



Supporting your child at home with Literacy

At Abbots Green we use Jolly Phonics and Letters and Sounds to teach phonics in Reception.



What is Letters and Sounds?

Letters and Sounds is a six-phase programme designed to help teach children to read and spell with phonics.

Phase One (Nursery / Pre-school) This phase concentrates on developing children's speaking and listening skills as preparation for learning to read with phonics. Parents can play a vital role in helping their children develop these skills, by encouraging their children to listen carefully and talk extensively about what they hear, see and do.

Phase Two – Four (Reception) Phase Two is when systematic, high quality phonic work begins. During Phase Two to Four, children learn:

- * How to represent each of the 44 sounds by a letter or sequence of letters.
- * How to blend sounds together for reading and how to segment (split) words for spelling.
- * Letter names e.g. through an alphabet song.

There is some debate as to when letter names should be introduced, but it is generally best to leave teaching letter names until children are secure with the alphabet letter sounds, as these are what are important when learning to read with phonics.

- * How to read and spell some high frequency 'tricky' words containing sounds not yet learnt (e.g. they, my, her, you).

The Letters and Sounds Programme suggests an order for teaching the letters, and a fast pace of one Set per week. It recognises, however, that children's personal experience of letters varies enormously. Most importantly, it progresses from the simple to the more complex aspects of phonics at a pace that is suitable for the children who are learning.

Learning Letter Sounds

Spoken English uses about 44 sounds (phonemes). These phonemes are represented by letters (graphemes).

The alphabet contains only 26 letters, but we use it to make all the graphemes that represent the phonemes of English. In other words, a sound can be represented by a letter (e.g. 's') or a group of letters (e.g. 'th' or 'igh')

Once children begin learning letters, they are used as quickly as possible in reading and spelling words. Children can then see the purpose of learning letters. For this reason, the first six letters taught are 's', 'a', 't', 'p', 'i', 'n'. These can immediately be used to make a number of words such as 'sat', 'pin', 'pat', 'tap', 'nap'

As a parent, your involvement in supporting your child's learning will be a vital factor in determining their success in learning to read. Magnetic boards and letters are one of the most effective ways to help children learn letters and develop their reading and spelling skills in a multi-sensory way. Children find using them enjoyable and easy to understand and apply.

Other useful resources include: Flash cards, Wall Frieze or poster, Alphabet puzzles, Alphabet games such as 'I-Spy', Phonics Lotto and Whiteboards and Pens.

The chart below shows the order for teaching the letter sounds as suggested by the Letters and Sounds Programme.

The chart also gives an example of a word to indicate how to pronounce each sound.

Set 1	s	a	t	p
	sun	ant	tap	pen
Set 2	i	n	m	d
	in	net	map	dog
Set 3	g	o	c	k
	go	on	cat	kit

Set 4	ck duck	e egg	u up	r rat
Set 5	h hen l,ll leg, bell	b bat ss miss	f,ff fan, puff	
Set 6	j jet	v van	w wig	x box
Set 7	y yes	z,zz zip, buzz		qu quiz

Letter formation

It is very important that a child holds their pencil in the correct way.

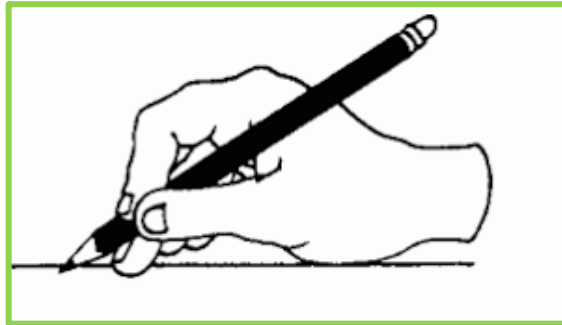
The pencil should be held in the “tripod” grip between the thumb and the first two fingers. The grip is the same for both left and right handed children. If a child’s hold starts incorrectly, it is very difficult to correct later on. (See picture below.)

A child needs to form each letter the correct way. The letter ‘c’ is introduced in the early stages as this forms the basic shape of some other letters, such as ‘d’.

