

Phonics at Staplehurst

10th October 2025



STAPLEHURST
SCHOOL

Outline:

- What is phonics and how does it supports early reading?
- How is phonics taught at school?
- What is the phonics screening check (PSC) ?
- Tips and activities you can use at home to help your child feel confident to apply their phonic knowledge when reading.
- Explore some of the resources used to teach phonics and early reading.

What is phonics?

Phonics is

Knowledge of the alphabetic code

(26 letters, 44 phonemes, 140 different letter combinations)

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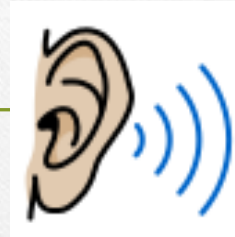
segmenting and blending

= reading and writing

Terminology

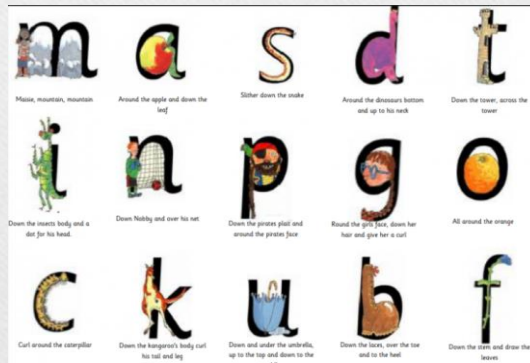
Phoneme (sound)

The smallest unit of sound in a word



Graphemes (letter)

Letter(s) representing a phoneme



Oral blending

Hearing a series of spoken sounds and

- merging them together to make a spoken word
- no text is used
- *For example, when a teacher calls out 'b-u-s', the children say 'bus'*
- This skill is usually taught before blending and reading printed words

Segmenting

Identifying the individual sounds in a spoken word (e.g. **h-i-m**) and writing down or manipulating letters for each sound to form the word 'him'



How phonics taught at Staplehurst?

- Daily 30 RWI reading session -, Revisit sounds, reading words and story book.
- Daily 15 minutes speed sound session-new sound, words, spelling
- RWI teachers - Smaller groups to help focus on sound that children may find tricky.
- Children are assessed every half term & regrouped.

Simple Speed Sounds

Consonants: stretchy

f	l	m	n	r	s	v	z	sh	th	ng
										nk

Consonants: bouncy

b	c	d	g	h	j	p	qu	t	w	x	y	ch
	k											

Vowels: bouncy

Vowels: stretchy

a	e	i	o	u	ay	ee	igh	ow
---	---	---	---	---	----	----	-----	----

Vowels: stretchy

oo	oo	ar	or	air	ir	ou	oy
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Complex Speed Sounds

Consonant sounds

f	l	m	n	r	s	v	z	sh	th	ng
ff	ll	mm	nn	rr	ss	ve	zz	ti		nk
ph	le	mb	kn	wr	se		s	ci		
			gn		c		se			
					ce					

b	c	d	g	h	j	p	qu	t	w	x	y	ch
bb	k	dd	gg		g	pp		tt	wh			tch
	ck		gu		ge							
	ch				dge							

Vowel sounds

a	e	i	o	u	ay	ee	igh	ow
	ea				<u>a-e</u>	<u>e-e</u>	<u>i-e</u>	<u>o-e</u>
					ai	y	ie	oa
					a	ea	i	o
						e	y	oe

oo	oo	ar	or	air	ir	ou	oy	ire	ear	ure
<u>u-e</u>			oor	are	ur	ow	oi			
ue			ore		er					
ew			aw							
			au							

Picture Phrases

ay



may I play?

2. day, play, may, way, lay, say, tray, spray

aw



yawn at dawn

3. saw, raw, law, straw, dawn, paw,
crawl, jaw, claw, yawn

We teach children sounds using a picture phrases to help them remember.

For example, ay, may I play? aw, yawn at dawn.

Many sounds have two or more letters making one sound. We call these 'Special Friends'.

'Special Friends', 'Fred Talk', read the word

1.4

ship

We teach children to read both real and nonsense words using the routine 'Special Friends', 'Fred Talk', read the word'.

Children spot the 'Special Friends' (two letters that make one sound), Fred talk the word, and then read the word as a whole.

For example, 'sh', sh-i-p, ship.

Finn drops it

Set 1 More Storybooks
Story 1

a e i o u



Story by Abbie Rushton
Illustrated by Mark Beech
Series developed by Ruth Miskin

OXFORD

Story books

Story Green Words

Ask children to read the words first in Fred Talk and then say the word.

Finn pram Mum sock cot Dad

Ask children to read the root first and then the whole word with the suffix.

sob → sobs grin → grins chuck → chucks

spill → spills

Red Words

Ask children to practice reading the words across the rows, down the columns and in and out of order clearly and quickly.

no	he	the
put	my	of
your	no	I
of	the	he

Finn drops it

This is Finn.
Finn drops things.



Finn drops Fox from the pram.

He sobs.

Mum gets it.

Finn grins.



What is the Phonics Screening Check?

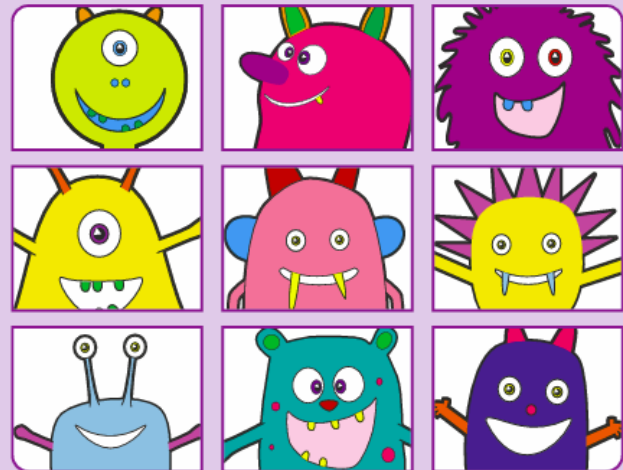
- A word-reading test at the end of Year 1 (June)
- Children read 40 words.
- 20 real and 20 pseudo words.
- Previous pass marks have consistently been 32

2024 national curriculum assessments

Key stage 1

Phonics screening check

Pupils' materials



What is the Phonics Screening Check?

