

Phonics the RAB way

We use the DfE's Letters and Sounds programme with **fidelity** and believe it provides an effective systematic phonics progression. Our teaching of phonics is focussed on **empowering** children as young readers and writers and thus phonics teaching and learning should be a highly **positive** and **successful** process for all. To achieve this, we ensure lessons are **engaging, purposeful** and **interactive**.

Organisation

Phonic sessions are whole class sessions, differentiated to ensure all children are effectively supported and challenged to develop their reading and writing skills. All children are exposed to the age-related content as identified by the National Curriculum (in the revisit and review and teach section of the session). This is followed by differentiated opportunities for children to practice and apply learning at an appropriate level, based upon effective assessment.

Style/content

Phonics sessions are engaging, interactive and multisensory, with children being 'active' participants in the learning for the majority of the session. This is achieved through use of Kagan structures, carefully chosen Letters and Sounds games, and strategic use of resources to ensure children are busy reading (blending) and writing (segmenting) following clear adult models. Wherever appropriate, additional language is removed from adult modelling to reduce the cognitive load and focus on phonics. Whenever appropriate a context is provided for reading and writing in phonics sessions.

Assessment

Children are assessed half-termly using the school's letters and sounds based assessment. The assessment includes knowledge (grapheme and tricky word recognition) and skills (blending/segmenting encoding/decoding). The assessment information is used to inform whole class teaching and interventions.

Intervention

Phonics interventions begin as soon as gaps in children's learning are identified.

Phonics interventions are tightly focussed on overcoming particular barriers to learning e.g.

- Oral blending
- Oral segmenting
- Grapheme recognition

Display

- Each classroom has a phonics display which includes:
 - Grapheme cards – without images
 - Tricky words

Daily 20 minute lessons

All children in Early Years and Key Stage One have a daily 20-minute phonics lesson. Each lesson follows the four-part teaching sequence:

- Revisit/Review
- Teach
- Practice
- Apply

One day a week will focus on the teaching of new tricky words and will include an extended written application of the week's learning.

Revisit and Review

Each lesson follows the same pattern of review:

- Oral blending
- Recognition of graphemes
- Visual blending of phonically decodable words
- Reading of tricky words

Oral Blending:

Between 3 and 5 words

Adult to orally say sounds e.g. c-a-t

Children to then orally say the sounds and blend. e.g. c-a-t cat

The words being orally blended should be beyond the complexity of words children are visually blending and should develop over time e.g. during phase 2 children can be orally blending words from future phases e.g. coat, lunch, farmer

Recognising graphemes:

Graphemes selected based on assessment

Up to ten graphemes shown to children on flashcards

Increase the speed of presentation so the children learn to respond quickly

Adult to correct any incorrect enunciation and address any errors

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Visual blending of phonically decodable words

5 words selected based on assessment and presented on flashcards

Adult to point to sound buttons and children sound talk b-oa-t

Adult to swipe finger under the word and children blend e.g. boat

Initially the adult will need to model – my turn your turn – but this should be removed as appropriate to encourage the children to blend independently.

Reading of tricky words

Tricky words selected based on assessment
Three or four tricky words shown to children on flashcards
Children to read by sight
Adult to correct any error

Teach

A new phoneme (or grapheme) or one/two tricky words are taught.
The teaching needs to be **memorable** - this will often mean providing a context for the learning.

Teaching a new phoneme

HEAR it, SAY it

Adult says the sound. (my turn)
Children repeat the sound. (your turn)
Ensure sufficient repetition for young learners to practice articulating the phoneme.
Adult to say words (and show objects) with the phoneme/grapheme.
Children repeat words.

SEE it, HEAR it

Adult shows the grapheme and says the sound.
Children say the sound and look at the grapheme.

Spot it!

Mix new grapheme with previously taught graphemes and show the children a card at a time.
Children to say phonemes and wave when they see the new grapheme.

