

## How we teach phonics at St Blaise

Phonics is explicitly taught at St Blaise in daily lessons throughout Reception and KS1. We follow a structured phonics program called Letters and Sounds, and we also use Phonics Play to plan and teach our sessions. Children will always work within the phase that is appropriate for their level of learning and they are assessed regularly so their progress is tracked.

### What is phonics?

**Phonics** is a method of teaching children to read skilfully and quickly by linking sounds (phonemes) and the symbols that represent them (**graphemes**, or letter groups).

### What is a phoneme?

A **phoneme** is the smallest unit of sound. The phonemes used when speaking English are:

s sat	t tap	p pan	n nose	m mat	a ant	e egg	i ink	o otter
g goat	d dog	ck click	r run	h hat	u up	ai rain	ee knee	igh light
b bus	f farm	l lolly	j jam	v van	oa boat	oo cook	oo boot	ar star
w wish	x axe	y yell	z zap	qu quill	or fork	ur burn	ow now	oi boil
ch chin	sh ship	th think	th the	ng sing	ear near	air stair	ure sure	er writer

L&S Phase	Approximate age/stage	Phonics teaching	Tricky/high frequency words
Phase 1	Ongoing	Throughout Phase 1, children are taught to discriminate between different sounds, such as environmental sounds, instruments, body sounds, voice sounds, rhythm & rhyme and they are introduced to oral blending and segmenting (c-oa-t). The ways in which teachers interact and talk with children are critical to developing children's speaking and listening. This needs to be kept in mind throughout all phase one activities.	
Phase 2	Autumn term of Reception	In Phase 2, children are taught letter sounds. They begin to learn a variety of phonemes and the graphemes (letter/s) which represents them. The aim is for children to be able to see a letter and then say the sound it represents out loud. This is called <b>decoding</b> . Children then need to go from saying the individual sounds of each letter, to being able to <b>blend the sounds and say the whole word</b> . This can be a big step for many children and takes time. Throughout this phase, children will learn to read and spell VC and <b>CVC words</b> (vowel & consonant).  <b>s, a, t, p, i, n, m, d, g, o, c, k, ck, e, u, r, h, b, f, ff, l, ll, ss, o</b>	the, to, no, go, l, into  an, is, it, in, if, at, a, as, of, off, can, on, dad, had, back, and, get, big, him, his, not, got, up, mum, but

Phase 3	Spring and Summer term of Reception	<p>The Children are introduced to an increasing number of graphemes, many of which are made up of 2 letters (<b>digraph</b>). Children will learn consonant digraphs (2 consonants that make one sound) and vowel digraphs (2 vowels that together make one sound). Within phase 3, children will also be introduced to trigraphs, a group of 3 letters that make a single sound. They will also learn letter names during this phase.</p> <p><b><i>j, w, v, x, y, z, zz, qu, sh, th, ch, ng, ai, ee, oo, oa, ar, oe, igh, ur, ow, oi, ear, er, air, ure</i></b></p>	<p>he, she, we, me, be, was, my, you, they, her, all, are</p> <p>will, that, this, then, them, with, see, for, now, down, look, too</p>
Phase 4	Summer term in Reception – recap Autumn term Year 1	<p>During Phase 4, children will continue to consolidate their previous knowledge and they will learn about adjacent consonants, two consonants located together in a word, such as tr, cr, st, lk, pl. Children will learn to read a range of <b>CCVC words</b> (consonant, consonant, vowel, consonant) such as trap, stop, plan. They will also read a range of <b>CVCC words</b> (consonant, vowel, consonant, consonant) such as milk, best, dent.</p>	<p>Said, so, have, like, do, some, come, were, there, little, one, when, out, what</p> <p>Went, it's, from, children, just, help</p>
Phase 5	Throughout Year 1	<p>In Year 1 Children are then introduced to Phase 5. They will learn that one sound might be represented by different groups of letters: for example, light and pie (igh and ie make the same sound) and they will move onto learning about <b>split digraphs</b> (or 'magic e'). Later on, children will also learn alternative pronunciations for some known graphemes, for example the 'ow' grapheme in cow and blow makes 2 different sounds. Throughout phase 5, children will learn to choose the appropriate grapheme to represent a phoneme, building on their word specific knowledge of the spelling of words.</p> <p><b><i>ay, ou, ie, ea, oy, ir, ue, aw, wh, ph, ew, oe, au, ey, a_e, i_e, u_e, o_e</i></b></p>	<p>Oh, their, people, Mr, Mrs, looked, called, asked, could, by, your,</p> <p>I'm, here, day, time, house, about, old, put, make, very, don't, saw, came, made</p>

Right from the start, lots of opportunities should be provided for children to engage with books that fire their imagination and interest. They should be encouraged to choose and peruse books freely as well as sharing them when read by an adult. Enjoying and sharing books leads to children seeing them as a source of pleasure and interest and motivates them to value reading.

### High Frequency/Tricky words

Following the guidance in Letters and Sounds, the teaching and learning of high frequency words has been aligned, as far as possible, to the teaching of each phase in phonics. Some of these are decodable, as long as the sounds are known, and others are unusual (tricky) which need to be learned. Children are able to practise reading and spelling these at regular opportunities (during phonics lessons, morning activities, continuous provision, guided reading) and where possible they will be linked to key texts in English and reading sessions.

## **Reading books**

Children from reception to Year 2 (Year 2's who continue to have phonics sessions) will take home a couple of phonically decodable books each week that match the sounds they have learnt. Children in Reception will begin to bring home reading books in term 1b if they are secure with the sounds and are becoming secure with blending. If this is something that specific children need some more support with, we aim for them to start bringing home reading books at the end of term 1b.

## **Encoding, or learning to spell as well as read**

Alongside this process of learning to decode (read) words, children will need to continue to practise forming letters which then needs to move onto encoding. Encoding is the process of writing down a spoken word, otherwise known as **spelling**. They should start to be able to produce their own short pieces of writing, spelling the simple words correctly.

It goes without saying that reading a range of age-appropriate texts as often as possible will really support children in their grasp of all the reading and spelling of all the phonemes.

## **Statutory Testing**

In the summer term of Year 1, children take part in a **phonics screening check** to assess their phonics skills and knowledge learnt through Reception and Year 1. Children practise using old versions of the tests at points throughout the year while we are assessing their phonics.

Children that do not pass the phonics screening check in Year 1 can retake it in the summer term of Year 2 and will continue to receive phonics sessions and support/interventions throughout the year.

## **Year 2**

Children in Year 2 will be learning **spelling rules**, such as adding **suffixes** to words (such as -ed, -ing, -er, -est, -ful, -ly, -y, -s, -es, -ment and -ness). They will be taught rules on how to change root words when adding these suffixes (for example, removing the 'e' from 'have' before adding 'ing'). They will also learn other concepts, such as silent letters (knock, write, etc) and particular endings (le in bottle and il in fossil).

## **Recommended websites to support your child's learning**

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

<https://www.oxfordowl.co.uk/for-home/reading-owl/expert-help/phonics-made-easy/>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UCI2mu7URBc&t=216s> – Oxford Owl How to pronounce pure sounds