

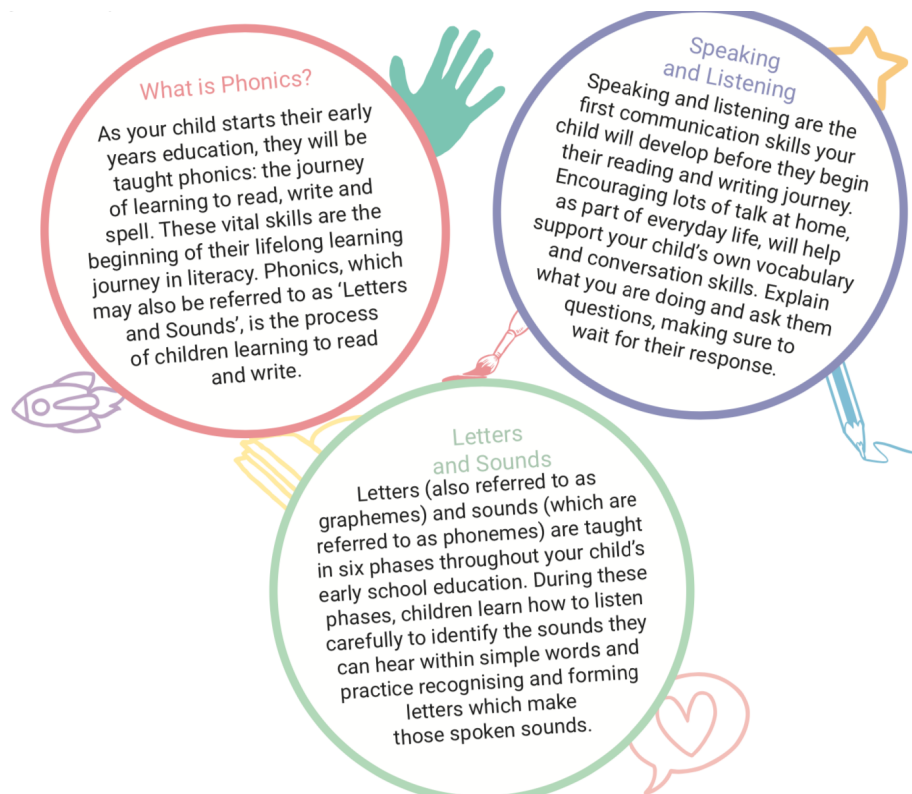
# PHONICS GUIDANCE FOR PARENTS

SCHOOL YEAR 2021/22

## INTRODUCTION TO LETTERS AND SOUNDS

If your child is in the Kindergarten section you may be wondering how you can help them read at home or maybe interested in how children at Kelem are learning to read in school. Most parents of young children were taught to read using a different strategy so this guide is to help you become familiar with our phonics programme called Letters and Sounds.

Letters and sounds is a UK based phonics scheme that has six different stages. We are fully implementing the programme in our kindergarten and younger grades this year. As children learn and develop differently the levels should not be associated with a specific class but seen as more of a progression of learning. In this guide, we hope to share some tips and ideas that you can use at home to reinforce learning at school.



# PHASE 1

Phase 1 is the first phase that will be taught to children in KG3; this phase focuses on developing children's speaking, listening and awareness of sound. Developing these skills creates foundations for when children begin to learn their letters and sounds in later phases. During this phase, your child will begin to distinguish between different sounds within their environment and may begin to show an awareness of rhyme and alliteration.

Grapheme is what each letter looks like.

Phoneme is the sound the letter makes

## Phase 1

- 1) tuning in to sounds
- 2) listening and remembering sounds
- 3) talking about sounds  
(so basically being aware that words are made of graphemes and phonemes).
- 4) orally sounding out words to identify and spell them.
- 5) Hearing words that start and end with the same sounds.

## Some ideas for playing with sounds at home

Go on a listening walk. Sounds are all around us, why not go on a listening walk with your child and try to identify the different sounds that you hear along the way?

Print off or draw a range of familiar pictures for your child to look at and say. Practice listening for the initial sounds in words and see if you can match two pictures that start with the same sound! For example, dog, duck and dinosaur all begin with the 'd' sound and snake, soup and sock all start with the 's' sound.

Read, Read, Read!  
Sharing books together is the most powerful way for children to learn about character types and how stories are structured.



