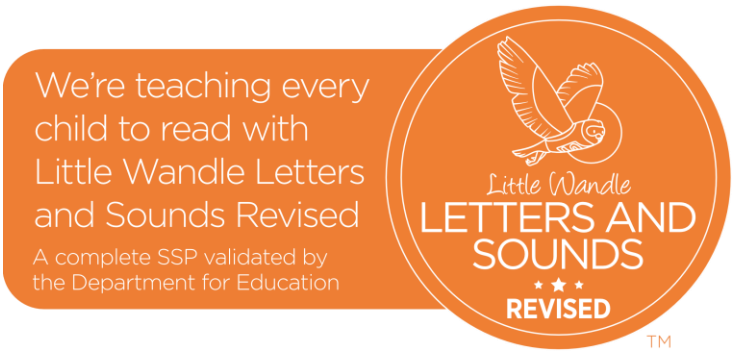
Phonics at

Yaxley Infant School





Parents/Carers Guide

Contents

- What is phonics?
- Why do we use phonics?
- How do the children learn phonics?
- Little Wandle Progression
- How could you help at home?
- Phonics Screening Check

What is phonics?

Phonics is the process of learning the sounds that different letters and letter combinations make. Each one of the 26 letters in the alphabet has its own 'sound'. This is different to how the letter is 'said' in the alphabet; instead these are called the letter names.

A word is made up of smaller units of sound which are called phonemes. There are 44 phonemes in total, and these can be made up of 1, 2 or 3 letters. A sound made up of two letters is called a digraph, and a sound made up of three letters is called a trigraph. Phonics teaches children to listen carefully and identify phonemes that make up each word. This is called blending and segmenting. This helps children to read unknown words, and begin to spell phonetically.

There are many subject specific words associated with phonics so here is a short phonics glossary just to clarify what these words mean.

Phoneme – the sound a letter or combination of letters makes

Grapheme – the written representation of the sound; the letter or letters

Digraph – two letters producing one sound i.e. play

Split digraph – two letters producing one sound that are split up by another letter i.e. cake

Trigraph – three letters producing one sound i.e. high

Blending – merging phonemes together to read a word

Segmenting – breaking a word down into sounds to spell a word

Letter names – the name of the letter as it is said in the alphabet, not the sound

Why do we use phonics?

Phonics is a key reading strategy and makes learning to read easier, simpler and teaches children reading more quickly than learning to read by memorising words individually. Knowing they can use their phonics knowledge to sound out unknown words, children are more confident to have a go and this ability to read instils a love of reading from an earlier age.

Phonics allows children to work out how to read around 95% of the English Language. Although there are many sounds to learn, and many spellings of each sound to remember, children can make remarkable progress in reading once they have retained this understanding of letters and sounds.

Another strategy use to read words is their understanding of 'tricky words'. Tricky words are often common words which the children cannot sound out, and are therefore 'tricky' to read and spell. The children practise reading these each day at school and we hope by increasing the frequency of seeing, reading and writing these words that the children will learn these words by sight, rather than attempting to sound these out. There is further guidance in 'How do children learn phonics?' as to which tricky words are taught at which phase and year group.

How do the children learn phonics?

At Yaxley Infant School we teach the children phonics by following Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised as our systematic synthetics phonics (SSP) programme to teach reading and spelling.

Children begin to learn letter sounds when they start school in reception, and continue to learn phonics throughout KS1 and beyond, although most children begin their learning of sounds much before this.

Phonics is taught in a daily 20 minute discrete session, although we ensure there are many opportunities for children to apply this learning during reading time, writing tasks, speaking and listening tasks, as well as through the use of child initiated learning, songs and multi-sensory games. Different graphemes and phonemes are taught at different stages through different phases. Tricky words are also broken down into phases. Below is a programme outline of which tricky words and graphemes, along with examples of phonemes, are taught in which phase and additionally when each phase is taught.

Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised 2021: Programme progression

Reception and Year 1 overviews

This programme overview shows the progression of GPCs and tricky words that we teach term-by-term. The progression has been organised so that children are taught from the simple to more complex GPCs, as well as taking into account the frequency of their occurrence in the most commonly encountered words. All the graphemes taught are practised in words, sentences, and later on, in fully decodable books. Children review and revise GPCs and words, daily, weekly and across terms and years, in order to move this knowledge into their long-term memory.

