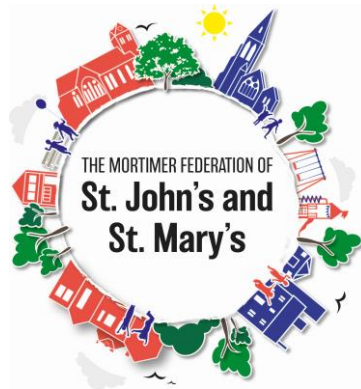


The Mortimer Federation of St. John's and St. Mary's



**Helping your child
achieve in Phonics**

- Year 1 -

A booklet for parents

What is phonics?

Phonics is a way of teaching children to read by breaking up words into smaller chunks of sound.

For example, we can break a simple word like 'cat' into the three sounds c-a-t.

Children will learn the individual sounds for each letter or groups of letters in order to become a successful reader. Some sounds in English are made up of more than one letter like the sound 'ea' in tea or team.

Once children know the sounds they will be able to 'decode' unfamiliar words by breaking the word into sounds then read the word by blending back together. For example, sh-o-p- shop.

Why do we teach phonics?

Research shows that when phonics is taught in a structured way- starting with the easiest sounds, progressing through to the most complex- it's the most effective way of teaching young children to read. It's particularly helpful for children aged 5-6.

Almost all children who have good teaching of phonics will learn the skills they need to tackle new words. They can then go on to read any kind of text fluently and confidently, and to read for enjoyment.

What is the phonics screening check?

The government requires a phonics screening check for all Year 1 children and Year 2 children who did not meet the nationally expected level in Year 1. It is designed to give teachers and parents information about how the children are progressing in phonics.

Each child will sit with a teacher they know and will be asked to read 40 words aloud. Some of the words they may have read before and some words will be completely new to them. The test normally takes a few minutes to complete but there is no time limit. If your child is struggling, the teacher can easily stop the test. The test is carefully designed not to be stressful for your child.

The 40 words in the test are made up of real and non-words.

What are non-words?

Non-words or pseudo words are nonsense words made up of letter sounds. For example, 'vam' or 'jound'. These words are included in the screening test so they are unfamiliar to the child and therefore test their ability to decode words using phonics.

It will check your child can:

- Sound out and blend graphemes (see terminology glossary) in order to read simple words
- Read phonically decodable one-syllable and two-syllable words e.g. cat, windmill

What should I do if my child is struggling to decode a word?

- Say each sound in the word from left to right
- Blend the sound by pointing to each letter i.e. b – in bat, or letter group i.e. igh – in sigh, as you say the sound run your finger under the whole word as you say it.
- Work at your child's pace
- Always be positive and give lots of praise and encouragement.

Terminology

Below is some of the terminology your child will learn during their phonics lessons and what they mean.

Phoneme

A phoneme is the smallest unit of sound in a word. It is generally accepted that most varieties of spoken English use about 44 phonemes.

Graphemes

A grapheme the written symbol of a phoneme. It is a letter or group of letters representing a sound e.g. /s/, /ai/, /ear/

Segmenting and blending

Segmenting consists of breaking words down into phonemes to spell. Blending consists of building words from phonemes to read. Both skills are important.

Digraph

This is when two letters come together to make a phoneme. For example, /oa/ makes the sound in 'boat' and is also known as a **vowel digraph**. There are also **consonant digraphs**, for example, /sh/ and /ch/ as in ship or chip.

Trigraph

This is when three letters come together to make one phoneme, for example /igh/

Split digraph

A digraph in which the two letters are not adjacent – e.g. the /a_e/ sound in **make**.

Abbreviations

VC, CVC, and CCVC are the abbreviations for words with vowels and consonants. For example, *am* (VC), *Sam* (CVC), *slam* (CCVC), or *each* (VC), *beach* (CVC) and *bleach* (CCVC).

Phase 5 Phonics

In Year 1, the children will continue their phonics learning from the Foundation Stage. Children will be taught new graphemes and alternative pronunciations for these graphemes as well as graphemes they already know. Some of the alternatives will already have been encountered in high frequency words that have been taught previously. The children will begin to learn to choose the appropriate grapheme when spelling. They will be automatically decoding a large number of words for reading by this point.

Tricky words for reading and writing

Tricky words are called common exception words in the KS1 Spelling Curriculum. These are words that are spelled without using the normal spelling rules.

the	you	where	put	are
a	your	love	push	were
do	they	come	pull	was
to	be	some	full	is
today	he	one	house	his
of	me	once	our	has
said	she	ask	my	I
says	we	by	here	school
go	no	so	there	friend

New graphemes for reading:

ay - day	oy - boy	wh - when	a-e - make
ou - out	ir - girl	ph - photo	e-e - these
ie - tie	ue - blue	ew - new	i-e - like
ea - eat	aw - saw	oe - toe	o-e - home
		au - Paul	u-e - rule

By Phase 5 children should be reading words fluently and no longer be blending and segmenting familiar words.

The real focus throughout the phase is to not only learn the new graphemes for reading but also to learn to read words with alternative pronunciations. Children also will need to learn alternative spellings for each phoneme.

How can I help my child at home?

- Look at an example of a Phonics screening check to understand what the children will have to do:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/phonics-screening-check-2017-materials>
- Encourage your child to 'sound out' when reading or writing. Focus particularly on spotting more unusual sound patterns
- Help your child to complete any phonics homework they bring home
- Children can practice their phonics by playing games online –see examples below
- REMEMBER: Phonics is not the only thing needed to become a fluent reader
- Please continue to read with your child daily and encourage them to: sound out, re-read to check it makes sense, use pictures for clues and ask questions about the book.
- Most importantly, ENJOY READING!

Useful webpages

<http://www.letters-and-sounds.com>

<http://www.phonicsplay.co.uk>

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/wordsandpictures>

http://www.ictgames.com/phonemeFlop_v4.html

<http://www.oxfordowl.co.uk/welcome/home/reading-owl/fun-ideas>

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/ks1/literacy/phonics/play/popup.shtml>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/topics/zd63xyc/articles/zncgvk7?scrlybrkr>

<https://www.teachyourmonstertoread.com/>