



Phonics at St John the Divine CoE Primary School

Phonics is taught daily in discrete phonics sessions for children in Early Years and Key Stage One. Pupils learn different skills and are taught different letter sounds planned for in a systematic way through phases.

Phase One

In Phase One we focus on speaking and listening skills, so that children become more aware of the different sounds around them. We cover seven aspects including environmental sounds, instrumental sounds, body percussion, rhythm and rhyme, alliteration, voice sounds and oral blending and segmenting. Hearing the individual sounds in a word and being able to blend them together to identify the word is a precursor to being able to read.

Phase Two

This is the phase most people think of when they hear 'Phonics'. In Phase Two, we begin to introduce letter sounds. We do not learn the sounds in alphabetical order, but rather in an order that makes it possible to form words sooner. Children will learn how to break up (segment) a word into its individual sounds (phonemes), such as 'c-a-t', and then how to blend the sounds together to read the whole word – 'cat'. Children are also introduced to 'Common Exception' or 'Sight' words, which are words that cannot be decoded using phonics, such as 'no'.

Phase Three

During this phase, children are introduced to more letter sounds, including the rest of the alphabet, digraphs (two-letter sounds) and trigraphs (three-letter sounds). Children will continue practising segmenting and blending in order to read and write new words featuring sounds they have been taught. They continue to expand their recall of new tricky words.

Phase Four

During this phase, no new phonemes are introduced. Children continue to practise segmenting and blending words, including words that are a little more complicated, such as polysyllabic words and words with adjacent consonants such as 'milk'. They continue to expand their recall of new tricky words.

Phase Five

During this phase, children will learn alternative graphemes (what the letter sounds look like). For example, they will have already learnt 'oi' as in 'coin', but will now learn 'oy' as in 'toy'. They continue to expand their recall of new tricky words.

Phase Six

During this phase, we focus on becoming more fluent and confident readers. Children will continue to practise the skill of decoding unfamiliar words and will also be able to spell many words phonetically. Children continue to learn the spelling rules identified in the National Curriculum.