Children need to learn to read as quickly as reasonably possible, so they can move from learning to read, to reading to learn, giving them access to the treasure house of reading. Our expectations of progression are aspirational yet achievable if schools maintain pace, practice and participation by all children. Children who are not keeping up with their peers should be given additional practice immediately through keep-up sessions.

Reception

Autumn 1 Phase 2 graphemes	New tricky words
s a t p i n m d g o c k ck e u r h b f l	is I the

Autumn 2 Phase 2 graphemes	New tricky words
ff ll ss j v w x y z zz qu ch sh th ng nk • words with –s /s/ added at the end (hats sits) • words ending in s /z/ (his) and with –s /z/ added at the end (bags sings)	put* pull* full* as and has his her go no to into she push* he of we me be

*The tricky words 'put', 'pull', 'full' and 'push' may not be tricky in some regional pronunciations; in which case, they should not be treated as such.

Spring 1 Phase 3 graphemes	New tricky words
ai ee igh oa oo **oo** ar or ur ow oi ear air er • words with double letters • longer words	was you they my by all are sure pure

Spring 2 Phase 3 graphemes	No new tricky words
Review Phase 3 • words with double letters, longer words, words with two or more digraphs, words ending in –ing, compound words • words with s /z/ in the middle • words with –s /s/ /z/ at the end • words with –es /z/ at the end	Review all taught so far

Summer 1 Phase 4	New tricky words
Short vowels with adjacent consonants • CVCC CCVC CCVCC CCCVC CCCVCC • longer words and compound words • words ending in suffixes: –ing, –ed /t/, –ed /id/ /ed/, –est	said so have like some come love do were here little says there when what one out today

Summer 2 Phase 4 graphemes	No new tricky words
Phase 3 long vowel graphemes with adjacent consonants • CVCC CCVC CCCVC CCV CCVCC • words ending in suffixes: –ing, –ed /t/, –ed /id/ /ed/, –ed /d/ –er, –est • longer words	Review all taught so far

Year 1

Autumn 1	Review tricky words Phases 2–4
Review Phase 3 and 4 **Phase 5** /ai/ ay play /ow/ ou cloud /oi/ oy toy /ea/ ea each	Phases 2–4: the put* pull* full* push* to into I no go of he she we me be was you they all are my by sure pure said have like so do some come love were there little one when out what says here today

*The tricky words 'put', 'pull', 'full' and 'push' may not be tricky in some regional pronunciations; in which case, they should not be treated as such.

Autumn 2 Phase 5 graphemes	New tricky words
/ur/ ir bird /igh/ ie pie /oo/ /yoo/ ue blue rescue /yoo/ u unicorn /oa/ o go /igh/ i tiger /ai/ a paper /ee/ e he /ai/ a-e shake /igh/ i-e time /oa/ o-e home /oo/ /yoo/ u-e rude cute /ee/ e-e these /oo/ /yoo/ ew chew new /ee/ ie shield /or/ aw claw	their people oh your Mr Mrs Ms ask* could would should our house mouse water want

*The tricky word 'ask' may not be tricky in some regional pronunciations; in which case, it should not be treated as such.

Spring 1 Phase 5 graphemes	New tricky words
/ee/ y funny /e/ ea head /w/ wh wheel /oa/ oe ou toe shoulder /igh/ y fly /oa/ ow snow /j/ g giant /f/ ph phone /l/ le al apple metal /s/ c ice /v/ ve give /u/ o-e o ou some mother young /z/ se cheese /s/ se ce mouse fence /ee/ ey donkey /oo/ ui ou fruit soup	any many again who whole where two school call different thought through friend work

We will work our way through the whole Little Wandle Programme until your child can read fluently.

How could you help at home?

It is really important that you pronounce the sounds correctly if you are supporting your child at home. You can watch a video on how to articulate the sounds on the Little Wandle website here…

https://www.littlewandlelettersandsounds.org.uk/resources/for-parents/Reading

We usually teach four new sounds a week and have a review lesson on a Friday. You will get a list of the sounds that we are learning to have at home, please check Tapestry for weekly updates. At the end of this section you will find the Grapheme Information Sheets. This will help you with formation and pronunciation.

