Lister Primary School

Little Wandle Letters and Sounds

Phonics information for parents and carers

Introduction

As you know, the ability to read and write well is a vital skill for all children, paving the way for an enjoyable and successful school experience.

Children learn and practise many of the skills that they need for reading and writing from a very early age. They do this through a wide range of activities and experiences, at home, in settings and in school. They explore and learn through singing and saying rhymes, making and listening to music, talking with others, sharing books with adults and other children, dressing up, experimenting with writing and using puppets and toys to retell and make up stories.

Children's spoken language supports reading and writing

In order to make a good start in reading and writing, children need to have an adult listen to them and talk to them. Speaking and listening are the foundations for reading and writing. Even everyday activities such as preparing meals, tidying up, putting shopping away and getting ready to go out offer you the chance to talk to your child, explaining what you are doing. Through these activities, children hear the way language is put together into sentences for a purpose.

Books are a rich source of new words for your child; words you would not use in everyday conversations appear in books. Children need to have a wide vocabulary to understand the meaning of books, so read aloud and share books as often as you can. They will enjoy it and it will be useful to them when they come across these words in their own reading later on.

Ways you can support your children at home: talking and listening

- **Make time to listen to your child talking** – as you meet them from their setting or school, as you walk, or travel home by car, in the supermarket as you shop, at meal times, bath times, bedtimes – any time!
- **Switch off the TV, radio and mobile phones** – and really listen!
- **Show that you are interested in what they are talking about** – look at your child, smile, nod your head, ask a question or make a response to show that you really have been listening.
- **Make a collection of different toy creatures** – for example, a duck, a snake, an alien, say the sound it might make as you play together, for example, 'quack-quack', 'sssssss', 'yuk-yuk', and encourage your child to copy you.
- **Listen at home** – switch off the TV and listen to the sounds, both inside and outside the home. Can your child tell you what sounds they heard, in the order in which they heard them?
- **Play-a-tune** – and follow me! Make or buy some simple shakers, drums and beaters, then play a simple tune and ask your child to copy. Have fun!
- **Use puppets** and toys to make up stories or retell known ones. Record your child telling the story and play it back to them.

Sounds in spoken language – the beginning of phonics

At Lister Primary, when children enter Nursery they take part in high-quality speaking and listening sessions every day. These are fun sessions involving lots of speaking, listening and games, where the emphasis is on children's active participation. They learn to use their phonic knowledge for reading and writing activities and in their independent play.
The aim of this booklet is to give you a clear picture of how we approach the teaching of phonics and word recognition and how, as a parent or carer, you can support and encourage your child at home.

From a very early stage, children develop awareness of different sounds in spoken language. They develop understanding that spoken words are made up of different sounds (phonemes) and they learn to match these phonemes to letters (graphemes). Phonics is about children knowing how letters link to sounds (graphemes to phonemes), for example, **c** as in 'cat', **ll** as in 'fell', ***ee*** as in 'sheep'.

Children use this phonic knowledge when they are reading and writing. This approach has been shown to provide a quick and efficient way for most young children to learn to read words on the page, fluently and accurately. We want children to develop this skill so that it becomes automatic. This also greatly helps them with their spelling.
At Lister Primary School we use a systematic phonics programme called Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised. More information on this Phonics programme can be found:
https://www.littlewandlelettersandsounds.org.uk/resources/for-parents/

Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised

Letters and Sounds Revised is planned across phases 2, 3, 4 and 5, with each phase building on the skills and knowledge of previous learning. There are no big leaps in learning. Children have time to practise and rapidly expand their ability to read and spell words. They are also taught to read and spell 'tricky words', which are words with spellings that are unusual or that children have not yet been taught.

Foundation for Phonics

This paves the way for systematic learning of phonics and starts in nursery.

Teachers plan activities that will help children to listen attentively to sounds around them, such as the sounds of their toys and to sounds in spoken language. Teachers teach a wide range of nursery rhymes and songs. They read good books to and with the children. This helps to increase the number of words they know – their vocabulary – and helps them talk confidently about books.

Ways you can support your children at home

Play '**What do we have in here?**' Put some toys or objects in a bag and pull one out at a time. Emphasise the first sound of the name of the toy or object by repeating it, for example, 'c c c c – car', 'b b b b – box', 'ch ch ch ch – chip'.

