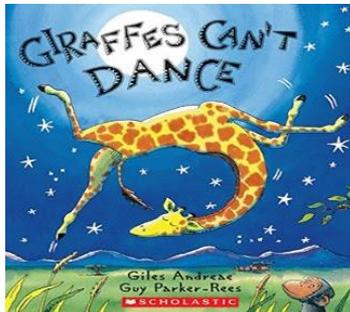
# Parents as Partners

- You are a valuable resource in teaching phonics and are encouraged to become involved in your child's journey as they learn to read and write.
- We will let you know what sounds your child is being taught and the actions and rhymes that go with it so you can practise together at home.
- Please read regularly at home with your child and record what they have covered in the reading diary which acts as a home school link and is a way of communicating with us.



## What else can I do at home?

- Sing nursery rhymes from an early age.
- Share books regularly. Read books by the same author and reread your child's favourites.
- Listen to your child read and remember to continue to read to them. It is important that your child is exposed to vocabulary beyond their reading ability.
- Talk about books. Ask your child what is happening, how the characters are feeling, what they have enjoyed.
- Use puppets and other props to retell stories.
- Use ambitious vocabulary, explaining its meaning.
- Make reading a pleasure not a chore!



Here are some suggestions for phonic and reading games. Some of the sites also offer parents advice for helping with reading at home.

Please also see our school website for other links.

[www.bbc.co.uk/cbeebies/alphablocks](http://www.bbc.co.uk/cbeebies/alphablocks)

[www.readingforlife.org.uk](http://www.readingforlife.org.uk)

[www.literacytrust.org.uk](http://www.literacytrust.org.uk)

[www.phonicsplay.com](http://www.phonicsplay.com)

[www.mrthorne.com](http://www.mrthorne.com)

[www.oxfordowls.co.uk](http://www.oxfordowls.co.uk)



[www.readingforlife.org.uk](http://www.readingforlife.org.uk)



Blend to read the words on the coins. Are they real or fake?  
Great for: Practising blending