



Dundonald Primary School's Parent Guide to:

Phonics, Spelling and Reading

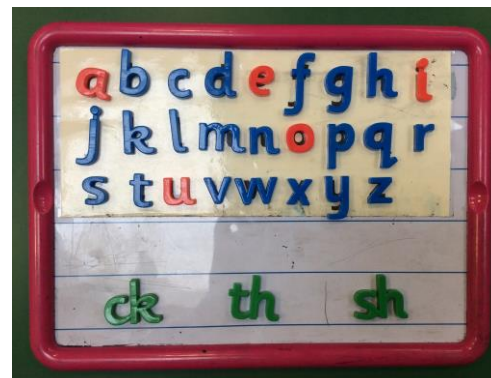




Phonics and Spelling in Primary 1 - 3

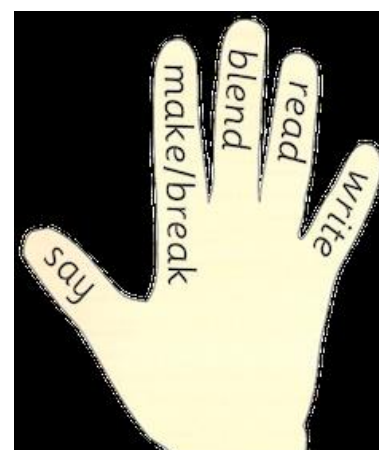
A phoneme is a sound, made up by a single letter or a group of letters, e.g. pin has separate sounds - p/i/n chop has ch/o/p.

On a weekly basis a new phoneme is introduced by the teacher through an interactive story/song/video etc. Letter formation and word building is demonstrated using the magnetic board and letters shown across. These phonemes are reinforced through written and active tasks, such as Sound Searches, Spelling Partners, Bingo Games, Play-Doh etc.



Methodology

The five finger approach (see diagram) is used to encourage children to build words with the phonemes they learn. Children SAY the word out loud, MAKE/BREAK it using the individual phonemes, BLEND the sounds together to say the word and READ it and then finally WRITE it.



Spelling and Common Words

Common words are the words that children are most likely to come across when reading. They are taught where possible via the methodology above, but should eventually be recognised by children on sight, rather than through sounding out and blending.

Common words are assessed in a variety of ways and not through a weekly 'spelling test'. Judgements about a child's phonic/word knowledge are made daily, as well as periodically, in a variety of contexts such as partner work, active games and written work in Literacy and other curricular areas.

Spelling Strategies

The strategies that children are taught are:

- Using phonic knowledge (sounding out)
- Word Shape - look at letter shape, size, ascending (tall - b, d, f, h, k, l, t) and descending (tailed - g, j, p, q, y) letters.

- Syllabification - breaking words down into syllables. The children can clap out words to identify syllables, e.g. go-ing
- Tricky Letters - looking at the position of tricky letters as an aid to spelling, e.g. **n**ight
- Compound Words - breaking the compound word into simple words, e.g. into makes in and to.
- Mnemonic - a pattern of letters to help you remember something, e.g. because - **B**ig **E**lephants **C**an **A**dd **U**p **S**ums **E**asily
- Using Analogy - if you know how to spell one word you can spell similar words, e.g. if you can spell me, you can spell we, he, she, etc.

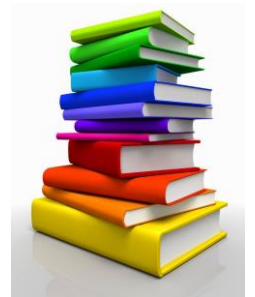
Linking Our Learning

Children may be given different activities to do surrounding the taught phonemes, encouraging them to find, read and write words containing the phoneme in a story book, signs, menus, newspapers, etc. They may also have tasks relating to their common words to allow them to practise these using the strategies above.

Reading in Primary 1-3

Reading Programme

Children are taught to read through the process of guided reading. We use a variety of reading schemes to expose children to a wide range of texts, including fiction and non-fiction. Children progress from one reading book to another when the teacher judges that they are able to physically read the book **and** demonstrate understanding, for example, predicting, summarising and asking/answering questions.



Methodology

Children are introduced to a new reading book with support from an adult to identify any common/sight words, tricky words or any that they can sound out and blend. After this introduction, children read aloud in groups or pairs throughout the week and the teacher listens and provides feedback to individual readers.

Children also learn to use **Word Attack Strategies** to help them decode tricky words.

Word Attack Strategies

- Break the word into phonemes
- Sound the first few letters and blend them together
- Look at the first letter and last letters
- Break the word into syllables (or parts)
- Read the sentence again
- Look at the shape of the word
- Look at the pictures

Linking Our Learning

Reading of any kind is beneficial to your child, especially in different contexts. Tasks may encourage children to seek out a variety of reading materials to practise their Word Attack Strategies. When reading a book (from school or otherwise), the following guidance may be helpful:

Book Introduction

- Look at the front cover. 'How many words are in the title?' 'Do you recognise any of the words (a, the)?'
- Find the author and illustrator and point them out to your child.
- Open the book and have a look at the pictures.
- Decode the story using picture clues/child can make up own story.
- Ask questions. 'There's a long word beginning with 'b'. Can you find it?' 'Look at the picture. Does it give us any clues about what the book is about?'