# PHASE 2

Phase two is the second phase of phonics that will be taught to children. This phase builds upon the oral blending and segmenting skills that were learned in phase one. Children will continue to practice these skills, whilst being introduced to the grapheme-phoneme (letters and sounds) representations for 19 letters. In addition, they will learn that some phonemes (sounds) can be represented by more than one grapheme (letter). For example, the sound 'f' is the same in **fin** and **huff**, though one has one letter and the other has two.

The 19 letters and their corresponding sounds are taught in a specific sequence. A set of sounds are taught to the children, building their grapheme and phoneme knowledge steadily and systematically.

Letters are often taught in this sequence:

Set 1	s , a , t , p
Set 2	i , n , m , d
Set 3	g , o , c , k
Set 4	ck , e , u , r
Set 5	h , b , f , ff , l , ll , ss

## **VC and CVC Words**

Once children begin to build a knowledge of grapheme-phoneme correspondence, (for example they know that the letter 'S' makes the ssss sound, like a snake), they will then be taught to read simple words containing the sounds and letters they have been taught.

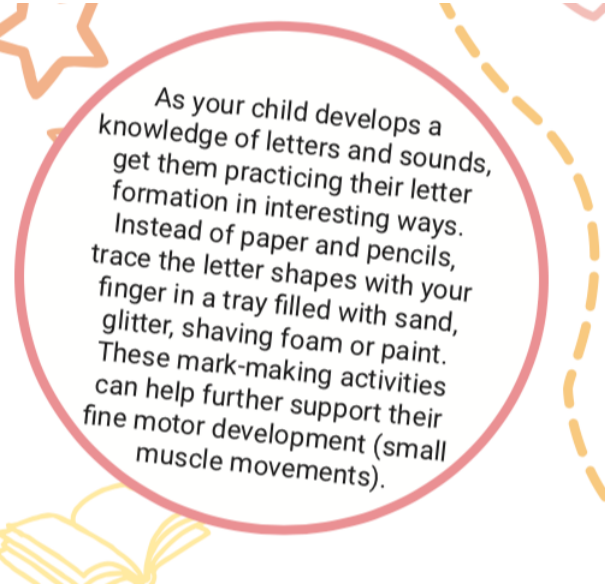
VC words are those that consist of a vowel and then a consonant (am, on, it). CVC words are those that consist of a consonant, then a vowel and then a consonant (cat, dog, pen). Some words such as bell are also CVC words because they only have three sounds. b-e-ll.

## **Tricky Words**

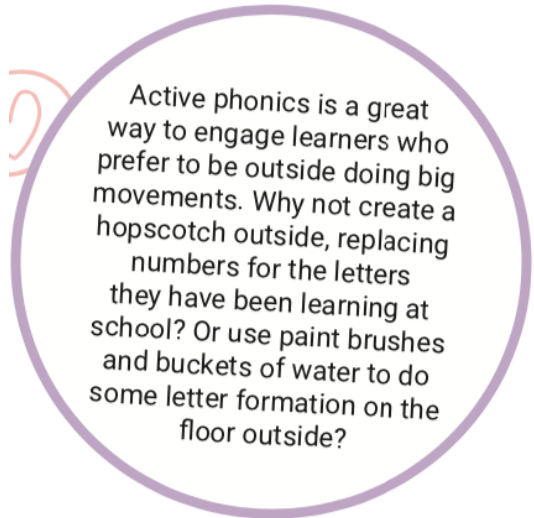
There are some written words in which the phoneme sounds your child is learning for each grapheme (letter) don't quite sound the same as normal. For example, the letter 'i' by itself (e.g. 'I went to bed') doesn't make the normal 'i' sound found in words like 'f-i-t', but sounds like the word 'eye'. Words that cannot be sounded out with normal phonic blending techniques are called 'tricky words'. Instead of sounding out, your child will eventually learn to recognise these words on sight.

