

# ELS Essential Letters and Sounds

developed by Knowledge Schools Trust

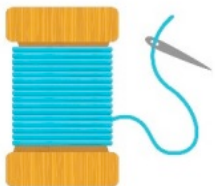
Getting all children to  
read well, quickly.



OXFORD

# What are we going to cover?

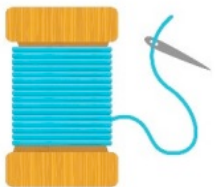
- What is Phonics?
- What is Essential Letters and Sounds?
- How we teach phonics
- Getting children ready to read
- Supporting your child with reading at home
- Pronouncing pure sounds
- Using the letter formations and spelling sequence to support writing at home



# What is Phonics?

A method of teaching beginners to read and pronounce words by learning to associate letters or letter groups with the sounds they represent.

There are 44 main sounds in the English Language. Each sound is represented by a grapheme (the written representation of a sound).



# What is Phonics?

**Phoneme**: the smallest single identifiable sound in a word. For example, in the word 'cat' there are three phonemes c/a/t.

**Grapheme**: the written representation of a sound.

**Digraph**: two letters making one sound. For example, /sh/ in the word 'shop'.

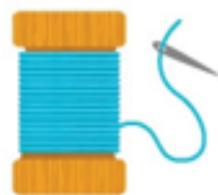
**Trigraph**: three letters making one sound. For example, /igh/ in the word 'night'.

**Split digraph**: two vowel letters split but are split by one or more consonants. For example, /a-e/ in the word 'cake'.

## What is ELS?

Essential Letters and Sounds (ELS) is our chosen phonics programme. It teaches children to read by identifying the phonemes (smallest unit of sound) and graphemes (written version of the sound) within words and using these to read words.

Children experience the joy of books and language whilst rapidly acquiring the skills they need to become fluent independent readers and writers.



## How do we teach phonics?

- We use a simple, consistent approach to teaching phonics.
- Your child will experience the same classroom routines within each lesson which reduces cognitive load and maximises the chances of success.
- All children are supported within the lesson to use their new phonic knowledge independently.
- In every single ELS lesson, your child will make the direct application to reading.



## How do we teach phonics?

Daily Phonics sessions- these start from the beginning of Reception through to Term 1 in Year 2.

- Phonics throughout the day to review sounds & graphemes taught
- Lots of opportunities for oral blending if needed-  
c/oa/t
- Focus is on word recognition, building fluency and expression. However, new vocabulary is also given and explained in every lesson.



- Opportunities for writing.

- **ELS video- Phase 2 Days 1-4**



# ELS Progression

Phase 1*	Phase 2	Phase 3**
<p><i>Nursery/Pre-School</i></p> <p>Seven aspects:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Environmental sounds</li> <li>• Instrumental sounds</li> <li>• Body percussion</li> <li>• Rhythm and rhyme</li> <li>• Alliteration</li> <li>• Voice sounds</li> <li>• Oral blending</li> </ul>	<p><i>Reception Autumn 1</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Oral blending</li> <li>• Sounding out and blending with 23 new grapheme-phoneme correspondences (GPCs)</li> <li>• 12 new harder to read and spell (HRS) words</li> </ul>	<p><i>Reception Autumn 2, Spring 1 and Spring 2</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Oral blending</li> <li>• Sounding out and blending with 29 new GPCs</li> <li>• 32 new HRS words</li> <li>• Revision of Phase 2</li> </ul>





# ELS Progression

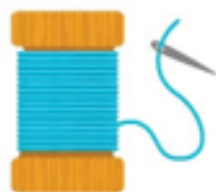
Phase 4**	Phase 5 including alternatives and lesser-known GPCs	Beyond Phase 5
<p><i>Reception Summer 1</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Oral blending</li><li>• No new GPCs</li><li>• No new HRS words</li><li>• Word structures – cvcc, ccvc, ccvcc, cccvc, cccvcc</li><li>• Suffixes</li><li>• Revision of Phase 2 and Phase 3</li></ul>	<p><i>Reception Summer 2</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Introduction to Phase 5 for reading</li><li>• 20 new GPCs</li><li>• 16 new HRS words</li></ul> <p><i>Year 1 Autumn 1 and 2</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Revision of previously taught Phase 5 GPCs</li><li>• 2 new GPCs</li><li>• 9 new HRS words</li></ul> <p><i>Year 1 Spring 1 and 2</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Alternative spellings for previously taught sounds</li><li>• 49 new GPCs</li><li>• 4 new HRS words</li><li>• Oral blending</li><li>• Revision of Phase 2, Phase 3 and Phase 4</li></ul>	<p><i>Year 1 Summer, Year 2 and Key Stage 2</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• With ELS, phonics teaching does not stop at the end of Year 1, but continues as children move through the school, with links being made between their GPC knowledge and spelling</li><li>• Revision of all previously taught GPCs for reading and spelling</li><li>• Wider reading, spelling and writing curriculum</li></ul>



Some children who need to continue with phonics after Term 1 will receive 1:1 phonics interventions across the week. This is to fill gaps in learning and support with the skill of blending words, building fluency and reading with expression.

