

# Our Approach to Teaching Reading and Phonics at Great Dalby



We are committed to teaching all children to read well by ensuring that every teacher is a reading champion. We believe our key to success can be attributed to the following;

- ✚ teachers have an excellent knowledge and understanding of the processes that help children learn to read
- ✚ as a school we have a rigorous programme of **systematic, synthetic** phonics as the prime approach to decoding print
- ✚ a consistent teaching of the highest quality, together with effective assessment of children's progress and help for those who encounter difficulty in reading

## How phonics works

Phonics focuses on sounds rather than, for example, having children try to recognise whole words. We use Letters and Sounds to guide our teaching, LCP to support our daily practice and a variety of other published resources (Jolly Phonics) and games to ensure high quality teaching,

## What is synthetic phonics?

When your child is learning to read there are two crucial things to learn:

- ✚ the sounds represented by written letters
- ✚ how to blend the sounds together to make words.

Synthetic Phonics is a way of teaching reading. In synthetic phonics, children start by sequencing the individual sounds in words – for example, 's-t-r-ee-t', with an emphasis on blending them together.

Once they have learned all these, they progress to reading books.

The 'synthetic' part comes from the word 'synthesise', meaning to assemble or blend together.

Children who learn using synthetic phonics are able to have a go at new words working from sound alone, whereas those using analytic phonics are more dependent on having prior knowledge of families of words.

Children are taught to read letters or groups of letters by saying the sound(s) they represent – so, they are taught that the letter l sounds like llllll when we say it. Children can then start to read words by blending (synthesising) the sounds together to make a word.

At school, we talk about blending, but you might also hear us refer to sounding out or robot talk too. All these terms focus on the same point – synthesising sounds.

## How we do it ...

We teach daily phonics sessions across Foundation Stage, Year 1 and Year 2. Where necessary, children from other year groups who need additional support will also join the sessions. Children with SEND have phonics sessions in small groups, or individually, at different points in the day.

We teach Phase 1 to Phase 6, breaking sounds into sets each week. Children are first taught a small group of sounds, then learn to blend the sounds to read words made up of those sounds, e.g. mat. Then they are taught more sounds and learn to blend those too. We do not teach in alphabetical order because that's not the best order to allow your child to start blending the sounds for reading.

Speedy recognition of the sound for each letter is really important too, so your child can blend them to read words easily.

## Early Reading Top tips Adapted from Oxford Owl

### 1. Saying sounds correctly

This is really important when you are helping your child to learn the sounds. Just remember not to add an uh to the end of the consonant sounds – so say mmm not muh, lll not luh, etc. because then later it's easier to blend the sounds together to make words.

If you're not sure then use the phonics book in your child's book bag – each sound has an action and a picture (Jolly Phonics)

### 2. Linking sounds to letters

Encourage your child to make a link between the sound and the written letter shape. Start with the sounds in your child's name and then look out for them in signs. The sound m in McDonalds is always a good starting point too!

### 3. Sounds represented by more than one letter

Some sounds are represented by more than one letter such as sh in ship, ch in chat, th in thin, qu in quick and ng in sing. When you're out and about point out examples of these to your child too. You might see them in posters, signs, or leaflets.

### 4. Practise, practise, practise

Build up a knowledge of the letters and sounds quite quickly with your child and keep practising so that it becomes automatic. Keep reminding 'Do you remember when we were talking about the sound ch...?', or 'Oh look! There's a big t (sound) on that poster!'

### 5. Putting sounds together to read simple words

Say the sounds c-a-t to read cat, sh-o-p to read shop and s-t-r-ee-t to read street. If your child gets stuck and is struggling to blend the sounds, say the sounds yourself, quickly, until your child can hear the word!

Only beginner readers need to sound out every word as they read all the time. But, they will still need to work out new and long words.

### 6. Tricky words

Some everyday words in English have tricky spellings and can't be read by blending. Imagine trying to read the word said or does by blending each letter! These are sometimes called high frequency tricky words. These words just have

to be learned by sight and flashcard-type games are a good way to practise these. We send tricky words home to learn.

## **7. Reading books**

We use a synthetic phonics scheme, Songbirds, these are books with decodable words. This means the books contain mostly words that children can read by sounding out to get them off to a good start with independent reading. After your child has read a page, you can read it aloud again, to make sure that the story is enjoyed and understood. We also send an addition book with repeating sentences (early stages) and high frequency tricky words (later on). These books are colour banded and the children are assessed when we feel they are reading confidently and fluently within each band. We also use Dandelion books to offer a wider range of reading material.

## **8. Using pictures**

Pictures are great for sharing and talking about a story (which is really important too!) but don't encourage your child to use pictures to guess the words that they don't already know.

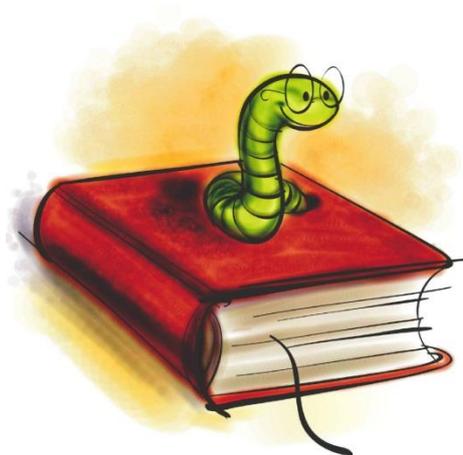
## **9. Writing letters**

Teach your child how to write the letters correctly as the letter sounds are learned. And don't forget to show your child how to hold the pencil correctly too!

## **10. Common sense ...**

Lots and lots of books! Carry on sharing and reading lots and lots of stories and information books to and with your child.

*Praise and hugs! Most importantly, remember that your child will learn much faster with encouragement, praise and hugs.*



## Reading throughout the School

We use a variety of approaches to developing reading skills, these include ...

- Shared reading
- Guided reading
- Group reading
- Individual reading
- Quiet reading
- Story time
- Reading at Home

We also have Reading Targets for Years 4-6 and a whole-school reading challenges.



**Reading at Great Dalby is intertwined within writing, speaking and listening activities in many cross curricular situations.**



*Please do not hesitate to contact Miss Jenkins (EYFS teacher) or Mrs Corner (Reading Coordinator) if you have any further questions.*