# PHASE 2

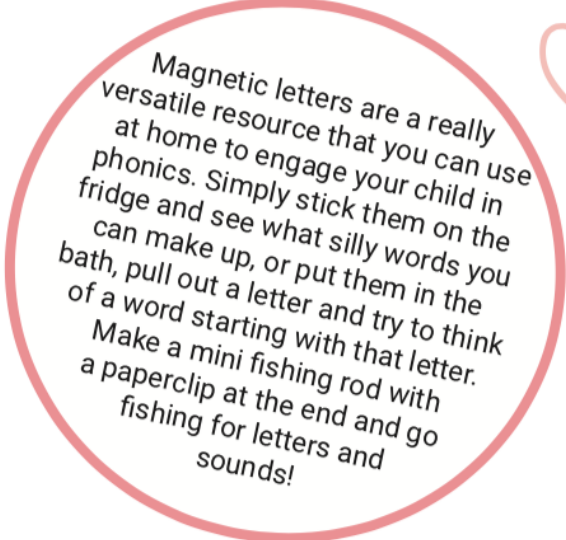
Some ideas for playing phase 2 sounds at home



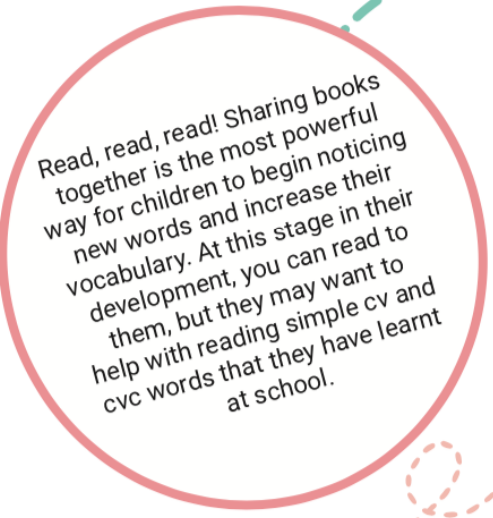
As your child develops a knowledge of letters and sounds, get them practicing their letter formation in interesting ways. Instead of paper and pencils, trace the letter shapes with your finger in a tray filled with sand, glitter, shaving foam or paint. These mark-making activities can help further support their fine motor development (small muscle movements).



Active phonics is a great way to engage learners who prefer to be outside doing big movements. Why not create a hopscotch outside, replacing numbers for the letters they have been learning at school? Or use paint brushes and buckets of water to do some letter formation on the floor outside?



Magnetic letters are a really versatile resource that you can use at home to engage your child in phonics. Simply stick them on the fridge and see what silly words you can make up, or put them in the bath, pull out a letter and try to think of a word starting with that letter. Make a mini fishing rod with a paperclip at the end and go fishing for letters and sounds!



Read, read, read! Sharing books together is the most powerful way for children to begin noticing new words and increase their vocabulary. At this stage in their development, you can read to them, but they may want to help with reading simple cv and cvc words that they have learnt at school.

# PHASE 3

Phase three is the third phase of phonics. This phase is a continuation of the skills learned during phase 2, in which the remaining alphabet sounds are taught as well as some sounds which have two or three sounds in them. These are known as digraphs (two letters, e.g. sh, ch, th) and trigraphs (three letters, e.g. igh, ear, air.) Throughout this phase of phonics, children will continue to practice blending and segmenting a wider range of CV and CVC words; read more tricky words and begin to spell them; and start to read more familiar words by sight, rather than decoding them.

26 new sounds are taught during phase 3. Like phase 2, the letters and their corresponding sounds are taught in sets.

The letters in phase 3 are often taught in this sequence

Set 6	Set 7	Digraphs	Trigraphs
j v w x	y z, zz qu	ch sh th ng ai ee oa oo ar or ur ow oi er	igh ear air ure

## CVC Words

As children develop their phonic knowledge and begin to recognise a wider range of letters and their corresponding sounds, they will be taught how to read CVC words (consonant, vowel, consonant words, e.g. cat, pin, mop) with increasing speed.

During this phase, it is important that children recognise digraphs and trigraphs as a single sound, rather than separate letters, e.g. sh-o-p not s-h-o-p. And l-igh-t not l-i-g-h-t.


## Tricky Words

During this phase, as well as consolidating the tricky words that were previously taught during phase 2, children will also be exposed to some new tricky words: words that cannot be sounded out.


The tricky words taught in phase 3 include:  
he, she, we, me, be, was, my, you, her, they, all

# PHASE 3



Some ideas for playing phase 3 sounds at home




As your child develops their mark-making skills, encourage them to do some writing each day in different ways. Get them writing their name on anything they make, create labels for toys, try to write words alongside drawings or make cards together for different occasions. If your child isn't ready to write full words, help build their confidence by forming letters instead.