Particular problems to look for are:

- the o (the pencil stroke must be anti-clockwise, not clockwise)
- d (the pencil starts in the middle, not the top)

- m and n (there must be an initial down stroke, or the letter m looks like the McDonald's arches)



Jolly Phonics

Jolly Phonics is a fun and child centered approach to teaching literacy through synthetic phonics. With actions for each of the 42 letter sounds, the multi-sensory method is very motivating for children and teachers.

S Weave hand in an s shape, like a snake, and say **ssssss**.

a Wiggle fingers above elbow as if ants crawling on you and say **a, a, a**.

t Turn head from side to side as if watching tennis and say **t, t, t**.

i Pretend to be a mouse by wriggling fingers at end of noise and squeak **i, i, i**.

p Pretend to puff out candles and say **p, p, p**.

n Make a noise, as if you are a plane – hold arms out and say **nnnnnn**.

C k Raise hands and snap fingers as if playing castanets and say **ck, ck, ck**.

e Pretend to tap an egg on the side of a pan and crack it into the pan, saying **eh, eh, eh**.

h Hold hand in front of mouth panting as if you are shaking out of breath and say **h, h, h**.

r Pretend to be a puppy holding a piece of rag, shaking head from side to side, and say **rrrrrr**.

m Rub tummy as if seeing tasty food and say **mmmmm**.

d Beat hands up and down as if playing a drum and say **d, d, d**.

g Spiral hand down, as if water going down the drain, and say **g, g, g.**

O Pretend to turn light switch on and off and say **o, o, o, o.**

U Pretend to be putting up an umbrella and say **u, u, u.**

l Pretend to lick a lollipop and say **l, l, l, l, l, l.**

f Let hands gently come together as if toy fish deflating, and say **f, f, f, f, f, f.**

b Pretend to hit a ball with a bat and say **b, b, b.**

ai Cup hand over ear and say **ai, ai, ai**

j Pretend to wobble on a plate and say **j, j, j.**

oa Bring hand over mouth as if you have done something wrong and say **oh!**

ee or Put hands on head as if ears on a donkey and say **eeyore, eeyore.**

Z Put arms out at sides and pretend to be a bee, saying **zzzzzz.**

W Blow on to open hand, as if you are the wind, and say **wh, wh, wh.**

ng Imagine you are a weightlifter, and pretend to lift a heavy weight above your head, saying **ng...**

V Pretend to be holding the steering wheel of a van and say **vvvvvv.**

Oo oo Move head back and forth as if it is the cuckoo in a cuckoo clock, saying **u, oo; u, oo** (Little and long oo)

y Pretend to be eating a yoghurt and say **y, y, y.**

X Pretend to take an x-ray of someone with an x-ray gun and say **ks, ks, ks.**

ch Move arms at sides as if you are a train and say **ch, ch, ch.**

sh Place index finger of lips and say **sh sh sh.**

th th Pretend to be naughty clowns and stick out tongue a little for the **th**, and further for the **th** sounds (this and thumb).

qu Make a duck's beak with your hands and say **qu, qu, qu.**

OW Pretend your finger is a needle and prick thumb saying **ow, ow, ow**.

oi Cup hands around mouth and shout to another boat saying **oi!** Ship ahoy!

ue Point to people around you and say **you, you, you**.

er Roll hands over each other like a mixer and say **er er er**.

ar Open mouth wide and say ah. (UK English). Flap hands as if a seal, and say **ar, ar, ar**. (US English)

Useful websites

www.bookstart.org.uk – games and activities

www.wordsforlife.org.uk an excellent website with activities, tips and information, plus recommended books.

www.jollylearning.co.uk/2010/10/29/hear-the-letter-sounds a section of the website where you can hear each letter sound.

www.icanread.com/parentfamilies/reading - tips and ideas for supporting your child at home especially once they are reading.

Other websites children like to explore:

www.ictgames.co.uk

www.topicbox.co.uk

www.phonicsplay.co.uk

Reading skills

Please support your child regularly with their reading scheme book and key words as this support at home really does help with their progress in school.

Thank you for all your support. It is very much appreciated.

Mrs Mayes, Miss Perry, Mrs Brill and Mrs Laflin