Say: 'A **t**all **t**in of **t**omatoes!' '**T**ommy, the **t**icklish **t**eddy!' 'A **l**ovely **l**ittle **l**emon!' This is called alliteration. Use names, for example, '**G**urpreet **g**ets the **g**iggles', '**M**ilo **m**akes **m**usic', '**N**aheema's **n**ose'.

Share **'Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled peppers'**.

Going on a sound hunt outside – What sounds did you hear? What did you hear first/last? What did it sound like?

Hide some objects in a box – can you listen – what did you hear? Can the children name the sound. Challenge: Play three sounds – can you put them in order of what you heard at the start, the middle and at the end?

Learning how to 'sound-talk'
The teacher shows children how to do this – **c-a-t = cat**. The separate sounds (phonemes) are spoken aloud, in order, all through the word, and are then merged together into the whole word. The merging together is called blending and is a vital skill for reading.

Children will also learn to do this the other way around – **cat = c-a-t**. The whole word is spoken aloud and then broken up into its sounds (phonemes) in order, all through the word. This is called segmenting and is a vital skill for spelling.
This is all oral (spoken). Your child will not be expected to match the letter to the sound at this stage. The emphasis is on helping children to hear the separate sounds in words and to create spoken sounds.

Ways you can support your children at home

Sound-talking
Find real objects around your home that have three phonemes (sounds) and practise 'sound talk'. First, just let them listen, then see if they will join in, for example, saying:
'I spy a p-e-g – peg.'
'I spy a c-u-p – cup.'
'Where's your other s-o-ck – sock?'
'Simon says – put your hands on your h-ea-d.'
'Simon says – touch your ch-i-n.'

Phase 2

In this phase children will continue practising what they have learned from Nursery, including 'sound-talk'. They will also be taught the phonemes (sounds) for a number of letters (graphemes), which phoneme is represented by which grapheme and that a phoneme can be represented by **more than one letter,** for example, **/ll/** as in **b-e-ll**. They may be using pictures (mnemonics) to help them remember these.

VC and CVC words

C and V are abbreviations for 'consonant' and 'vowel'. VC words are words consisting of a vowel then a consonant (e.g. am, at, it) and CVC words are words consisting of a consonant then a vowel then a consonant (e.g. cat, rug, sun). Words such as tick and bell also count as CVC words – although they have four letters, they have only three sounds. For example, in the word bell, **b** = consonant, **e** = vowel, **ll** = consonant.

Now the children will be seeing letters and words, as well as hearing them. They will be shown how to make whole words by pushing magnetic letters or flashcards together to form little words, reading little words on the interactive whiteboard and breaking up words into individual sounds, which will help their spelling. These will be simple words made up of two phonemes, for example, am, at, it, or three phonemes, for example, cat, rug, sun, tick, bell.

Tricky words
They will also learn several tricky words: **the**, **is, I, put, pull, full, as, and, has, his, her, go, no, to, into, she, push, he, of, we, me, be.**

Children will still be practising oral blending and segmenting skills daily. They need plenty of practice at doing this.

Saying the sounds
Your child will be taught how to pronounce the sounds (phonemes) correctly to make blending easier.

Sounds should be sustained where possible (e.g. sss, fff, mmm) and, where this is not possible, 'uh' sounds after consonants should be reduced as far as possible (e.g. try to avoid saying 'buh', 'cuh'). Teachers help children to look at different letters and say the right sounds for them. See the videos to support this: https://www.littlewandlelettersandsounds.org.uk/resources/for-parents/

Ways you can support your children at home

Magnetic letters
Stick magnetic letters on your fridge, or use with a tin baking tray. Find out which letters have been taught – have fun finding these with your child and place them on the magnetic surface.

Making words together
Make little words together, for example, it, up, am, and, top, dig, run, met, pick. As you select the letters, say them aloud: 'a-m – am', 'm-e-t – met'.

Breaking words up
Now do it the other way around: read the word, break the word up and move the letters away, saying: 'met – m-e-t'.

Both these activities help children to see that reading and spelling are reversible processes.

Don't forget the writing box!
Spelling is harder than reading words – praise, don't criticise. Little whiteboards and pens, and magic boards, are a good way for children to try out spellings and practise their handwriting.