Read, read, read! Sharing books together is the most powerful way for children to begin noticing new words and increase their vocabulary. At this stage in their development, your child may be bringing home decodable books. Encourage them to read a page or two a day, while continuing to read a range of different books to them before bedtime.



Active phonics is a great way to engage learners who prefer to be outside doing big movements. Why not create a CVC frame outside using masking tape? This is just three big boxes next to each other. You can then challenge your child to write a CVC word inside the boxes using chunky chalks. Phase 3 CVC words might include: f-o-x, j-o-g and y-e-s.



# PHASE 4

Phase 4 focuses on consolidating and practising the letter sounds learnt so far and **does not introduce any new sounds**. During Phase 4, children will continue to practise the letter sounds (phonemes) they learnt in Phase 2 and Phase 3. They will practise instant recall of these sounds as well as blending them together to read words. Alongside this, children will practise writing sounds correctly and segmenting words into sounds in order to spell them correctly.

In this phase children will learn 'alien words' also sometimes called 'nonsense words'. These are words that test children's ability to use phonics, rather than word memory as the prime method of reading. Examples might be 'thord' or 'josk'.

Children will also progress to reading so called CCVC words. C stands for consonant and V for Vowel. In Phase 2 children looked at CVC words such as bat, pen, dog, they will now learn to sound out and blend longer words CCVC such as stop, clap, desk and hand.

## Some ideas for playing phase 4 sounds at home

As your child begins to build up a bank of high frequency words and tricky words, why not make your own flashcards to practice recognising and reading these words by sight or at a faster pace? Turn this into a game by seeing how many your child can read in one minute or 30 seconds.

<https://www.twinkl.co.uk/go/resource/twinkl-phonics-galaxy-game-tg-ga-193>

### Read, Read, Read!

Keep reading with your child every day. Let them read to you but also make sure that you are reading more complex books to them and that they are continuing to hear stories and other texts read aloud with intonation (using your voice in different ways to create characters).

Play a game of I Spy together, further reinforcing the sounds learnt during Phases 2 and 3. I Spy is a perfect five minute filler to do anywhere; in the car, on the bus, during breakfast or while queuing somewhere. Challenge your child by saying 'something ending with...' rather than 'something beginning with...'

### High Frequency and Tricky Words

During Phase 4, children will revise previously taught 'high frequency words'. High frequency words, as the name suggests, are words that we see frequently when reading and writing. Children can read high frequency words much more fluently if they know these words by sight. Some of them can be sounded out, e.g. 'my' or 'all', and are therefore 'tricky words.' Children are taught to read a new set of these words during Phase 4.

# PHASE 5

At this stage, your child will probably learn a series of new digraphs, including 'ou', 'ay', 'ie', 'oy' and 'aw'. As part of practising and learning these new digraphs, your child may explore split digraphs. A split digraph is a sound represented by two letters with a different letter between them, e.g. 'a\_e' in made, 'o\_e' in tone or 'i\_e' in pine.

When exploring digraphs, your child will begin to look at alternative spellings for different sounds. Not all sounds are spelt the same way all of the time. For example, made, pay and grain all contain the 'ay' sound but are all spelt differently.

Your child will continue to learn more tricky words in phase 5. They will have already explored a variety of tricky words in the other phases, but these will become increasingly complex. Tricky words are words that don't follow the phonics rules, containing sounds that are not spelt with the usual phonetic letters. For example, words like 'could' (which your child would expect to be spelt something like 'cud') or 'called' (which may be expected to be spelt 'cawld').

In addition to exploring sounds and letters, your child will also be solidifying their knowledge about the past and present tense in their spoken language, reading and writing.

## Some ideas for playing phase 5 sounds at home

### Read, Read, Read

One of the best ways to explore phonics rules and practise using blending and segmenting is to read as many books as you can with your child. This can include not only your child reading books but you sharing stories with them. As your child's reading skills improve, they will be able to explore stories in more detail. Don't be afraid to ask your children questions about the stories they are reading; you could ask them about the characters' feelings, events that have happened in the story and about their opinions of the story.