Inside the Front Cover

- Identify where to start reading.
- Identify in which direction to read.
- Make sure your child points to each word as they read.
- Look for common words.
- Look for tricky words.
- Ask your child to look for capital letters and full stops.
- As you read, encourage your child to talk about the story, e.g., discussing the pictures, thinking about what might take place next.
- When the story is finished, talk about what has happened. This will help your child to gain a better understanding of the text and re-read the story to increase fluency.

Phonics and Spelling in Primary 4 - 7



Each phonics block lasts for 2 weeks and is followed by a 2 week block of spelling. The activities are mainly paired work using whiteboards.



Methodology

The five finger approach (see diagram) is used to encourage children to build words with the phonemes they learn. Children SAY the word out loud, MAKE/BREAK it using the individual phonemes, BLEND the sounds together to say the word and READ it and then finally WRITE it.

Phonics

The first week of phonics focuses on the new sound, how it is represented and Elkonin Boxes. The second week focuses on finding the new phoneme in texts and Diacritical Marking.

Elkonin Boxes

Elkonin Boxes are square grids used to split words into phonemes. Each phoneme is written in a box:

e.g.

th	i	n
----	---	---

Diacritical Marking

Children sound out words and mark them according to the type of phoneme that makes the sound:

e.g. p h o n e

- — . represents a single letter phoneme
- __ represents a joined letter phoneme
- ⤿ represents a split phoneme

This allows children to recognise the difference between phonemes and blends.

Spelling and Common Words

The first week of spelling focuses on using spelling strategies and the second week focuses on spelling rules.

Common words are the words that children are most likely to come across when reading. They should eventually be recognised by children on sight, rather than through sounding out and blending.

Spelling/common words are assessed in a variety of ways and not through a weekly 'spelling test'. Judgements about a child's phonic/word knowledge are made daily, as well as periodically in a variety of contexts, such as partner work, active games and written work in Literacy and other curricular areas.

Spelling Strategies

The strategies that children are taught are:

- Using Phonic Knowledge - sounding it out.
- Syllabification - breaking words down into syllables.
- Compound Words - words made up of two or more words, e.g. furthermore.
- Mnemonic - using a memory aid, e.g. because - **B**ig **E**lephants **C**an **A**dd **U**p **S**ums **E**asily.
- Using Analogy - if you know how to spell one word you can spell similar words, e.g. if you can spell hill, you can spell mill, will, fill, etc.
- Words within Words - finding words in words, e.g. believe, train.
- Spelling Rules - using appropriate rules to help, e.g. 'q' is always followed by 'u' and makes the 'kw' sound.
 - It is important to remember that there are exceptions to every rule.

In addition to this, fortnightly spelling should also develop the following skills:

- Word building: where children look at how words are made
 - Root - the main part of the word with no affixes, e.g. -ject-
 - Prefix - an affix added to the start of a word, e.g. re-
 - Suffix - an affix added to the end of a word, e.g. -ing
- Homophones: where children investigate words that sound the same but are spelled differently and have different meanings, e.g. bee/be; to/two/too; their/they're/there
- Homographs: where children investigate words that are spelled the same but sound different and have different meanings, e.g. read - to read a book, to have read a book; bow - a hair bow, take a bow.

- Synonyms: where children look at different words that mean the same as each other (words you find in a thesaurus), e.g. important = vital, key, essential.
- Antonyms: where children look at words that mean the opposite of each other, e.g. hot/cold; big/small.

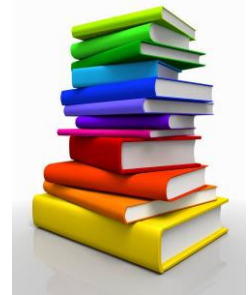
Linking Our Learning

Children should be encouraged to identify phonemes that they recognise in everyday contexts, e.g. road signs, television guides. They may also have tasks relating to their common words to allow them to practise these using the strategies above.

Reading in Primary 4 - 7

Reading Programme

As children develop their skills, they will engage with a range of reading materials in various ways, rather than reading aloud to the teacher every day. We use a variety of reading schemes to expose children to a wide range of texts, including fiction and non-fiction. Children progress from one text to another when the teacher judges that they are able to physically read it **and** demonstrate understanding, for example, predicting, summarising and asking/answering questions.



Methodology

Although children will have a large bank of common words, they will still come across new words or tricky words that they need to sound out and blend.

Children also learn to use **Word Attack Strategies** to help them decode tricky words.

Word Attack Strategies:

- Break the word into phonemes
- Sound the first few letters and blend them together
- Look at the first letter and last letters
- Break the word into syllables (or parts)

- Read the sentence again
- Think of words it is similar to
- Look at the pictures

Children spend time in groups, pairs or as individuals using **Reading Strategies** to analyse their text and demonstrate their understanding.

Reading Strategies

- **Metalinguistics** - identifying new words and finding their meaning.
- **Summarising** - picking out the key ideas of what you have read.
- **Main Ideas/Themes** - the underlying message or idea.
- **Visualisation** - a visual representation of a character/setting/plot, e.g. mind map, illustration, diagram.
- **Prior Knowledge and Prediction** - thinking back to what you have learned previously or already know and using this to make assumptions about what will happen next.
- **Inference** - drawing conclusions from the text using clues.

Children may also develop their skills in reading through asking and answering questions about a text.

Linking Our Learning

Encouraging your child to read different genres of text often and for a reasonable amount of time helps improve many of their Literacy skills. It may be helpful to encourage the use of some of the 6 Reading Strategies when reading at home.



We hope you find this parent leaflet helpful.
We have created other Numeracy and Literacy leaflets to help you when supporting your child at home.