

Phonics in School

This page provides information on how to teach Phonics.



Getting to know the basics.

Alien Words

As part of the programme, children will be introduced to 'alien words'. These are nonsense words. The children have to use their phonic knowledge to sound out the words and then blend the sounds together to read. It is important that the children say the word they hear rather than try to turn it into a real word.

Types of sounds

Pure sounds

When teaching the speed sounds it is very important that you do not add an intrusive 'uh' to the end of the consonant sound. Try to pronounce them as pure sounds 'mmmmmm' not 'muh', 'fffff' not 'fuh' and 'lllllll' not 'luh'.

This can be quite difficult to begin with but, by ensuring the pure sounds are pronounced, your child will find it much easier to blend the sounds to make words.

Bouncy and stretchy sounds

To help your child remember his or her sounds, we say that some make a stretchy sound and some make a bouncy sound.

Stretchy sounds are said in one continuous sound e.g. mmmmmmm as in mountain.

Bouncy sounds are said with a short sharp gap in between e.g d-d-d-d dinosaur.

Sound blends

Your child is ready to sound blend once they have learnt the first set of sounds and can say these in and out of order. In school, we call this Fred Talk.

Fred Talk involves reading the sounds within a word (for example, c-a-t) and then blending them together to read the word.

Red and Green Words

Green Words

Green words are words that your child will be able to sound out and then blend together, using the speed sounds they have learnt.

Your child will be able to read a book more easily if they practise reading these words first.

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Red Words

Red words are those words which contain spelling patterns that cannot be sounded out. Some of the most frequently used words in the English language have an uncommon spelling pattern and don't sound like they look - for example, 'said' sounds like 'sed'.

Red words have to be learnt by sight. These words are printed in red in the story books we read daily. Learning to read the red words is a very important part of reading and one which you can help your child with at home.

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