

Phonics

At Stamshaw Infant School we follow the Letters and Sounds document to teach phonics. It can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/letters-and-sounds>

Research shows that when phonics is taught in a structured way, starting with the easiest sounds and progressing through to the most complex, it is the most effective way of teaching young children to read. It is particularly helpful for 5 to 7 year-old children.

In Phase 2, letters and their sounds are introduced one at a time. A set of letters is taught each week, in the following sequence:

Set 1: s, a, t, p

Set 2: i, n, m, d

Set 3: g, o, c, k

Set 4: ck, e, u, r

Set 5: h, b, f, ff, l, ll, s

By the time they reach Phase 3, children will already be able to blend and segment words containing the 19 letters taught in Phase 2. Over the twelve weeks which Phase 3 is expected to last, twenty-five new graphemes are introduced (one at a time).

Set 6: j, v, w, x

Set 7: y, z, zz, qu

Consonant digraphs: ch, sh, th, ng

Vowel digraphs: ai, ee, igh, oa, oo, ar, or, ur, ow, oi, ear, air, ure, er

During Phase 3, children will also learn the letter names using an alphabet song, although they will continue to use the sounds when decoding words.

Tricky words

During Phase 3, the following tricky words (which can't yet be decoded) are introduced:

- he • she • we • me • be • was • you • they • all • are • my • her

When children start Phase Four of the Letters and Sounds phonics programme, they will know a grapheme for each of the 42 phonemes. They will be able to blend phonemes to read CVC (consonant-vowel-consonant) words and segment in order to spell them.

Children will also have begun reading straightforward two-syllable words and simple captions, as well as reading and spelling some tricky words.

In Phase 4, no new graphemes are introduced. The main aim of this phase is to consolidate the children's knowledge and to help them learn to read and spell words which have adjacent consonants, such as trap, string and milk.

Tricky words

During Phase 4, the following tricky words (which can't yet be decoded) are introduced: • said • have • like • so • do • some • come • were • there • little • one • when • out • what

Children entering Phase Five will already be able to read and spell words with adjacent consonants, such as trap, string and flask. They will also be able to read and spell some polysyllabic words.

In Phase Five, children will learn more graphemes and phonemes. For example, they already know ai as in rain, but now they will be introduced to ay as in day and a-e as in make. Alternative pronunciations for graphemes will also be introduced, e.g. ea in tea, head and break. With practice, speed at recognising and blending graphemes will improve. Word and spelling knowledge will be worked on extensively.

Tricky words

During Phase 5, the following tricky words (which can't yet be decoded) are introduced: • oh • their • people • Mr • Mrs • looked • called • asked • could

At the start of Phase Six of Letters and Sounds, children will have already learnt the most frequently occurring grapheme–phoneme correspondences (GPCs) in the English language. They will be able to read many familiar words automatically. When they come across unfamiliar words they will in many cases be able to decode them quickly and quietly using their well-developed sounding and blending skills. With more complex unfamiliar words they will often be able to decode them by sounding them out. At this stage children should be able to spell words phonetically although not always correctly. In Phase Six the main aim is for children to become more fluent readers and more accurate spellers.

More information and games can be found at:

<http://www.letters-and-sounds.com/phase-6-introduction.html>