



Phonics teaching at Claycots Primary School

Letters and Sounds



From the beginning

From the moment each child enters the Early Years Foundation Stage, we are committed as a school to providing opportunities for developing their awareness and understanding, of the letters and sounds system.

At Claycots Primary School, when pupils enter Reception, they take part in high quality phonics sessions every day. These are fun, interactive sessions involving a range of speaking, listening, reading and writing opportunities.

The emphasis in these sessions is on active participation. The aim of these sessions is to develop a child's phonic knowledge to support their speaking, reading and writing activities.



Letters and Sounds

Letters and Sounds is a Phonics resource published 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 (sound) skills for children starting from the age of five, with the aim of them becoming fluent readers by age seven.

Letters and Sounds is the Phonics resource used at Claycots School.



The letters and Sounds Programme at Claycots Primary School

- The Letters and Sounds programme is introduced in Nursery as Phase 1 and continues throughout the Explorers to the End of Discovery.
- Those pupils who require further consolidation to secure their knowledge of phonics to read, receive small group intervention opportunities in Venture and Horizon phases.
- There are daily phonic sessions in Reception and Year 1. Phonic sessions and phonic interventions are also taught throughout the week in Year 2.
- Phonics sessions are carefully planned and delivered to meet all the needs of pupils in the class.
- There are also opportunities planned into these Year Groups for individualised or small group work, for those pupils who may require it.



Letters and Sounds The 6 Phases

The Letters and Sounds Programme is divided into six clear phases, each with a phase building on the skills and knowledge of previous learning. Children have time and opportunity to practice and expand their ability to read and spell words. They are also taught to read and spell 'tricky words', which are words with spellings that are unusual or that children have not yet been taught.



The 6 Phases explained

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 rules, including prefixes and suffixes, doubling and dropping letters etc.



The 6 Phases explained

Children will be taught phase 1 in Nursery. They will then move on to phase 2 in reception and by the end of the Reception Year children are expected to be working towards Phase 4. In Year 1 children will consolidate phase 3 and 4, they will then be taught Phase 5. At the end of Year 1 children are expected to have secure phase 5 knowledge, so that they are ready to sit their phonic screening test.



Year 1 Phonic Screening Check

The national phonics screening check was introduced in 2012 to all Year 1 pupils. It is a short, statutory assessment to ensure that children are making sufficient progress in the phonics skills to read words and are on track to become fluent readers who can enjoy reading for pleasure and for learning.

The check is not about passing or failing but checking appropriate progress is being made. If children do not reach the required standard, then we will be in touch to discuss plans and offer additional, tailored support to ensure that your child improves their reading skills. Children progress at different speeds so not reaching the threshold score does not necessarily mean there is a serious problem. Your child will re-sit the check the following summer term. In our school we already identify individual children who need extra support and provide early intervention support, however we must comply with the statutory requirement.



A Simple Phonics Glossary

Term	Meaning
<i>CVC</i>	A consonant-vowel-consonant word, such as cat, pin or top. You may also come across the abbreviation CCVC for consonant-consonant-vowel-consonant words such as clap and from. Also CVCC for words such as mask and belt.
<i>Phoneme</i>	Phonemes are the smallest unit of speech-sounds which make up a word. If you change a phoneme in a word, you would change its meaning. For example, there are three phonemes in the word sit /s/-/i/-/t/. If you change the phoneme /s/ for /f/, you have a new word, fit. If you change the phoneme /t/ in fit for a /sh/, you have a new word, fish - /f/-/i/-/sh/.
<i>Grapheme</i>	Graphemes are the written representation of sounds.
<i>Blending</i>	to draw individual sounds together to pronounce a word, e.g. s-n-a-p, blended together, reads snap
<i>Segmenting</i>	to split up a word into its individual phonemes in order to spell it, e.g. the word 'cat' has three phonemes: /c/, /a/, /t/



Pronunciation

In order to support the teaching of Phonics effectively, it is extremely important that the phonemes (sounds) are pronounced correctly. The website below shows the correct pronunciation of the main sounds:

<http://www.teachfind.com/national-strategies/letter-and-sounds--%E2%80%93-ar8cula8on-phonemes-vowels-and--consonants>

<https://www.phonicbooks.co.uk/2011/03/13/how-to-say-the-sounds-of-letters-in-synthetic-phonics/>