

Phonics

At Rushwick Primary school, children are taught reading, phonics and spelling throughout the week. Each session follows a similar format. The activities used to teach vary and can be adapted. They are multisensory and appeal to different learning styles. For Phonics we follow the Letters and Sounds programme and use the “Floppy phonics” online resource and teaching book to help facilitate our phonics teaching and learning. We combine both synthetic and systematic phonics.

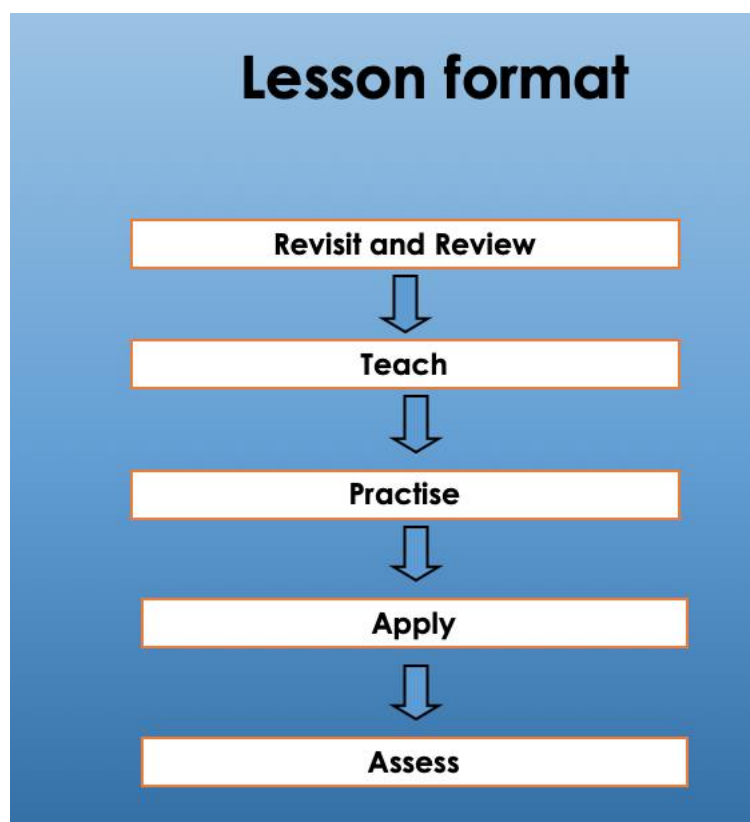
Synthetic phonics

Phonics consists of the skills of segmentation and blending, knowledge of the alphabetical code and an understanding of the principles which underpin how the code is used in reading and spelling

Systematic phonics

A method of instruction, that teaches students, correspondences between graphemes in written language and phonemes in spoken language and how to use the correspondences to read and spell words. Phonics instruction is systematic when all major grapheme-phoneme correspondences are taught and they are covered in a clearly defined sequence.

The lessons follow the format below:



Readers must be taught how the letters of the alphabet, (singularly or in combination) represent the spoken language (letter-sound correspondence) and how to blend (synthesise) the sounds to read words and break up (segment) the sounds in words to spell

- **grapheme-phoneme correspondence (GPC)**(that is, the alphabetic code) in a clearly defined, incremental sequence
- **to synthesise** (blend) **phonemes** (sounds) in order, all through a word, to read it
- **to segment words** into their phonemes for spelling
- that blending and segmenting are **reversible processes**
- To recognise on sight **common exception words** that do not follow the rules

Pace and progression

- By the end of Reception, children should know at least one way of representing each phoneme.
- By the end of Year 1, children should know alternative graphemes and different pronunciations of the same grapheme and use these to read and spell.
- By the end of Year 2 children should be applying their phonic knowledge and recognising irregularities to spell more complex words taking note of spelling patterns.

Phonics is taught in 6 phases as follows:

Phase 1

Phase 1 is absolutely vital. It is the one phase that shouldn't come to an end. These skills should continue to be developed throughout KS1 and KS2. Phase 1 develops children's abilities to listen to, make, explore and talk about sounds. This phase is split into 7 aspects that are explored and developed through games.

In developing their phonological awareness children will improve their ability to distinguish between sounds and to speak clearly and audibly with confidence and control. Through speaking and listening activities, children will develop their language structures and increase their vocabulary.