Your child might be trying to use letters from their name to write; this shows that they know that writing needs real alphabet letters. Once the children are confident with the sounds in Phase 2 we teach the children their letter names.
Make an alphabet poster to help them remember the letters.

Getting ready for writing
Teachers will model how to form letters (graphemes) correctly, so that children can eventually acquire a fluent and legible handwriting style. These skills develop over a long period of time. A child's ability to form a letter correctly is a separate skill from phonics. Holding a pen or pencil needs considerable co-ordination and practice in making small movements with hands and fingers.

In the early phonic phases children can use letter cards or magnetic letters to demonstrate their knowledge of phonics.

Writing in lower-case letters
We shall be teaching lower-case letters, as well as capital letters. As most writing will be in lower-case letters it is useful if you can use these at home. A good start is for your child to write their name correctly, starting with a capital letter followed by lower-case letters.

Your child's teacher can advise on the handwriting style that is taught and how you can help at home.

Once the children have completed Phase 2 they can begin to practise the Upper Case letter (see guide on our website under curriculum tab and phonics).

Ways you can support your children at home

Using their whole body
For handwriting children need to be well co-ordinated through their whole body, not just their hands and fingers. Games that help co-ordination include throwing balls at a target, under-arm and over-arm, and bouncing balls – also skipping on the spot, throwing a Frisbee, picking up pebbles from the beach and throwing them into the sea. Have fun!

Hand and finger play
Action rhymes such as 'Incy wincy spider', 'One potato, two potato' and 'Tommy Thumb' are great fun and get their hands and fingers moving. Playing with salt dough or clay really helps strengthen little fingers, as does cookery and using simple toolkits.

Hand–eye co-ordination
Pouring water into jugs and cups of different sizes, sweeping up with a dustpan and brush, cutting, sticking, tracing, threading beads, completing puzzles, peeling off stickers and sticking them in the right place – these all help hand–eye co-ordination.

Pencil hold
The 'pincer' movement needs to be practised. This is important as it enables children to hold a pencil properly as they write. Provide them with kitchen tongs and see if they can pick up small objects. Move on to challenging them to pick up smaller things, for example, little cubes, sugar lumps, dried peas, lentils, first with chopsticks, then with tweezers.
Ask children to peg objects to a washing line.
Provide plenty or different types of pen and pencil; hold their hand to practise the correct grip.

Phase 3

The purpose of this phase is to:

- Teach more graphemes, most of which are made of two letters, for example, '**oa**' as in **boat**
- Practise blending and segmenting a wider set of CVC words, for example, **fizz**, **chip**, **sheep**, **light**
- Learn all letter names and begin to form them correctly
- Read more tricky words and begin to spell some of them
- Read and write words in phrases and sentences.

CVC words containing graphemes made of two or more letters

Here are some examples of words your children will be reading: **tail**, **week**, **right**, **soap**, **food**, **park**, **burn**, **cord**, **town**, **soil**

Their confidence from the daily experience of practising and applying their phonic knowledge to reading and writing is really paying off!

Tricky words

The number of tricky words is growing. These are so important for reading and spelling: **was, you, they, my, by, all, are, sure, pure.**

Ways you can support your children at home

- Sing an alphabet song together.
- Play '**I spy**', using letter names as well as sounds.
- Continue to play with magnetic letters, using some of the two grapheme (letter) combinations:

r-ai-n = rain blending for reading **rain = r-ai-n** – segmenting for spelling
b-oa-t = boat blending for reading **boat = b-oa-t** – segmenting for spelling
h-ur-t = hurt blending for reading **hurt = h-ur-t** – segmenting for spelling

- Praise your child for trying out words.
- Ask teachers for a list of the tricky words.
- Set a timer. Call out one word at a time and get your child to spell it on a magic board or a small whiteboard, against the timer – remember, they can use magnetic letters.
- Play '**Pairs**', turning over two words at a time trying to find a matching pair. This is especially helpful with the tricky words: **the the**, **to to**, **no no**, **go go**, **I I**
- Don't worry if they get some wrong! These are hard to remember – they need plenty of practice.

