

Enquiring Minds & Open Hearts



ST. JOHN'S  
CHURCH OF ENGLAND  
INFANT SCHOOL

# Early Year's Reading and Phonics Guidance



St John's C of E Infant School

# Content

The information in this booklet will explain the phonics teaching and reading that your child will receive and learn at school during their time in early years.

It will also provide information on how you can help support your son's / daughter's phonics development at home.

Your child will be taught various **sets of sounds** as well as groups of **tricky words**.

If you need clarification or would like to know more about our phonics teaching, please make an appointment to speak to your son's /daughter's class teacher.

Thank you for your continued support.

Please remember that there are lots of ways you can engage a child in the books you read together. The skills a child needs to develop as a reader include:

Using the pictures, grammar and context of the writing to support their understanding and decoding the actual words.

**Above all, enjoy reading with your children!**

Before your son/daughter can start to read, s/he needs to learn to:

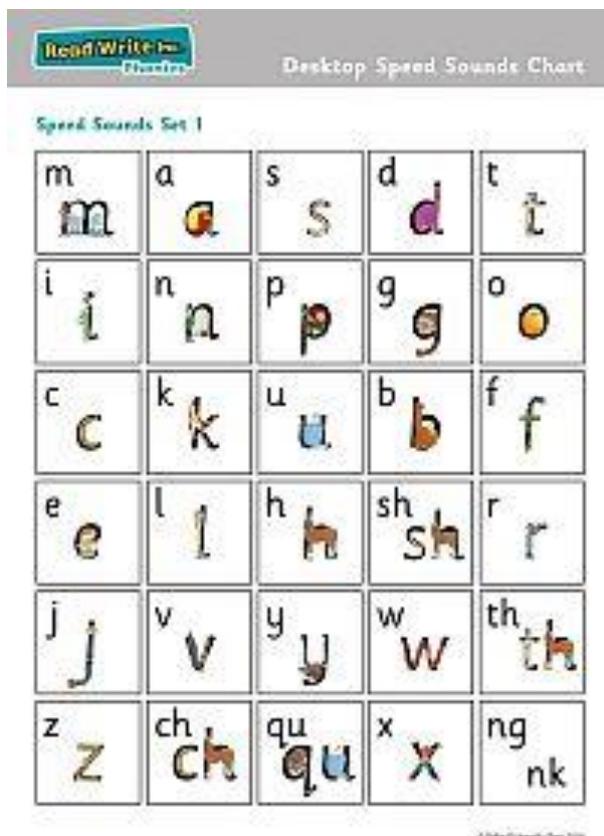
- Say the sound that is represented by each letter or groups of letters. These are called 'speed sounds'.
- How to blend the sounds together in a word to read it e.g c-a-t= cat. This is called 'sound blending'.

### What are speed sounds?

In *Read Write Inc* phonics the individual sounds are called 'speed sounds' because we want your child to read them effortlessly.

### What are 'speed sounds' Set 1, Set 2 and Set 3?

Set 1: In early years your child will learn the sounds below by sight. They will also learn how to blend them together to read words eg: m-a-t = mat.



## Set 1 sounds (in order)

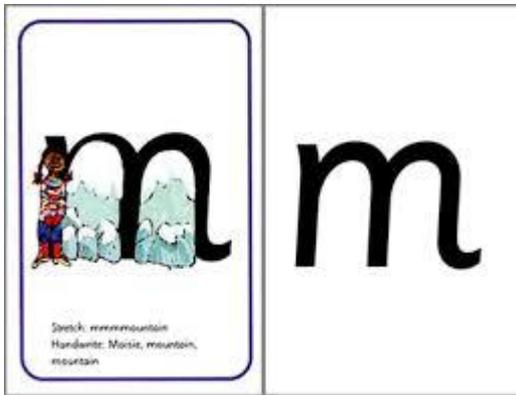
m a s d t, l n p g o, c k u b, f e l h sh, r j v y w, th z ch q u x ng nk

To begin with, we learn 4 sounds a week.

We use pure sounds so that your child will be able to blend the sounds into words more easily.