### Rub out the Word

On a whiteboard or piece of paper, write down a selection of words containing the sounds your child has been learning (including digraphs and trigraphs). To play, say one of the words out loud. Your child has to find the word as quickly as they can, read it and rub (or cross) it out. Repeat for different words until they are all gone. If you want to do this activity outside, you could use chalk to write on the pavement and a dustpan brush to rub away.



# PHASE 5

## Explaining some of the terms with activities to support learning

### **Phase 5 Digraphs**

Not all phonetic sounds are represented by single letters. Some can be represented by two letters together, e.g. ee, ai, ch and sh. It's important to note that digraphs represent unique sounds and are different to cluster blends, which are two separate sounds said together. It is during phase 5 of phonics that your child will become familiar with these digraphs (sounds with two graphemes or letters). Your child will begin to explore a range of new digraphs, including ay, ou, ie, ue, aw, ph, ew and ey. Flashcards are a great way for your child to practise recognising these sounds on sight.

### **Phase 5 Split -Digraphs**

It is at this step that your child will be introduced to split digraphs. Split digraphs are similar to other digraphs in that they are sounds represented by two letters. However, they differ from other digraphs because the two letters are split with a gap (or intervening letter) between them. For example, the a\_e in tame, the i\_e in time or the o\_e in bone. Matching card games are a fun way for your child to explore and recognise these split digraphs in words. In this activity, your child has to read each word that contains a split digraph and match it to the appropriate image.

### **Phase 5 Alternative Spellings**

Not all sounds are spelt the same way in every word; sometimes a sound can have a number of different forms, e.g. the 'ay' sound can be spelt ay, ai or a\_e (may, pain, take). At this step, your child will begin to explore these different spellings for sounds and learn the different sound families. They will experiment with writing the alternative spellings and begin to read words accurately that contain them. These alternative spelling word mats are a great visual representation that combine all the different ways of spelling different sounds into one place.

### **Phase 5 Blending and Segmenting**

Blending is the process of combining different sounds together to read words. To blend, your child will be identifying individual sounds within a word and combining them together to read the word. For example, in the word 'replied', your child may identify the sounds r - e - p - l - ie - d in order to blend them together. Segmenting is the reverse of this process. To segment, your child will be able to break a word down to identify the sounds within it. During phase 5, your child will probably practise blending and segmenting increasingly complex words that contain five or more sounds. This will include both real and nonsense words, allowing your child to focus on the skill of blending and segmenting rather than worrying about the meaning of the word. Roll and read games are an interesting way for your child to explore blending words. Roll a die to choose a word; can your child blend the individual sounds together and read the word?

### **Phase 5 Tricky Words**

Tricky words are ones that don't follow the phonics rules but appear often in common sentences. They contain groups of letters that make unique or different sounds to the ones your child would expect if they were to use blending or segmenting. As these words don't follow the normal phonics rules, your child will need to memorise them and learn to read them on sight. Phase 5 tricky words include words like oh, looked, their, called, people, asked, Mr, Mrs and could. For example, using their phonics knowledge, your child may expect people to be spelt something like 'peepl', or the word could to be spelt 'cud'. Tricky word mats act as a nice reminder for your child as to what these words look like and how they are spelt

# PHASE 6

Prefixes and suffixes are small groups of letters that are added to the beginning or end of words to change their meaning. Your child may begin to learn about spelling patterns for adding these prefixes and suffixes to words, meaning they can read them with more accuracy and fluency. They may also explore the meanings of these prefixes and suffixes and how they change the meaning of the words they are added to, e.g. un- means reverse or opposite of, so unhappy is the reverse or opposite of happy.

Your child may also start to read and recognise homophones. Homophones are words that have the same or very similar sound, but are spelt differently and have a different meaning. For example, be and bee, knight and night, or hear and here.

In addition to exploring sounds and letters, your child will also be solidifying their knowledge about the past and present tense in their spoken language, reading and writing.

## Read, Read, Read

One of the best ways to explore phonics rules and practise using blending and segmenting is to read as many books as you can with your child. This can include not only your child reading books, but you sharing stories with them. As your child's reading skills improve, they will be able to explore stories in more detail. Don't be afraid to ask your child questions about the stories they are reading; you could ask them about the characters' feelings, events that have happened in the story and about their opinions of the story.