Phase 4

Children continue to practise previously learned graphemes and phonemes and learn how to read and write:

CVCC words: **tent, damp, toast, chimp**

For example, in the word **'toast', t = consonant, oa = vowel, s = consonant, t = consonant.**

and **CCVC** words: **swim, plum, sport, cream, spoon**

For example, in the word **'cream', c = consonant, r = consonant, ea = vowel, m = consonant.**

They will be learning more tricky words and continuing to read and write sentences together.

Tricky words

Said, so, have, like, some, come, love, do, were, here, little, says, there, when, what, one, out, today.

Ways you can support your children at home

- Practise reading and spelling some CVCC and CCVC words but continue to play around with CVC words. Children like reading and spelling words that they have previously worked with, as this makes them feel successful.
- Make up captions and phrases for your child to read and write, for example, a silver star, clear the pond, crunch crisps. Write some simple sentences and leave them around the house for your child to find and read. After they have found and read three, give them a treat!
- Look out for words in the environment, such as on food packaging, which your child will find easy to read, for example, lunch, fresh milk, drink, fish and chips, jam.
- Work on reading words together, for example, a street name such as Park Road, captions on buses and lorries, street signs such as bus stop.

Phonics teaching will continue into Year 1 (Phase 5)

As your child enters Key Stage 1 (Year 1) they will continue to learn that most sounds (phonemes) can be spelled in more than one way. For example, the ***f*** sound can be written as ***f*** as in fan or ***ff*** as in puff or **ph** as in photo.

This develops their knowledge of spelling choices. They will continue with this spelling work into Year 2 and beyond.

The children will learn that most letters and combinations of letters (graphemes) can represent more than one sound. For example, the grapheme ea can be read as /ee/ as in leaf or /e/ as in bread.

This supports their reading development.

Good phonics knowledge and skills help your child to read words fluently and spell words, but they need to understand what they are reading and understand the processes and purposes for writing too. Your help is vital here.

Ways you can support your children at home: reading together

Teach lots of nursery rhymes – each one tells a different story.

Enjoy and share books together – buy or borrow books that will fire their imagination and interest. Read and reread those they love best.

Make time to read with your child throughout their time in school – **PLEASE** continue reading to your child, even when they are reading independently. This is very important – your child needs to practise their reading skills every day, and needs the support of an interested adult. Grandparents, older brothers or sisters can help, too.

Let them see you reading – grown-ups can share their magazines about their favourite sport or hobby.

Read with your child – ask your child to attempt unknown words, using their phonic skills and knowledge. Make sure they **blend** all through the word.

Talk about the meaning of the book, too – take time to talk about what is happening in the book, or things that they found really interesting in an information book. Discuss the characters and important events. Ask them their views. Provide toys, puppets and dressing-up clothes that will help them to act out stories.

Explain the meaning of words (vocabulary) that your child can read but may not understand, for example, flapped, roared.

Listen to story tapes.

Teach your child some action rhymes – 'Heads, shoulders, knees and toes', 'Here we go round the mulberry bush', 'We all clap hands together'. Use tapes and CD-ROMs of nursery rhymes to sing along to.

Read simple rhyming books together – leave out a rhyming word now and then, and see if your child can work out the missing word. If not, you say it.

Add sound effects when reading a story and encourage your child to join in.

A quiet area with some cushions and toys is a comfortable place where you and your child can go to look at a book together.

Ways you can support your children at home: writing together

Magic writing boards are great fun for children, both little and larger versions. It won't be long before they will be trying to write their names!

Write with your child – 'think aloud' so they can hear the decisions you are making as you write. Make sure the writing is for a purpose, for example, a birthday message, a shopping list, an address.

Talk about the words they see in everyday life – food packaging, signs in the supermarkets, captions on buses and lorries, messages on birthday cards and invitations.

Write a shopping list together.

Send an email to a family member or a friend – your child says the message, you write it!

Provide your child with a shoe box full of things to write with – writing tools of various sizes and thicknesses: gel pens, crayons, glitter pens, rainbow pencils, old birthday cards, coloured paper, sticky tape to make little books. Rolls of wallpaper can be attached to a table or wall to provide a large canvas for their writing and drawing.

Praise them for their play writing – those early squiggles and marks show that your child is beginning to understand writing.

Ways you can support your children at home: what to do if your child is reluctant to read or write at home

Relax!