Letter-sound pictures are used to help your child learn these sounds quickly.

*eg. Mmaisie mmmountain is morphed into m*



Once they have learnt the first 5 sounds we teach them to blend them. When we say words in pure sounds we call it 'Fred Talk'. E.g. s-a-t.

**We don't use the letter names at this early stage.**

See Ruth Miskin's top tips for getting started with phonics:

<https://www.oxfordowl.co.uk/for-home/reading/phonics-made-easy>

When teaching a speed sound we either have to 'stretch' or 'bounce' it.

These first sounds should all be stretched slightly. Try to avoid saying **uh** after each one! E.g. mm/not muh, ss/ not suh, ff/ not fuh.

**m** – mmmmmmountain (keep lips pressed together hard)

**s** – ssssssnake (keep teeth together and hiss – unvoiced)

**n** – nnnnnnet (keep tongue behind teeth)

**f** – ffffflower (keep teeth on bottom lip and force air out sharply – unvoiced)

**l** – lllllleg (keep pointed curled tongue behind teeth)

**r** – rrrrrrobot (say rrr as if you are growling)

**v** – vvvvvvulture (keep teeth on bottom lip and force air out gently)

**z** – zzzzzzig zzzzag (keep teeth together and make a buzzing sound)

**th** – thhhhank you ( stick out tongue and breathe out sharply) **sh** – shhhh (make a shhh noise as though you are telling somebody to be quiet!)

**ng** – thinnnnngg on a strinnnnngg (curl your tongue at the back of your throat)

**nk** – I think I stink (make a piggy oink noise without the oi! nk nk nk)

These next sounds cannot be stretched. Make the sound as short as possible avoiding uh at the end of the sound:

**t** – (tick tongue behind the teeth – unvoiced)

**p** - (make distinctive p with lips – unvoiced)

**k** – (make sharp click at back of throat)

**c** - as above h – (say h as you breathe sharply out – unvoiced) **ch** - (make a short sneezing sound)

**x** – (say a sharp c and add s – unvoiced)

You will find it harder to avoid saying uh at the end of these sounds.

**d** – (tap tongue behind the teeth)

**g** – (make soft sound in throat)

**b** – (make a short, strong b with lips)

**j** – (push lips forward)

**y** – (keep edges of tongue against teeth)

**w** – (keep lips tightly pursed)

**qu** – (keep lips pursed as you say cw – unvoiced)

The short vowels should be kept short and sharp:

**a:** a-a-a (open mouth wide as if to take a bite of an apple)

**e:** e-e-e (release mouth slightly from a position)

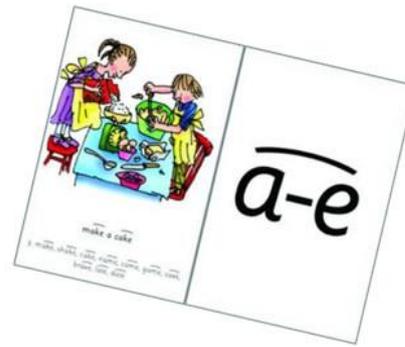
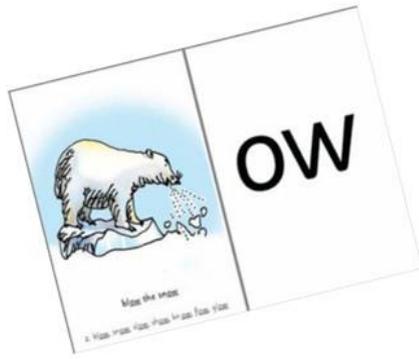
**i:** i-i-i (make a sharp sound at the back of the throat – smile) **o:** o-o-o  
(push out lips; make the mouth into o shape)

**u:** u-u-u (make a sound in the throat)

### **Speed Sounds Sets 2 and 3: The long vowels**

Once your son/daughter knows all Set 1 sounds by sight and sound and uses them to blend to read words, we start teaching Set 2 initially and then Set 3 long vowel sounds. Your son/daughter will need to learn that most vowel sounds have more than one spelling.

The average time it takes to learn and use correctly all these corresponding long vowel sounds in reading and writing is two years.



