

Phonics at Summerfields

In MacArthur class the children take part in phonics sessions every day. These are fun sessions involving lots of speaking, listening and games, where the emphasis is on children's active participation. They learn to use their phonic knowledge for reading and writing activities and in their independent play.

The aim of this leaflet is to give you a clear picture of how we approach the teaching of phonics and word recognition and how, as a parent or carer, you can support and encourage your child at home.



Letters and Sounds

At Summerfields we use a systematic phonics programme called Letters and Sounds.

Letters and Sounds is divided into six phases, with each phase building on the skills and knowledge of previous learning. There are no big leaps in learning. Children have time to practise and rapidly expand their ability to read and spell words. They are also taught to read and spell '**tricky words**' (or **red words**), which are words with spellings that are unusual or that can't be sounded out.

Phase 1



This paves the way for systematic learning of phonics. We plan activities that will help children to listen attentively to sounds around them, such as the sounds of their toys and to sounds in spoken language. We teach a wide range of nursery rhymes and songs. We read good books to and with the children. This helps to increase the number of words they know (their vocabulary) and helps them talk confidently about books.



Ways to help at home

Play 'What do we have in here?' Put some toys or objects in a bag and pull one out at a time. Emphasise the first sound of the name of the toy or object by repeating it, for example, 'c c c c - car', 'b b b b - box', 'ch ch ch ch - chip'.

Say: 'A tall tin of tomatoes!' 'Tommy, the ticklish teddy!' 'A lovely little lemon!' This is called alliteration. Use names, for example, 'Gabbie gets the giggles', 'Milo makes music', 'Jasmine jiggles jelly'. Teach them 'Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled peppers'.

Sound-talking. In phase 1 it is important that children learn how to sound talk. We show children how to do this - c-a-t = cat. The separate sounds (phonemes) are spoken aloud, in order, all through the word, and are then merged together into the whole word. The merging together is called **blending** and is a vital skill for reading. Children will also learn to do this the other way around - cat = c-a-t. The whole word is spoken aloud and then broken up into its sounds (phonemes) in order, all through the word. This is called **segmenting** and is a vital skill for spelling. This is all oral (spoken). Your child will not be expected to match the letter to the sound at this stage. The emphasis is on helping children to hear the separate sounds in words and to create spoken sounds.

Ways to help at home

Sound-talking

Find real objects around your home that have three phonemes (sounds) and practise 'sound talk'.

First, just let them listen, then see if they will join in, for example, saying:

'I spy a p-e-g - peg.'

'I spy a c-u-p - cup.'

'Where's your other s-o-ck - sock?'

'Simon says - put your hands on your h-ea-d.'

'Simon says - touch your ch-i-n.'

Phase 2



In this phase children will continue practising what they have learned from phase 1, including 'sound-talk'.

In phase 2 the children will be taught:

- the phonemes (sounds) for the following letters **s/a/t/p/i/n/m/d/g/o/c/k/ck/e/u/r/h/b/f/ff/l/ll/ss**
- which phoneme (sound) is represented by which letter
- that a phoneme (sound) can be represented by more than one letter, for example, /ll/ as in b-e-ll.

Now the children will be shown how to;

- make whole words by putting letters together to form words,
- read words (by blending)
- break up words into individual sounds (segmenting), which will help them to spell.

To begin with these will be simple words made up of just two or three phonemes, for example, am, at, it (2 phonemes) or cat, rug, sun, tick, bell. (3 phonemes.)

Tricky words (or Red words because they can't be sounded out) The children will also be given their first set of tricky word cards to practise reading by sight.

Set 1 - **the, to, I, go, no, into, of, put**

(these will be attached to their reading diaries)

Children will still be practising oral blending and segmenting skills daily. They need plenty of practice at doing this.

Your child will be taught how to pronounce the sounds (phonemes) correctly to make blending easier. It is very important that they say the sounds correctly, this is known as using the 'pure' sound for each letter.

Please find a list of useful websites at the end of this leaflet which help to explain what we mean by the 'pure' sound.

Ways to help at home

Every Monday we will send home information on the 4 sounds and tricky words that we learned the week before.

1. Using the sound cards (letter side) ask the children to say the sound that that letter makes.
2. **'Sound talk'** the words on the sheet for your child to say the word. E.g- say the sounds 's'- 'a'- 't' and see if they can **blend** the sounds to say the word 'sat'.
3. Now do it the other way around. Read the word, then encourage the children to sound out the sounds in that word. E.g- say 'tap' and segment the sounds to say 't'- 'a'- 'p'

These activities help children to see that reading and spelling are a reversible process.

Please note- Spelling is harder than reading words - so always praise, don't criticise. Little whiteboards and pens, and magnetic letters or letter cards, are a good way for children to try out spellings





Getting ready for writing

At School we will model how to form letters (graphemes) correctly but please note these skills develop over a long period of time. A child's ability to form a letter correctly is a separate skill from phonics. Holding a pen or pencil needs considerable co-ordination and practice in making small movements with hands and fingers. In the early phonic phases children can use letter cards or magnetic letters to demonstrate their knowledge of phonics.

We shall be teaching lower-case letters (and capital letters when necessary). As most writing will be in lowercase letters it is useful if you can use these at home. A good start is for your child to write their name correctly, starting with a capital letter followed by lower-case letters.

Ways to help at home

For handwriting children need to be well co-ordinated through their whole body, not just their hands and fingers. Games that help co-ordination include-

- throwing balls at a target, under-arm and overarm
- bouncing balls
- skipping on the spot
- throwing a Frisbee
- picking up pebbles from the beach and throwing them into the sea.

Hand and finger play

Action rhymes such as 'Incy wincy spider', 'One potato, two potato' and 'Tommy Thumb' are great fun and get their hands and fingers moving.

Playing with salt dough or clay really helps strengthen little fingers, as does cookery and using simple toolkits.

Hand-eye co-ordination

Pouring water into jugs and cups of different sizes, sweeping up with a dustpan and brush, cutting, sticking, tracing, threading beads, completing puzzles, peeling off stickers and sticking them in the right place - these all help hand-eye co-ordination.

Pencil hold

The 'pincer' movement needs to be practised. This is important as it enables children to hold a pencil properly as they write. Provide them with kitchen tongs and see if they can pick up small objects. Move on to challenging them to pick up smaller things, for example, little cubes, sugar lumps, dried peas, lentils, first with chopsticks, then with tweezers. Ask children to peg objects to a washing line. Provide plenty of different types of pen and pencil; hold their hand to practise the correct grip.



Useful websites

1. YouTube- type in- **RWI Pure Sounds** (Jon Pau)
(shows stretchy and bouncy consonant sounds then bouncy and stretchy vowel sounds)
2. Youtube-type in- **Jolly Phonics Letter Sounds** (British English) (Jolly Learning)
(shows mouth formation)
3. YouTube -type in- **Parent video: How to say the sounds (Ruth Miskin)** (Ruth Miskin training video)
(Shows set 1,2 and 3 sound pronunciation)
4. YouTube- type in- **Practice Blending Sounds for Reading- CVC Words** (Epic Phonics)
(shows how we say and blend to read cvc words)
5. YouTube- type in- **Phonics Phase 2 (CVC words) Blending for Reading** (Epic Phonics)
(reveals cvc words for you to blend)

