



Gusford Primary School

“Promoting Achievement and Success.”

Why do we teach phonics?



Phonics teaches children to listen carefully, differentiate between sounds and recognise the **phonemes (sounds)** that make up each word.

Learning the phonemes and the corresponding **grapheme (written form)** is the basis for learning to read and spell words.

At Gusford Nursery the teaching of phonics is approached in an engaging fun way for all the children. Phonic sessions are composed of games, music, stories, songs and actions.

In Nursery we concentrate initially on the first phase of phonic teaching (Phase 1). This phase focuses on developing children's speaking and listening skills, and continues throughout the year.

The emphasis during Phase 1 is to get children attuned to the sounds around them and ready to begin developing oral blending and segmenting skills.

Recognising and identifying sounds in the environment, voice sounds, sounds that are produced from musical instruments and body percussion form the basis of the learning.

This together with emphasis on teaching rhyme, rhythm, beat and alliteration give the children the skills to confidently move onto the next phase.

How do we teach phonics?

Phase 1 of Phonics teaching consists of the following aspects.

Aspect 1 - General sound discrimination- environmental

The aim of this aspect is to raise children's awareness of the sounds around them and to develop their listening skills.

Activities include going on a listening walk, drumming on different items outside and comparing the sounds, playing sounds games and making shakers.

Aspect 2 - General sound discrimination - instrumental sounds

This aspect aims to develop children's awareness of sounds made by various instruments and noise makers.

Activities include comparing and matching sound makers, playing instruments alongside a story and making loud and quiet sounds.

Aspect 3 - General sound discrimination - body percussion

The aim of this aspect is to develop children's awareness of sounds and rhythms. Activities include singing songs and action rhymes, listening to music and developing a sounds vocabulary.

Aspect 4 - Rhythm and rhyme

This aspect aims to develop children's appreciation and experiences of rhythm and rhyme in speech.

Activities include rhyming stories, rhyming bingo, clapping out the syllables in words, odd one out and rhyme in speech. Also rhyming stories, and rhyming bingo.

Aspect 5 - Alliteration

The focus is on initial sounds of words, with activities including I-Spy type games and matching objects which begin with the same sound.

Aspect 6 - Voice sounds

The aim is to distinguish between different vocal sounds and to begin oral blending and segmenting. Activities include Metal Mike, where children feed pictures of objects into a toy robot's mouth and the adult sounds out the name of the object in a robot voice - /c/-/u/-/p/ cup, with the children joining in.

Aspect 7 - Oral blending and segmenting

To practise oral blending, the adult could say some sounds, such as /c/-/u/-/p/ and see whether the children can pick out a cup from a group of objects. For segmenting practise, the adult could hold up an object such as a sock and ask the children which sounds they can hear in the word sock.

What next?

For those children who are ready we begin learning about the letter shapes, matching them to the **phonemes (sounds)**. This is **Phase 2** in phonic development.



We do this using our Read Write Inc. scheme. This will continue throughout the children's time in Reception, introducing them to more

phonemes as time goes on, enabling them to recognise and 'fred talk' the phonemes to read words. Fred, our Read Write Inc toy, can only speak in phonemes. The children will use 'fred talk' to blend phonemes to read words, as well as practicing their oral blending.



The following list gives a flavour of the type of activities that can be carried out at home to support your child in developing their phonic knowledge and awareness.

Listening Walk- Go on a walk indoors or outdoors see how many sounds can be heard. List them pictorially.

Guess the object- Choose household objects that make a sound e.g. bunch of keys, squeaky toy or instruments. Explore the sounds then make the sound with the object behind a screen. Can your child guess the object?

Grandmother's footsteps- Choose a range of objects / instruments to produce different sounds. Match a type of footstep e.g. tiptoes, fairy steps, giant stamps, hop etc. Play the instrument hidden behind your back and see if child can respond with correct movement.

Shaker Maker- Make shakers with different contents to produce a range of sounds. Use plastic bottles with lids. Put hand puppets over the shakers to hide the contents. Shake to see if child can guess the contents.

Rhythm and Rhyme- Sing / say nursery rhymes, read rhyming stories and stories with a repeated rhythmical phrase e.g. the Gingerbread man

Listen to The Beat- Clap / stamp a rhythm / pattern and ask your child to copy it. Use a variety of percussion instruments to play different rhythms and move in time by marching / stamping or clapping along.

Playing with words- This activity focuses on names and names of objects. The idea is to explore the name of an object or person by clapping the syllables. Encourage your child to clap along when you say the word.

Useful weblinks

www.letters-and-sounds.com/phase-1-games.html

www.phonicsplay.co.uk/Phase1Menu.htm

www.letters-and-sounds.com/phase-1-resources.html

www.earlylearninghq.org.uk/literacy/letters-sounds/

www.oxfordowl.co.uk/for-home/reading-owl/expert-help/phonics-made-easy

www.ruthmiskin.com/en/parents/

If you have any more questions about Phonics teaching in Gusford then please talk to a member of staff!