



Phonics at Glen Hills

What is phonics?

Phonics is a way of teaching reading where your child is taught to read letters or groups of letter by saying the sound(s) they represent. Children can then start to read words by blending the sounds together to make a word. All children in the 4+ and Year 1 participate in daily phonics sessions, whilst children in Year 2 have four sessions a week. Letters and Sounds is used primarily in 4+, Years 1 and 2 but is supplemented by Phonicsplay, Ruth Miskin rhymes (to introduce letter formation in a fun way in 4+) and other personalised planning.

Letters and Sounds

At Glen Hills we follow government guidance with regards to the six phases of phonics teaching. This six phase teaching programme focuses on high quality phonic work. The intention is to “equip children who are 5 with the phonic knowledge and skills they need to become fluent readers by the age of 7.”

Most children at the end of the Foundation Stage will be working within Phase 3/4 for reading and writing. Here is some information about the six phases and the progression between them.

Phase 1

Children explore and experiment with sounds, differentiate between sounds and become familiar with rhyme, rhythm and alliteration.

Phase 2

To introduce grapheme/phoneme (letter/sound) correspondence. Children know that words are constructed from phonemes and that phonemes are represented by graphemes. They have a knowledge of a small selection of common consonants and vowels (which usually begin with s, a, t, p, i, n) and begin to put them together to read and spell CVC words.

Phase 3

To teach one grapheme for each of the 44 phonemes in order to read and spell simple regular words. Children link sounds to letters, naming and sounding the letters of the alphabet. They hear and say sounds in the order they occur in the word and read simple words by blending phonemes from left to right. They recognise common digraphs (e.g. th) and read some high frequency words.

Phase 4

To teach children to read and spell words containing adjacent consonants. Children will be able to blend and segment adjacent consonants in words and apply this skill when reading and spelling. Children will move from CVC words (pot, sheep) to CVCC (pots) and CCVC (spot) and then CCVCC (spots).

Phase 5

Teaching children to recognise and use alternative ways of pronouncing the graphemes and spelling the phonemes already taught. Children will use alternative ways of pronouncing the graphemes (e.g. the 'c' in coat and city). Recognise an increasing number of high frequency words automatically. Knowledge and skills of phonics will be the prime approach to reading and spelling.

Phase 6

Teaching children to develop their skill and automaticity in reading and spelling, creating ever increasing capacity to attend to reading for meaning. Applying phonic knowledge to recognise and spell an increasing number of complex words. Read an increasing number of high and medium frequency words independently and automatically.

Phoneme – letter sound

Grapheme – a letter or a group of letters representing one sound

Digraph – sounds represented by two letters (e.g. sh). Children should sound out the digraph (sh) not the individual letters (s – h).

Vowel digraphs – comprise of two vowels which, together, make one sound (e.g. ai, oo, aw).

Blending – to draw individual sounds together to pronounce a word (e.g. s-n-a-p, blended together, reads *snap*).

Segmenting – to split up a word into its individual phonemes in order to spell it (e.g. the word *cat* has three phonemes: / c / , / a / , / t /).

Cluster – two (or three) letters making two (or three) sounds (e.g. the first three letters of *straight* are a consonant cluster).

Split digraph – two letters, split, making one sound (e.g. a – e as in *make* or l – e in *site*).

VC, CVC, CCVC – the abbreviations for vowel-consonant, consonant-vowel-consonant, consonant-consonant-vowel-consonant, which are used to describe the order of letters in words (e.g. *am*, *ham*, *slam*).

'Tricky Words' – some words in English have an irregular spelling and cannot be read by blending, such as *said*, *was* and *one*. Unfortunately, many of these are common words. The irregular parts have to be remembered.

How you can help at home

At Glen Hills Primary School we know how important it is for teachers and parents to work together to give your child the best start. Reading together at home is one of the easiest but most important ways in which you can help your child to become an effective and confident reader.

Other ideas

- Reading rhyming books / singing nursery rhymes
- Magnetic letters
- Modelling letters / words (Play Doh / Plasticine)
- Letter hunts
- Sorting objects into initial sounds
- Chalking letters / words outside
- Writing in sand / flour
- Letter / tricky word bingo
- I Spy (initial / first sounds)
- Writing shopping lists, birthday cards etc.

Useful websites

www.phonicsplay.co.uk

www.jollylearning.co.uk

www.ictgames.com

www.purplemash.co.uk