There are specific resources for the Little Wandle Programme which the children will be very familiar with. Each sound that we teach to begin with has either a mnemonic (*like the astronaut you can see on the table below for a*) or a phrase like boing-boing for *'oi'*. This helps the children recognise and remember the graphemes. Every time we teach a new sound, we also read words during the phonics lesson that contain that new sound, so that the children practise what they have learned. We then go on to reading a sentence containing some of those words.



Reading is one of the first things that children learn when they start school and supporting your child at home can greatly increase the progress children make in their knowledge of letters and sounds. Children who love to read will develop reading skills faster, and will also gain social and emotional benefits.

Reading with your child can be one of the most exciting, memorable and special times for you and them. Children who read more frequently have a greater love of reading, and exposure to different reading materials keeps the children engaged in their reading too. For example, reading different picture books, information books, newspapers, comics, magazines, even catalogues, will keep your child's interest in reading new and exciting.

Each week the children will bring home a guided reading book which will be a book from their phase level. The children read the same book three times in a week at school. The first time we work on decoding (sounding out) the words, the second time we work on prosody which is reading with expression – making the book sound more interesting with our storyteller voice or our David Attenborough voice – and the third time we look at comprehension. We read the books three times at school because we want to develop the fluency. The more children see words, the more they begin to read them automatically without having to sound them out.

Listening to your child read their phonics book at home -

- They should be able to read their book without your help
- If they can't read a word, read it to them.
- Talk about the book and celebrate their success

They also bring home another picture book each day too. This book is SO important. This is how we are going to give them the WILL to read. Please read with your child as often as you can – at least once a day if possible. This book is self-chosen from the book corner or library. Sharing this at home will help the

children to develop an enjoyment of reading, and if the children see you reading too, they are more likely to want to share books and stories with you.

Phase 2 grapheme information sheet

Autumn 1

Grapheme and mnemonic	Picture card	Pronunciation phrase	Formation phrase
 s	 snake	Show your teeth and and let the **s** hiss out **ssssss ssssss**	Under the snake's chin, slide down and round its tail.
 a	 astronaut	Open your mouth wide and make the **a** sound at the back of your mouth **a a a**	Around the astronaut's helmet and down into space.
 t	 tiger	Open your lips; put the tip of your tongue behind your teeth and press **t t t**	From the tiger's nose to its tail, then follow the stripe across the tiger.
 p	 penguin	Bring your lips together, push them open and say **p p p**	Down the penguin's back, up and around its head.
 i	 iguana	Pull your lips back and make the **i** sound at the back of your mouth **i i i**	Down the iguana's body, then draw a dot (on the leaf) at the top.
 n	 net	Open your lips a bit, put your tongue behind your teeth and make the **nnnnn** sound **nnnnn**	Down the stick, up and over the net.
 m	 mouse	Put your lips together and make the **mmmmm** sound **mmmmm**	Down, up and over the mouse's ears, then add a flick on the nose.

Grapheme and mnemonic	Picture card	Pronunciation phrase	Formation phrase
d d	 duck	Put your tongue to the top and front of your mouth and make a quick **d** sound **d d d**	Round the duck's body, up to its head and down to its feet.
g g	 goat	Give me a big smile that shows your teeth; press the middle of your tongue to the top and back of your mouth; push your tongue down and forward to make the **g** sound **g g g**	Round the goat's face, up to his ear; down and curl under his chin.
o o	 octopus	Make your mouth into round shape and say **o o o**	All around the octopus.
c c	 cat	Open your mouth into a little smile; make your tongue flat and move it up towards the top of your mouth to say **c c c**	Curl around the cat.
k k	 kite	Open your mouth into a little smile; make your tongue flat and move it up towards the top of your mouth to say **k k k**	Down the kite, up and across, back and down to the corner.
ck ck	 sock	Open your mouth into a little smile, make your tongue flat and move it up towards the top of your mouth to say **c c c**	c Curl round the heel of the sock. k Down the sock, up and across, back and down and to the corner. **Catchphrase:** Rock that sock!
e e	 elephant	Open your mouth wide and say **e e e**	Around the elephant's eye and down its trunk.