HANDWRITE (only when teaching initial letter sounds)

Adult says the sound
Adult to model saying the letter formation rhyme as they trace the letter (mnemonic)
Adult to model on whiteboard.
Children repeat formation rhyme and write the letter in the air/ floor/on backs.

Teach visual blending (early phase 2)

Once children can orally blend they are ready to learn to visually blend letters in order to decode words.
Children have to be explicitly taught this skill.

Assisted blending

Adult models blending with sound cards or magnetic letters.
e.g. for the word 'cat' the adult models pointing to each grapheme and sound talks the word c-a-t .

Children to repeat (MTYT)

Adult sweeps their finger under the word and say 'cat' in an exaggerated manner.

Children to repeat

Progress onto the adult moving the sound cards/ magnetic letters silently (no sound talk) on the board. The adult points and sweeps their finger under the words as the children say the sounds and read the word. If the children can do this they are ready for independent blending.

Teach visual blending (phase 2+) containing the new phoneme/ grapheme:

1. Adult to press sound buttons and sound talk the word.
Children to then sound talk and blend the word as they sweep their finger under the word.
Repeat for 3 or 4 words.
2. Adult to press sound buttons
Children say the sounds aloud and blend the word as the adult sweeps their finger under the word.
Repeat for 3 or 4 words.
3. Adult to press the sound buttons.
Children say the sounds in their head and say the word aloud as the adult sweeps their finger under the word.
Repeat for 3 or 4 words.

Teach reading a polysyllabic word

Display the word e.g. carpark

Adult to cover the second syllable, sound talk the first syllable and blend it e.g. c-ar car

Adult to cover the first syllable, sound talk and blend the second syllable p-ar-k park

Adult to say both syllables- carpark

Repeat and ask the children to join in.

Teach segmenting of words containing the new phoneme/ grapheme:

Oral segmenting:

Adult to say a word and hold a fist

Adult to hold up a phonic finger for each sound ensuring the 'sounds' read from left to right from the child's view.

Children to repeat

Segmenting:

Adult to say a word and hold a fist

Adult to hold up a phonic finger for each sound ensuring the 'sounds' read from left to right from the child's view.

Model writing each grapheme on a whiteboard.

Children to repeat

Segmenting a polysyllabic word

Adult to say the word and clap the syllables. E.g. desktop – two claps

Children to copy (MTYT)

Adult to clap the first word again and tell the children the first syllable is desk and the second is top.

Ask the children to orally segment desk and the adult to write them.

Repeat for the second syllable.

Read the completed word

Children to repeat

Teaching the reading of a tricky word

Explain tricky words cannot be blended using the phonics we know so we just have to learn them – they have a 'tricky bit'.

Show the word / write it on the board.

Sound talk the word and repeat putting sound buttons and lines under each phoneme and blending them to read the word. (MTYT)

Highlight and discuss the 'tricky bit' (the bit of the word where the letters do not correspond to the sounds the children know.)

Read the word a couple more times

Teaching the spelling of a tricky word

Children should be able to read the word before they learn to spell it.

Write the word to be learned on the board and check everyone can read it.

Say a sentence using the word.

Adult to sound talk the using 'phonic fingers'.

Highlight and discuss the 'tricky bit' (the bit of the word where the letters do not correspond to the sounds the children know.)

Discuss the letters required for each phoneme using letter names.

Practise

Children practise their phonics at word level- reading or spelling

Activities (often games) allow all children to actively participate and can be differentiated to provide challenge for all.

Games which support reading:

- **Word and Picture Match** - Each child has a piece of paper divided into quarters with words in each section. An adult reveals a picture and the child has to read the words to see which one matches.

Children needing more challenge can have four sentences (instead of words) which represent the pictures shown.