- Children complete a word-reading check at the end of Year 1 so that parents can be confident their children are being taught to read successfully.
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- Children read 40 words. It takes between two and five minutes.
 - If they do not manage to read 32 of the words, they are given extra support, and repeat the check at the end of Year 2.
 - It means that all children will be able to read accurately before they begin Year 3.
 - In our school, we aim to make sure that every child learns to read accurately by the end of Year 1 so they are set up for success in school and in life.
 - As soon as we spot a child who needs extra practice learning to read sounds and words, we teach them one-to-one for a few minutes every day.

Nonsense/pseudowords/ Alien words



sheb



glight

Half of the words in the check are real words.
Half are nonsense words. For example, 'sheb', 'glight', 'ched', 'teb'.

There is a picture of an alien next to each word to remind the children that it isn't a real word.

Nonsense words check that children will be able to read sounds they know in unfamiliar words.

Children who can read nonsense words will, very soon, be able to read any new word - for example - gargantuan, flailing, raucous, anticipation;

Reading new words increases children's vocabulary rapidly.

How can I help my child at home?

1. Use 'Special Friends', 'Fred Talk',
read the word' to read words.
2. Practise reading sounds speedily.
3. Listen to your child read their reading book
every day for 10 minutes.
4. Play games using sounds they have learned

Online resources available

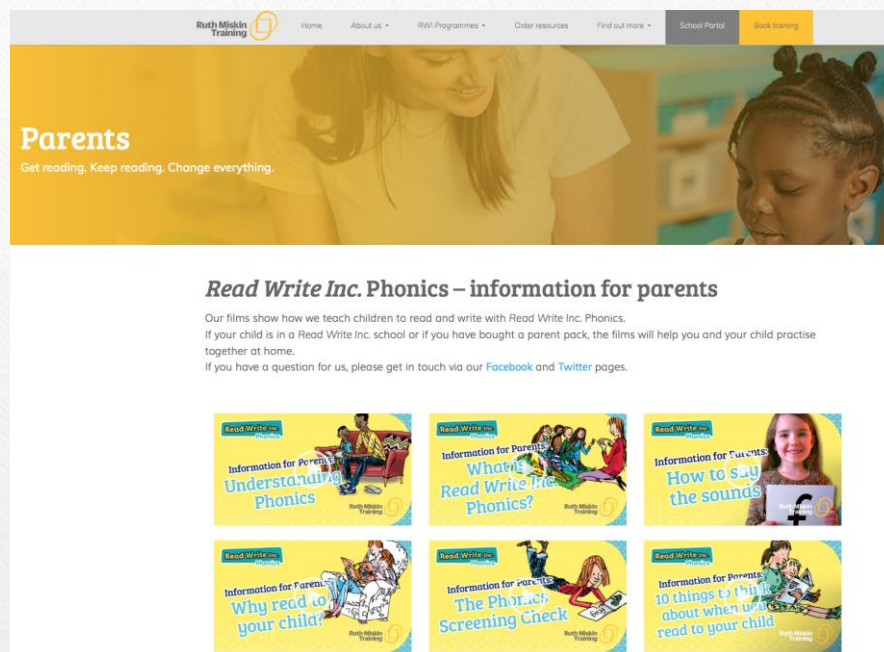
- Ruth Miskin Parents' Page:
 - <http://www.ruthmiskin.com/en/parents/>
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- Free e-books for home reading:
- <http://www.oxfordowl.co.uk/Reading/>



Free Video Tutorials (ruthmiskin.com)



Watch these video tutorials on the Ruth Miskin website to find out more about the PSC:

Understanding Phonics
The Phonics Screening Check

Websites and activities to support phonics at home



<https://www.teachyourmonstertoread.com/>
free on a computer!

PhonicsPlay - Resources



Phoneme sheets and alien words available to download on school website in phonics area.

Read Write Inc. Phonics Handwriting phrases

Use these handwriting phrases to help your child to remember how to form each letter correctly. Always practise writing sitting at a table and write on paper using a sharp pencil.

1. Write the letter in the air as you say the phrase. Ask your child to practise in the air with you.
2. Help your child to say the phrase as they write the letter on paper.

m Maisie, mountain, mountain

a round the apple, down the leaf

s slither down the snake

d round the dinosaur's bottom, up its tall neck and down to the feet

t down the tower, across the tower

i down the body, dot for the head

n down Nobby, over his net

p down the plot and over the pirate's face

g round her face, down her hair and give her a curl

o all around the orange

c curl around the caterpillar

k down the kangaroo's body, tail and leg

u down and under, up to the top and draw the puddle

m

a

s

d

t

i

n

p

g

o

c

k

u

3. Always praise your child for their efforts. Focus on correct formation rather than size.
4. Aim to practise with your child for a short time each day.

b down the laces to the heel, round the toe

f down the stem and draw the leaves

e lift off the top and scoop out the egg

l down the long leg

h down the head to the hooves and over its back

r down its back and then curl over its arm

j down its body, curl and dot

v down a wing, up a wing

y down a horn, up a horn and under its head

w down, up, down, up

z zig-zag-zig

q round her head, up past her earrings and down her hair

x down the arm and leg and repeat the other side

b

f

e

l

h

r

j

v

w

z

q

x