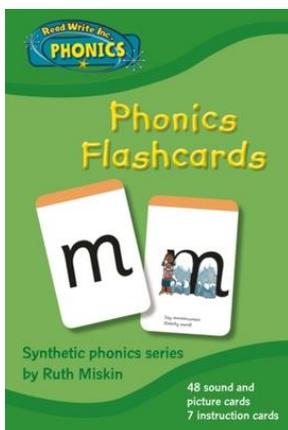
### What are green words?

'Green words' are words which your son/daughter will be able to 'go ahead' and read as they are made up of the speed sounds that s/he will have learnt.

### RESOURCES FOR HOME USE

*Read Write Inc. Phonics Flashcards*

We do not normally recommend buying flashcards for home use. However, we make an exception with these. They are great cards linked to the phonics scheme we do in school. You could use them with your son/daughter during their time in Reception and Year 1.



They retail at £6.99 However, you can order them from Amazon with free postage for less than £5.

[www.oxfordowl.co.uk/](http://www.oxfordowl.co.uk/)

A great website that has lots of useful information on it to help you with supporting your son's/daughter's maths and reading development.

## **ACTIVITIES TO DO AT HOME WITH YOUR CHILD**

You will need a pack of Read Write Inc. Phonics Flashcards (see resources for home).

### **How to practise Set 1 Speed sounds**

When you practise your son's/daughter's Set 1 'speed sounds', you either have to stretch or bounce them (see above for details).

### **Example of how to practise the stretchy speed sound e.g. m**

- Sing and stretch mmmm as you press your lips together. Ask your son/daughter to do the same.
- Hold up the picture card. Show the picture of the mouse and say mmmm, and ask your son/daughter to say mmmm.
- Show the picture side of the card 'm'. Say mountain & ask your son/daughter to repeat it. Write the letter 'm' next to the card, so your son/daughter can see that the picture looks like the letter. Show the letter side. Say m (sound not the letter name).
- Ask your son/daughter to repeat m.
- Show your son/daughter both sides and ask him/her to say either m or mountain, depending on which side you show.

### **Example of how to practise the bouncy speed sound e.g. a**

- Sing & bounce a-a-a a. Ask your son/daughter to do the same.
- Hold up the picture card. Show the picture of the astronaut and say a-a-a-a astronaut, and ask your son/daughter to repeat it.
- Show the picture side of the card 'a'. Say a-a-a-apple and ask your son/daughter to repeat it. Write the letter 'a' next to the card, so your son/daughter can see that the picture looks like the letter. Show the letter side. Say a (sound not the letter name).
- Ask your son/daughter to repeat a.
- Show your son/daughter both sides and ask him/her to say either a or apple, depending on which side you show.

Once your son/daughter knows a sound well, drop the bouncing/stretching to enable him or her to sound-blend. Also stop showing the picture prompt so that your son/daughter doesn't become too reliant on it.

### **How to practise Sound-blending**

Sound-blending 1 Your son/daughter will be ready to blend sounds together to read words once s/he has learnt the first set of sounds: m, a, s, d, t, and can say them in and out of order at speed.

Put the cards m, a, t on the table and push them closer to each other as you say the sounds. Point to each card as you say the sounds.

Repeat a few times saying the sounds more quickly and then the word, with your son/daughter. Repeat with: mad, sad, dad, sat, at.

Silently make m-a-t with the Speed sound cards. Point to each letter and say the sounds. Then say mat. Ask your son/daughter to do the same.

Then put the cards back with the other cards (s and d) and ask your son/daughter to use the cards to spell the word mat. Now ask your son/daughter to 'sound out' the word and read the word by blending again.

Repeat with: mad, sad, dad, sat, at.

Explain to your son/daughter that in order to read words s/he needs to practise saying each sound in a word and blending the sounds together.

Below is a list of 'Green words'. They are called Green words because your son/daughter should now be able to 'go ahead' and read them, having learnt all the sounds in them and how to sound-blend them.

For each of the words, ask your son/daughter first to 'sound out' the word and then to blend the sounds together, e.g. m-a-t = mat.