Reading

- Make sure your child sees you reading.
- Read **to** your child. Show you like the book. Bring stories to life by using loud/soft/scary voices – let yourself go!
- Spread books around your house for your child to dip into.
- Let your child choose what **they** would like to read – books, comics, catalogues.
- Read favourite books over and over again. Enjoy!

Writing

- Make sure your child sees you writing.
- Compose an email together, inviting a friend over to tea.
- Continue to make words together, using magnetic letters.
- Leave a message on the fridge door and encourage them to write a reply to you.
- Make up a story together about one of their toys. You write for them, repeating the sentences as you write. When the story is complete they can draw pictures to go with it.
- Buy stickers of a favourite film or TV programme and make a book about it.

Useful websites and leaflets for more information

www.bookstart.co.uk

This website provides information about the national Bookstart scheme and the Bookstart packs that your child will receive as a baby, a toddler and at age three to four. It also gives information about sharing books with your child. You can find out about Bookstart events in your area, which you can attend with your child.

www.literacycounts.co.uk/parents

There are links to webinars and resources to support you at home along with some lovely stories to share.

www.early-education.org.uk.

You can get 'Learning Together' leaflets – 'The road to reading' and 'Making their mark – children's early writing' (and other leaflets covering a range of topics) from Early Education, 136 Cavell Street, London, E1 2JA, telephone 020 7539 5400. You can also download them from the website

www.talktoyourbaby.org.uk

This website provides lots of information for parents and carers of babies and young children, and suggestions of activities, features, DVDs, books and events that are both useful and fun. You can have their free newsletter emailed to you directly.

www.nationalliteracytrust.org.uk/familyreading/parents

The Family Reading Campaign website provides a wealth of information to support you and your family. The Family Reading Campaign works to encourage reading in the home. It also offers many links to further websites.

http://www.phonicsplay.co.uk

http://www.phonicsbloom.com

https://www.littlewandlelettersandsounds.org.uk/resources/for-parents/

ictgames || html5 English Games Page

Sample phonics session Reception: www.youtube.com/watch?v=nlqMDXWEtXs

Sample phonics session Year 1: www.youtube.com/watch?v=WOGmKeYoUNU

Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised Overview

Reception

Autumn 1 Phase 2 graphemes	New tricky
s a t p i n m d g o c k ck e u r h b f l	is I the

Autumn 2 Phase 2 graphemes	New tricky
ff ll ss j v w x y z zz qu ch sh th ng nk • words with –s /s/ added at the end (hats sits)	put* pull* full* push* he of we

Spring 1 Phase 3 graphemes	New tricky
ai ee igh oa oo **oo** ar or ur ow oi ear air er • words with double letters • longer words	was you they r

Spring 2 Phase 3 graphemes	No new tricl
Review Phase 3	Review all taug

Summer 1 Phase 4	New tricky
Short vowels with adjacent consonants • CVCC CCVC CCVCC CCCVC CCCVCC • longer words and compound words • words ending in suffixes: –ing, –ed /t/, –ed /id/ /ed/, –est	said so have lik says there whe

Summer 2 Phase 4 graphemes	No new tricl
Phase 3 long vowel graphemes with adjacent consonants	Review all taug

Year 1

Autumn 1	Review trick
Review Phase 3 and 4 **Phase 5** /ai/ ay play /ow/ ou cloud /oi/ oy toy /ea/ ea each	Phases 2–4: the go of he she we sure pure said h there little one

*The tricky words 'put', 'pull', 'full' and 'push' may not be tricky in some regional pronun
treated as such.

Autumn 2 Phase 5 graphemes	New tricky
/ur/ ir bird /igh/ ie pie /oo/ /yoo/ ue blue rescue /yoo/ u unicorn /oa/ o go /igh/ i tiger /ai/ a paper	their people oh Mr Mrs Ms ask* could would sho house mouse wo

Spring 1 Phase 5 graphemes	New tricky
/ee/ y funny /e/ ea head /w/ wh wheel /oa/ oe ou toe shoulder /igh/ y fly /oa/ ow snow /j/ g giant /f/ ph phone /l/ le al apple metal /s/ c ice /v/ ve give	any many agai who whole wh school call diff thought throug