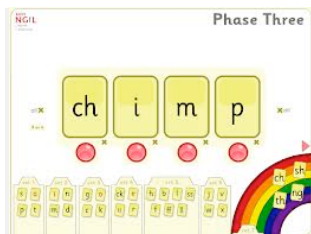




At St. Teresa's Primary school we use a systematic phonics programme called '**Letters and Sounds**' to deliver high quality, discrete phonic lessons throughout Foundation Stage and Key Stage One. Within these lessons, our pupils will be taught and get opportunity to practise and embed the essential skills, knowledge and understanding necessary to be able to decode (read) and encode (write/ spell) print.

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. Phase one begins with hearing environmental sounds. During phase two, children will be introduced to the first sets of letters (graphemes) and the sounds (phonemes) that they make. This builds all the way up phases five and six where different spellings for the same sounds will be explored and some spelling rules (for example adding 'ed' or 'ing') will be introduced.



Phoneme - The smallest unit of sound. There are approximately 44 phonemes in English (it depends on different accents). Phonemes can be put together to make words.

Grapheme - A way of writing down a phoneme. Graphemes can be made up from 1 letter e.g. p, 2 letters e.g. sh, 3 letters e.g. tch or 4 letters e.g. ough.



They are also taught to read and spell '**tricky words**', which are words with spellings that are unusual or that children have not yet been taught (for example 'was') . These are often the words that children get 'stuck' on when reading, and are often the words that as parents and teachers it is hard to explain how and why they 'say' what they say! They just do! They're tricky!



Phase	What's involved?
1	Activities focussed upon environmental sounds, instrumental sounds, rhythm, rhyme, alliteration, voice sounds and finally saying sounds and putting them together.
2 (Reception)	Learning 19 letters of the alphabet and one sound (phoneme) for each of these, beginning with s,a,t, i,p n. Learning to blend the sounds together to make small words and to separate (segment) words back into the sounds to spell them. <i>This is a big step in their reading journey – they will be able to read simple sentences!</i>
3 (Reception)	The remaining 7 letters of the alphabet and one sound for each. Graphemes such as sh, ch and oo - phonemes that cannot be represented by a single letter. By the end of phase three, your child will know a grapheme for each of the 44 phonemes in the English Language. Their spelling and writing will be more adventurous – and whilst not completely accurate, will be phonetically plausible!
4 (Reception)	No new graphemes. Lots of practice in blending and segmenting longer words and words that have adjacent consonants eg. Swim, jump, splash etc.
5 (Year One)	This is the tricky phase! In Year one, children will tackle the 'complex code' – they will learn that phonemes often have more than one way of being written (eg/ ee and ea) and that graphemes can be pronounced in more than one way! (For example pea and bread). English language is confusing!
6 (Year Two)	Phonics is consolidated and spelling is focussed upon, including using prefixes and suffixes etc.

Our phonics lessons are quick paced and multi- sensory; children are continually assessed and their learning challenged in exciting ways. This is then put into context in our Literacy lessons where the children see and experience phonics in action!



Our reading 'scheme' begins with exciting picture books that contain no words to promote familiarity with story structure, character and setting, prediction, deduction and vocabulary development. The conventions of front-to-back and left-to-right orientation when handling books can also be explored.

We have then hand-picked a wide selection of books and placed them into colour bands. They have been chosen from a wide range of schemes, different genres and topics to inspire the children and begin their love of reading. The books suitable for children working in phases 1 -5 of **Letters and Sounds** also have a strong phonics base - indeed many of them have been chosen from phonics schemes (eg/ Bug Club and Alphablocks) so the children should feel immediately successful in using their segmenting and blending skills. Of course, some brilliant 'real' children's story books (traditional tales and other must reads) have also found their way into the banded boxes. As your child works their way through the boxes, you will notice the words and stories getting more complex - and often this needs discussing and exploring more!

Your child can choose their own book from their colour box so they can search for a book that appeals to them - whether that is an exciting adventure story, a book about magic or a non-fiction book about volcanoes!

Transition into Key Stage Two

The 'junior' reading scheme has also been handpicked and on entering year three, all children will be placed onto it according to their needs and abilities. For those that require a little more phonics practise, we have carefully chosen (age appropriate) books to support. For those ready to fly, we have some chunkier novels to get their teeth into right up to a top shelf with children's classics.

All children also have access to our well stocked libraries every week and apply their reading and research skills across the curriculum.