**mat**                      **Dad**

**mad**                      **sad**

**at**                        **sat**

Once your son/daughter is confident with Sound-blending 1 you can move onto Sound-blending 2.

### **Sound-blending 2**

This time, add i, n, p, g, o to your pack of sounds (you will now have 10 sounds). Follow the blueprint instructions for teaching sound-blending 1. Using the cards, practise: dog, dig, pin, pan, on, it, top. Then ask your son/daughter to read the words below.

For each of the words, ask your son/daughter first to 'sound out' the word and then to blend the sounds together, e.g. p-i-n = pin.

<b>in</b>	<b>on</b>	<b>it</b>
<b>an</b>	<b>and</b>	<b>pin</b>
<b>got</b>	<b>dog</b>	<b>sit</b>
<b>tip</b>	<b>pan</b>	<b>gap</b>
<b>dig</b>	<b>top</b>	

Once your son/daughter is confident with Sound-blending 2 you can move onto Sound-blending 3.

### **Sound-blending 3**

This time, add c, k, u, b to your pack of sounds (you will now have 14 sounds). Follow the blueprint instructions for teaching sound-blending 1. Using the cards, practise: cat, cot, can, cup, bin, kit, up. Then ask your son/daughter to read the words below.

For each of the words, ask your son/daughter first to 'sound out' the word and then to blend the sounds together, e.g. k-i-ck = kick.

<b>bin</b>	<b>cat</b>	<b>cot</b>
<b>can</b>	<b>kit</b>	<b>mud</b>
<b>up</b>	<b>cup</b>	<b>bad</b>
<b>back</b>	<b>kick</b>	

Once your son/daughter is confident with Sound-blending 3 you can move onto Sound-blending 4.

### **Sound-blending 4**

This time, add f, e, l, h, sh to your pack of sounds (you will now have 19 sounds). Follow the blueprint instructions for teaching sound-blending 1. Using the cards, practise: ship, met, fan, hen, log, lip. Then ask your son/daughter to read the words below.

For each of the words, ask your son/daughter first to 'sound out' the word and then to blend the sounds together, e.g. f-i-sh = fish.

<b>met</b>	<b>set</b>	<b>fan</b>
<b>fun</b>	<b>fat</b>	<b>lip</b>
<b>log</b>	<b>let</b>	<b>had</b>
<b>hit</b>	<b>hen</b>	<b>ship</b>
<b>shop</b>	<b>fish</b>	

Once your son/daughter is confident with Sound-blending 5 you can move onto Sound-blending 5.

### **Sound-blending 5**

This time, add r, j, v, y, w to your pack of sounds (you will now have 24 sounds). Follow the blueprint instructions for teaching sound-blending 1. Using the cards, practise: red, jet, yum, wish, vet, rat. Then ask your son/daughter to read the words below.

For each of the words, ask your son/daughter first to 'sound out' the word and then to blend the sounds together, e.g. w-e-t = wet.

<b>red</b>	<b>run</b>	<b>rat</b>
<b>jog</b>	<b>yet</b>	<b>jam</b>
<b>vet</b>	<b>yap</b>	<b>yes</b>
<b>yum</b>	<b>web</b>	<b>win</b>
<b>wish</b>	<b>wet</b>	

Once your son/daughter is confident with Sound-blending 5 you can move onto Sound-blending 6.

### **Sound-blending 6**

This time, add th, z, ch, qu, x, ng, nk to your pack of sounds (you will now have 31 sounds). Follow the blueprint instructions for teaching sound-blending 1. Using the cards, practise: this, zap, chin, quilt, fox, bang, think. Then ask your son/daughter to read the words below.

For each of the words, ask your son/daughter first to 'sound out' the word and then to blend the sounds together, e.g. th-i-ng = thing.

<b>thin</b>	<b>thick</b>	<b>this</b>
<b>zap</b>	<b>zip</b>	<b>chin</b>
<b>chop</b>	<b>chat</b>	<b>quiz</b>
<b>quit</b>	<b>fox</b>	<b>sing</b>
<b>bang</b>	<b>thing</b>	<b>wink</b>