# Supporting your child with reading at home

- Only 1 in 3 children are read a bedtime story
- Reading a bedtime story every night to your child improves their outcomes
- Fluent readers can learn more because they can read and gain knowledge independently. **FIRST YOU LEARN TO READ, THEN YOU READ TO LEARN.**



# Supporting your child with reading at home

- Children are only reading from books that are entirely decodable
- We only use pure sounds when decoding words (no 'uh' after the sound)
- We want them to practise reading their book 4 times across the week working on these skills:

decode

fluency

expression



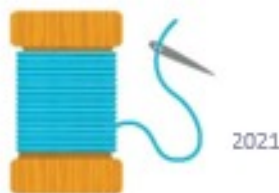
# Supporting your child with reading at home

Decode- To correctly pronounce written words

Fluency- To speak and read quickly with ease

Expression-To read like you talk and change your voice

**The dog is barking!**



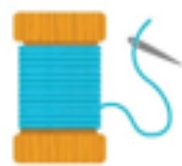
# Pronouncing pure sounds

We must use pure sounds when we are pronouncing the sounds and supporting children in reading words.

If we mispronounce these sounds we will make reading harder for our children.

There are videos for this on our school website where you can hear the correct pronunciation of the sounds.

## Phase 2/3 videos



# Supporting your child with writing at home



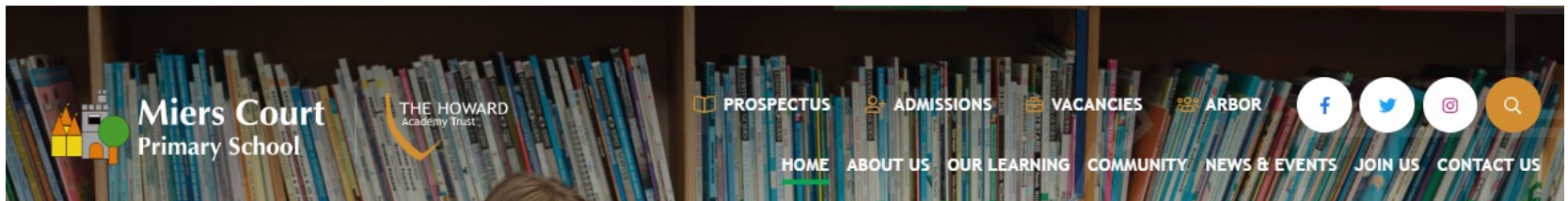
You can use the spelling sequence with your children at home to support them with their writing.

Let's try this with the word: rain

We also practise saying our sentences before we write them to make sure we write the sentence we have planned and to ensure it makes sense!



<https://www.mierscourt-that.org.uk/>



**ELS** Essential Letters and Sounds

Questions





\*A complete scheme of work organised into 36 weekly word lists for each year group, embedding logical progression and review.

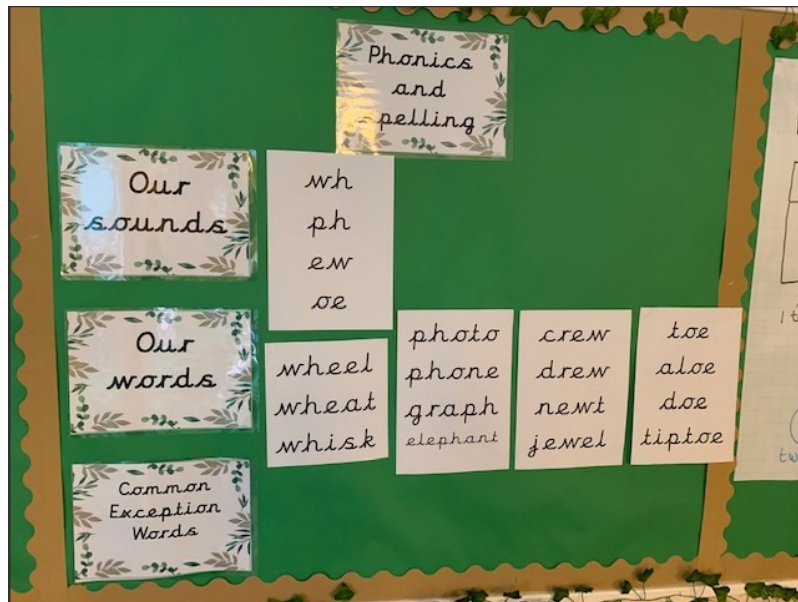
\*Weekly, lesson plans, teaching slides and activities aid the delivery of the spelling, grammar and punctuation objectives.

\*Children enjoy playing the games and practise their spellings more regularly which brings success for everyone to celebrate.



<https://www.edshed.com/en-gb/resources/stage-2?scheme=spelling-shed-scheme>

- Each week we have our focus on display on a class spelling display. At the moment this is covering our phonics review but after half term we will move to spellings.



# Common Exception Words

- Common exception words are a group of words that appear commonly in both texts and spoken language, but which can't be decoded using normal phonics rules. This could be because they don't follow normal spelling rules or contain unusual letter combinations.
- At the moment we are going to start focusing on 3-5 each week during our reading sessions.
- Handout. Please add your name to the list once you have taken one.