Grapheme and mnemonic	Picture card	Pronunciation phrase	Formation phrase
	 umbrella	Open your mouth wide and say **u u u**	Down and around the umbrella, stop at the top and down to the bottom and flick
	 rainbow	Show me your teeth to make a **rrrrr** sound **rrrrr rrrrr**	From the cloud to the ground, up the arch and over the rainbow.
	 helicopter	Open your mouth and breathe out sharply **h h h**	Down, up and over the helicopter
	 bear	Put your lips together and say **b** as you open them **b b b**	Down bear's back, up and round his big tummy.
	 flamingo	Open your lips a little; put your teeth on your bottom lip and push the air out to make the sound **fffff fffff**	Down the flamingo's neck, all the way to its foot, then across its wings.
	 lollipop	Open your mouth a little; put your tongue up to the top of your mouth, behind your teeth, and press **llllll llllll**	All the way down the lollipop.

Phase 2 grapheme information sheet

Autumn 2

Grapheme and mnemonic	Picture card	Pronunciation phrase	Formation phrase
j	 jellyfish	Pucker your lips and show your teeth use your tongue as you say **j j j**	All the way down the jellyfish. Dot on its head.
v	 volcano	Put your teeth against your bottom lip and make a buzzing **vvvvv vvvvv**	Down to the bottom of the volcano and back up to the top.
w	 wave	Pucker your lips and keep them small as you say **w w w**	From the top of the wave to the bottom, up the wave, down the wave, then up again.
x	 box	Mouth open, then push the **cs/x** sound through as you close your mouth **cs cs cs (x x x)**	Start at the top, then across to the bottom of the box. Start at the top, then across to the bottom of the box.
y	 yoyo	Smile, tongue to the top of your mouth, say **y** without opening your mouth **yyy**	Down and round the yo-yo, then follow the string round.
z	 zebra	Show me your teeth and buzz the **z** sound **zzzzz zzzzz**	Zip across, zag down and across the zebra.

Grapheme and mnemonic	Picture card	Pronunciation phrase	Formation phrase Catchphrase
	 queen	Pucker your mouth, then open it as you say **qu qu qu**	Round the queen's face, up to her crown, down her robe with a flick at the end. qu Quick, it's the queen!
	 cherries	Pucker your lips and show your teeth; use your tongue as you say **ch ch ch**	ch Chew the cherries, children.
	 shells	Show me your teeth and push the air out **shshshshsh shshshshsh**	sh Share the shells.
	 thumb	**Voiced:** Tongue on your teeth, teeth almost closed to make a 'buzzing' **th th th** **Unvoiced:** Tongue on your teeth; push the air out **th th th**	th Thumbs up, we're having fun.
	 ring	Open your mouth a bit and then use your tongue at the back of your mouth to say **ng ng ng**	ng Bling on a ring.
	 pink panda	Open your mouth a bit and then use your tongue at the back of your mouth to say **ngk ngk ngk**	nk I think I am pink.

Phase 3 grapheme information sheet

Spring 1

Catchphrase	Grapheme	Catchphrase	Grapheme
 tail in the rain	ai	 sheep in a jeep	ee
 a light in the night	igh	 soap that goat	oa
 zoom to the moon	oo	 hook a book	oo
 march in the dark	ar	 born with a horn	or
 curl the fur	ur	 wow owl	ow
 boing boing	oi	 get near to hear	ear
 chair in the air	air	 a bigger digger	er

Phonics Screening Check

The phonics screening check is a statutory DfE assessment that all children in Year One in England must take. It is used to assess a pupil's phonic decoding skills; whether can they sound out to read unknown words. In previous years, children have had to read correctly 32 out of 40 words to pass the check. The 40 words in the check are split into sections, progressing from simple CVC words to more difficult words with five or six letters, split digraphs and alternate pronunciations.

What is often a little confusing for the children during the check is that 20 out of 40 of the words that children are expected to read are 'pseudo' words; these are not real. In the check, they appear with an alien next to them, so the children recognise they are not real words and have no meaning. We include these 'daily alien' words in our in-school phonics teaching throughout the year so that this concept is familiar to the children before the check takes place. The reason behind these words being included in the check is so the children are being assessed on their ability to decode words, rather than their ability to just read words they know. The check is there to ensure children know their phonics sounds in order to read unknown words in the future.

The check is administered by your child's class teacher during a nationally designated phonics screening week, usually around June. The words are the same across the country. We try to keep the process as familiar as possible for the children; we treat it as a reading session rather than a test as we do not want them to feel anxious about this check.

Parents will be informed of their child's phonics screening results at the end of the academic year, alongside their school report. If your child does not pass the

phonics screening check in Year One then they have the chance to retake this in Year Two.

Below is how the check appears to the children in the statutory screening materials.

