



An Introduction to Phonics

At Alexandra Primary School we offer high quality daily phonics sessions following our APS phonics progression programme.

The programme has 5 phases which are taught through Nursery, Reception and Year 1. This leads on to spelling strategies in Year 2. Phonics teaches children to read and spell by using the sounds a letter or a group of letters make. This unit of sound in a word is called a phoneme. Children will learn to blend through sounds (phonemes) to read a word and segment the sounds (phonemes) that they can hear in a word to spell.

Your child will focus on Phase One of the phonics programme during their time in Nursery.

Your child will use wordless reading style books to explore many of the aspects of Phase 1 phonics and to become confident at handling and talking about books.



A guide to Phase One

Phase One falls largely within the Communication and Language area of learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage. It supports children's listening and attention skills and vocabulary. By developing the children's ability to hear and say the sounds in words it prepares them for early reading through phonics.

Phase One has 7 aspects:

Aspect 1: General sound discrimination - environmental sounds

Aspect 2: General sound discrimination - instrumental sounds

Aspect 3: General sound discrimination - body percussion

Aspect 4: Rhythm and rhyme

Aspect 5: Alliteration

Aspect 6: Voice sounds




Aspect 7: Oral blending and segmenting

Throughout all of these aspects there will be three main strands:



- Tuning into sounds (auditory discrimination)
- Listening and remembering sounds (auditory memory and sequencing)
- Talking about sounds (developing vocabulary and language comprehension)

Some of the learning opportunities will take place through small group speaking and listening activities. Other opportunities will be set up in the environment through the inside and outside areas for children to access and explore independently and with adult support.



Aspect	Description
1 - General sound discrimination - environmental sounds 	The main purpose of this aspect is to develop children's listening skills and awareness of sounds in the environment. This includes listening for sounds indoors and outside, listening to stories with added sound effects, remembering sounds in the order they were heard and looking for where sounds are coming from - where they are louder and quieter?
2 - General sound discrimination - instrumental sounds 	The main purpose of this aspect is to experience and develop awareness of sounds made with instruments and noise makers. By tuning into the sounds they will be able to listen and appreciate the difference between sounds made with instruments. Activities include adding sounds to stories, hiding instruments and matching the sounds heard, making their own music makers, playing instruments in a repeated sequence and adjusting the volume of the music that they make.
3 - General sound discrimination - body percussion 	Children will develop an awareness of sounds and rhythms. They will begin to distinguish between sounds and to remember patterns of sound. During this aspect children will learn to talk about the sounds we make with our bodies and what the sounds mean. Activities include listening to music, joining in with action songs, following the sound games and changing the sounds we make - slow, fast; quiet, loud; long, short etc. with clicking, clapping, rubbing, stamping etc.
4 - Rhythm and rhyme	The main purpose of this aspect is for children to experience and appreciate rhythm and rhyme and to develop awareness of rhythm and rhyme in speech. Children will also be encouraged to produce their own rhyming words. Games include rhyming pairs, singing songs and rhymes and playing out one out. For example, sun, hen , run.



<p>5 - Alliteration</p>	<p>Alliteration is when the same letter or sound is at the beginning of words that are in a string together e.g. green grass or the sweet bird sang. Activities to encourage this play with words include I spy games, making up strings of alien words and collecting objects that begin with the same sound.</p>
<p>6 - Voice sounds</p> 	<p>The main purpose of this aspect is to distinguish between the differences in vocal sounds. Children will have opportunities to explore speech sounds and talk about the sounds we can make with our voices. Activities include looking in a mirror and making different mouth movements, making voice sounds (weeeee, buzzzz, ooooo etc.) Saying rhymes or retelling stories in different voices (whispering, squeaking, growling, shouting etc.)</p>
<p>7 - Oral blending and segmenting</p>  <p>d-u-ck</p>	<p>Blending is the skill used to read a word. Oral blending is about saying the sounds and hearing the whole word at the end. For example c-a-t, p-e-n. Children should be given lots of opportunities to hear this. An instruction could be given to them 'Go and get your c-oa-t' 'Can you find a r-e-d pen?'. Other games include clapping the sounds in words and playing 'I spy' with words rather than initial letter sounds 'I spy with my little eye something that sounds like z-i-p'.</p> <p>Segmenting is the skill used to spell a word. Oral segmenting is about saying a word and then breaking it down into sound segments. Games include 'say the sound' where children pull an object from the bag e.g. a duck and then say the sounds 'd-u-ck'. Another activity is toy talk where the toy only understands words that are orally segmented.</p>