- **SUHUPU (stand-up, hand-up, pair-up)** - each child has a word and when they pair up the children read each other's words. Adapt the game to Quiz, Quiz, trade – played exactly the same but children swap word cards before moving on to a new partner
- **Roll and Read** games (play in pairs) A variety of roll and games are available which support the children in practising blending, reading tricky words and recognising graphemes. Children can cover the words/ graphemes read with counters or cross out with pen. Adding the challenge of achieving three/four in a row can be motivating for some children. These can also be made using sentences instead of words to add further challenge.
- **Track Games-** A variety of track games are available which support the children in practising blending, reading tricky words and recognising graphemes.
- **Bingo** - A variety of bingo games are available which support the children in practising blending, reading tricky words and hearing and recognising graphemes
- **Sorting** - Words, such as the names of farm and zoo animals (e.g. zebra, camel, hen, chimpanzee, panda, cow, yak, sheep, goat, duck)

Games which support spelling:

Adults to model and support segmenting prior to children doing independently e.g. if playing a game, having identified which word needs spelling, adult and children to orally segment (MTYT) and adult to model writing before children have a go. This to pre-empt errors and stop children practising incorrect spellings.

- **Kim's Game:** A selection of objects (or words) on show. The adult removes one of the objects/ words and the children write the missing word.
- **Pocket Dice** - Put pictures in the pockets. Roll the die and the children have to write the word for the picture rolled.
- **SUHUPU (stand-up, hand-up, pair-up)** - each child has a word and when they pair up the children orally spell each other's words. Adapt the game to Quiz, Quiz, trade – played exactly the same but children swap word cards before moving on to a new partner. Children could also have whiteboards to write down the spelling
- **Roll It, Spell It Game** - Using one of the roll and spell game sheet: roll the dice and depending on the grapheme rolled, segment and spell one of the words which contains the grapheme.

Apply

Children apply their phonics at sentence level – reading or writing

Reading

Children read more than a sentence where possible.

Activities could include reading letters/notes linked to the session context, matching sentences to pictures, reading YES/NO questions, Change it!

Application to reading is then further developed in partnered reading session

Model reading a sentence:

Display a sentence(s). Sound talk (if necessary) and read the first word e.g. It

After reading the second word, say both words e.g. It is

Continue with the next word e.g. It is fun

Continue to the end of the sentence

Writing

Children write a sentence(s) preferably in phonic books but possibly on whiteboards.

The sentence(s) will often link back to the context introduced in the 'teach' section.

Differ the sentences to ensure challenge for all e.g. The frog jumps.

The frog jumps in the pond. The frog jumps in the pond and swims off.

Application to writing is further developed in English writing lesson

Hold a sentence:

Adult to orally say a sentence. Children to repeat. Say the sentences in lots of different voices etc (MTYT) so the sentence is internalised and can be recalled accurately.

Adult to model writing the sentence, talking out loud about spelling, finger spaces, punctuation etc. Adult to involve the children by asking them to repeat the sentence and identify the next word to write and by asking them say the letters needed to spell some of the words. Adult to model rereading of sentence for sense.

Adult to cover sentence and children to have a turn at writing the sentence.

Allow children to self /peer mark the sentence by revisiting the adult written sentence.

Dictated sentence

This should be used less often than 'Hold a sentence' as there is less scaffold to secure success and accuracy but gives a useful assessment opportunity.

Adult dictates a sentence, sharing a few words at a time, for children to write down.

EARLY YEARS

Although phonic lessons follow the four-part structure, in the very initial stages of the children's phonics learning (approximately weeks 1-3) the content of the different lesson parts varies slightly from the one adhered to once blending has begun to be established. At this early stage many children need to secure oral blending as well as grapheme recognition and formation in preparation for reading and spelling words.

The following structure is typical during early phonics sessions:

Review and Revisit:

Phase 1 games and activities

Oral blending

Recall of graphemes taught

Quick write of graphemes taught

Teaching

New grapheme – hear, say, see, write

Teach and Practise

Oral blending- leading to assisted blending

Oral segmenting

Application

Application at is word level: assisted blending/ independent blending, segmenting using magnetic letters/writing.