Phase 2

GPCs need to be introduced in a systematic way.

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 s ss

It is very important that you pronounce these phonemes clearly and correctly. If you don't, children may find it very difficult to blend them together. (bouncy and stretchy sounds)

When introducing GPCs, ensure you introduce them with the sounds, pictures, actions and lots of practise for forming the letter. You can form the letter with a finger in the air, on the palm of the hand, on the back of another child, on a rough surface like the floor. All these experiences will need to come before trying to write the letter on a whiteboard or piece of paper. This phase should be completed by the end of Reception year.

Phase 3

Phase 3 continues in the same way as Phase 2 and introduces more new GPCs. By the end of Phase 3 the children will know one way of writing down each of the 44 phonemes.

Set 6 - j v w x

Set 7 - y z zz qu

Consonant digraphs - ch sh th ng

Vowel digraphs (and trigraphs) ai ee igh oa oo ar or ur ow oi ear air ure er

Most children will have completed by the end of Reception.

Phase 4

The main challenge in this phase is to help children to blend and segment words with adjacent consonants e.g. truck, help. These adjacent consonant phonemes can both be heard when you say the word which makes them different from a digraph where there are two letters that make just one sound.

Children with speech and language difficulties can find Phase 4 very tricky. If children struggle to hear all the sounds in a word encourage them to think about the movements that their mouths are making. Looking in mirrors can help with this. This phase should be completed by the end of year 1.

Phase 5

Introduces some new GPCs in the same way as in previous phases. Five of these GPCs are known as split digraphs. They are **a_e, e_e, i_e, o_e, u_e**. These are no longer taught as magic e. Introduces the idea that some graphemes can be pronounced in more than one way. E.g. the ch grapheme can be pronounced in each of these ways check, chef and school. This is a vital lesson for children to learn and they need to learn to apply it in their reading. Introduces that some phonemes have more than one spelling (in fact some of the really awkward ones have many different spellings). This phase should be completed by the end of Year 1.

Phase 6

Reinforces much of the learning from Phase 5, helps children to develop greater automaticity in reading, and begins to explore spelling rules and conventions e.g. adding -ing and -ed. This phase should be completed by the end of Year 2.

Year 2

By the beginning of Year 2, pupils should be able to read all common graphemes. They should be able to read unfamiliar words containing these graphemes by sounding them out in books that are matched closely to each pupil's level of word reading knowledge. Pupils will increase their fluency by being able to read these words easily and automatically. Finally, pupils should be able to retell some familiar stories that have been read to and discussed with them or that they have acted out during Year 1.

During Year 2, teachers should continue to focus on establishing pupils' accurate and speedy word-reading skills. They should also make sure that pupils listen to and discuss a wide range of stories, poems, plays and information books; this should include whole books. The sooner that pupils can read well and do so frequently, the sooner they will be able to increase their vocabulary, comprehension and their knowledge across the wider curriculum.

For pupils who do not have the phonic knowledge and skills they need for Year 2, teachers should use the Year 1 programmes of study for word reading and spelling so that pupils' word-reading skills catch up. However, teachers should use the Year 2 programme of study for comprehension so that these pupils hear and talk about new books, poems, other writing, and vocabulary with the rest of the class.

Pupils should revise and consolidate the GPCs and the common exception words taught in Year 1. The exception words taught, will vary slightly, depending on the phonics programme being used. As soon as pupils can read words comprising the year 2 GPCs accurately and speedily, they should move on to the Years 3 and 4 programme of study for word reading. By the end of Year 2: Children are becoming fluent readers and more accurate spellers. They learn more spelling patterns such as the use of prefixes and suffixes, contracted forms of words (e.g. can't, won't) and other words in common usage such as days of the week. At this stage, children can read hundreds of words automatically. They are now reading for pleasure and reading to learn rather than learning to read.

What parents can you do to help support their child?

- Read with your child as often as you can.
- Use the Floppy phonics online resource to help reinforce their child's phonetic knowledge and application skills.
- Be a 'reader leader' and role model for a love of reading around your home.
- Use the sound checker in the children's reading records to help their child with their sounds.
- Make sure that when helping their child, parents only use pure sounds.