



PHONICS Teaching at Three Ways School

The principle vehicle for phonics delivery for our pupils is 'Letters and Sounds' (as recommended by the Department for Education and Skills in 2007). It aims to build children's speaking and listening skills in their own right as well as to prepare children for learning to read by developing their phonic knowledge and skills. It sets out a detailed and systematic programme for teaching phonic skills for children starting by the age of five, with the aim of them becoming fluent readers as quickly as possible. We also use a range of other phonics interventions given the wide variety of learning styles within our school population which demand flexible personalised approaches to ensure that all our learners reach their full potential. We have a range of banded books which correspond with the six phases of phonological development set out by the Letters and Sounds Programme to enable practice and reinforcement in school and at home.

'Letters and Sounds' begins with a focus on listening skills and sound-making in phase one. The teaching of systematic synthetic phonics begins with phase two, where children start to be taught the relationship between written letters (graphemes) and the sounds of spoken English (phonemes). Blending and segmenting skills are taught from the start, and applied into reading fully decodable captions and phrases. The programme includes the teaching of high frequency words. By the end of the programme, children are expected to have developed strong decoding (reading) and encoding (spelling) skills. Children usually secure accurate word reading before they secure comparable accuracy in spelling; therefore the teaching and learning of spelling continues beyond the programme. In addition to this, we have amassed a wide variety of banded texts to encourage selection of books beyond phase 6 of the programme so as to maintain a sequenced model of progression for our pupils as they journey to become Free Readers.

'Letters and Sounds' has six overlapping phases. The table below is a summary of these.

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| Phase One Activities are divided into seven aspects, including environmental sounds, instrumental sounds, body sounds, rhythm and rhyme, alliteration, voice sounds and finally oral blending and segmenting. |
| Phase Two Learning 19 letters of the alphabet and one sound for each. Blending sounds together to make words. Segmenting words into their separate sounds. Beginning to read simple captions. |
| Phase Three The remaining 7 letters of the alphabet, one sound for each. Graphemes such as ch, oo, th representing the remaining phonemes not covered by single letters. Reading captions, sentences and questions. On completion of this phase, children will have learnt the "simple code", i.e. one grapheme for each phoneme in the English language. |
| Phase Four No new grapheme-phoneme correspondences are taught in this phase. Children learn to blend and segment longer words with adjacent consonants, e.g. swim, clap, jump. |
| Phase Five Now we move on to the "complex code". Children learn more graphemes for the phonemes which they already know, plus different ways of pronouncing the graphemes they already know. |
| Phase Six Working on spelling, including prefixes and suffixes, doubling and dropping letters etc. |