## Tricky Word Spotter

Choose a tricky word from the **High Frequency Word Mat**. On three strips of paper, write different versions of spelling the tricky word (one being the correct way, the others spelt incorrectly). Place them face down and have your child turn them over one at a time. Can your child identify the correct spelling? For an added challenge, you could do this activity with more than one tricky word at a time and have your child collect the ones that are correct.

## Rub out the Word

On a whiteboard or piece of paper, write down a selection of words containing the sounds your child has been learning (including digraphs and trigraphs). To play, say one of the words out loud. Your child has to find the word as quickly as they can, read it and rub (or cross) it out. Repeat for different words until they are all gone. If you want to do this activity outside, you could use chalk to write on the pavement and a dustpan brush to rub away.

## Suffix Endings

If you are doing this activity indoors, use a piece of paper; if you are doing it outdoors, you could use chalk on the floor. Give your child the suffixes -ed, -ful, -ly and -est. Using the paper or chalk, get your child to write as many words that contain each of these suffixes they can think of.



# PHASE 6

## Explaining some of the terms with activities to support learning

### **Prefixes**

Prefixes are small groups of letters that are placed at the beginning of words to change their meaning. At this stage, your child will probably begin to recognise different spelling patterns for adding these prefixes to words. This will help them read these words more fluently. They may also begin to identify the meaning of these and recognise how they change the meaning of the words they are added to. For example, dis- means 'not or reverse of', so disappear means the reverse of appear. Prefix worksheets are a nice way for your child to explore the meanings of prefixes and practise how to use them in words, helping your child to recognise and read these words more easily.

### **Suffixes**

Suffixes are small groups of letters that are added to the end of words to change their meaning, such as -ful, -ness or -ly. During this step, your child may learn all about the spelling patterns for how to add these to words and begin to explore the meaning of each. Using this information, your child will hopefully begin to read these words more accurately and understand how the suffix changes the meaning of the word. To help your child develop their vocabulary and think of more words that contain suffixes, try using a suffix word list as a visual reminder.

### **Contractions**

Contractions are shortened forms of words. Your child will learn to use an apostrophe as a replacement for a letter when combining two words into a contracted form. For example, I am becomes 'I'm' and you are becomes 'you're'. Being able to recognise how these words are formed and what they actually mean may help your child to read them more accurately. Matching card games are a great way for your child to practise joining the separate words to the contracted form.

### **Homophones**

Homophones are words that have the same or very similar sound but a different spelling and meaning, e.g. here and hear, night and knight or see and sea. Your child will need to use and apply their knowledge of alternative spellings of sounds in order to read these words accurately.

### **High frequency**

High Frequency words are the words that appear most often in the English language and are words that your child will encounter most often when reading a variety of books. Therefore, it's important to learn to read these words quickly and accurately. Perhaps you could use this word mat of 200 high frequency words to practise reading on sight; can you turn it into a game? How many can your child read in a minute? Can they beat their score next time?

## Example of a High Frequency Word Mat

# 200 High Frequency Words

across	birds	each	fun	how	looks	next	river	tell	want
after	boat	eat	garden	I'll	lots	night	room	than	wanted
again	book	eggs	gave	I've	magic	one	round	that's	water
air	box	end	giant	inside	man	only	run	there's	way
along	boy	even	girl	its	many	or	sat	these	well
am	can't	ever	going	jumped	may	other	say	thing	we're
animals	car	every	gone	keep	miss	our	school	things	where
another	cat	everyone	good	key	more	over	sea	think	which
any	clothes	eyes	gran	king	morning	park	shouted	thought	white
around	cold	fast	grandad	know	most	place	sleep	three	who
away	coming	feet	great	last	mother	plants	small	through	why
baby	couldn't	fell	green	laughed	mouse	play	snow	told	wind
bad	cried	find	grow	let	much	please	something	took	window
bear	dark	first	hard	let's	must	pulled	soon	top	wish
because	did	fish	has	liked	narrator	queen	still	town	work
bed	didn't	floppy	hat	live	need	rabbit	stop	tree	would
been	different	fly	he's	lived	never	ran	stopped	trees	yes
before	dog	food	head	long	new	really	suddenly	two	
began	door	found	home	looking		red	sun	under	
best	dragon	fox	horse			right	take	us	
better	duck	friends	hot				tea	use	