



Phonics at Nursery

Dear Parents/Carers

At Sandy Lane Nursery and Forest School, we use the programme of teaching phonics called 'Letters and Sounds' which is adapted by staff to include the introduction of letter symbols.

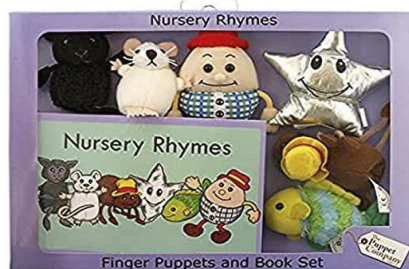


In nursery we teach Phase 1 of Letters and Sounds which concentrates on developing children's speaking and listening skills. This programme lays the foundations for your child's phonics knowledge and understanding and is divided into seven aspects as shown in the table below.

Letters and Sounds Phase 1	
Aspect 1	Environmental Sounds (sounds heard inside or outside)
Aspect 2	Instrumental Sounds (sounds instruments make)
Aspect 3	Body Percussion (using out body to make sounds)
Aspect 4	Rhythm and Rhyme (beats in words and rhymes)
Aspect 5	Alliteration (words that start with the same initial sound)
Aspect 6	Voice Sounds (sounds we can make with our voice)
Aspect 7	Oral Blending and Segmenting (putting sounds together or breaking up words)

Each aspect contains three strands. Tuning into sounds (auditory discrimination), listening and remembering sounds (auditory memory and sequencing), and talking about the sounds (developing vocabulary and language comprehension) We use words like 'phoneme' - the sound a letter makes, and grapheme - the letter shape/ what the letter looks like. During their time at nursery your child will receive dedicated sessions of Phase 1 phonics teaching, in addition to the opportunities staff take to develop phonic skills during children's free play, in which all seven aspects are explored, embedded and consolidated upon throughout the year.

We aim to provide quality first teaching in phonics through playing a wide variety of games and activities which promote careful listening. Music, stories and rhyme time also play an important role in developing your child's ability to listen carefully. Most of these activities are adult led and will take part in our key worker time, however singing, making music and listening to rhymes will be part of your child's daily diet at Sandy Lane.



Progressing in Phonics

When we feel that your child is ready, they will embark upon Phase 2 of the Letters and Sounds phonics programme, which continues to provide a structured and systematic approach to teaching phonics in nursery. Our phonics programme is delivered by highly skilled practitioners and will ensure that your child gets off to a flying start before going into their Reception class. Please be guided by your child's key worker as to your child's progress in phonics. It is very important that your child says the phonemes correctly for their continued success in phonics. You can support this at home by encouraging your child to say the pure sounds ('m' not muh, 's' not 'suh'). The video link below gives parents and carers guidance on pronunciation and staff are happy to help if you have any questions or need any further support.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UCI2mu7URBc>



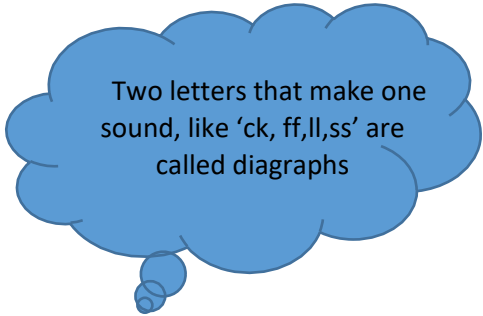
Toy Talk

During their time at nursery your child will meet various 'characters' that can only speak in pure sounds, talking like a robot, for example they will say m-a-t for mat. They help the children sound out words to support the initial steps in reading and spelling. Toy talk games are a fun way to develop your child's ability to orally blend (put sounds together to make words) and segment (break a word up into the sounds that make up the word) which is a very important skill for reading. It's helpful to play these type of games at home to support your child's development of these early reading skills.

Phase 2 Phonics

When your child is ready to begin Phase 2 of the Letters and Sounds phonics programme they will be taught the letter sounds (phonemes) and shapes (diagraphs) in this order

Letters and Sounds Phase 2	
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



Two letters that make one sound, like 'ck, ff, ll, ss' are called diagraphs

Home Learning Activity Ideas

At home you could try some 'toy talk' activities. Choose a toy and introduce it to your child explaining that the toy can only speak in 'sound-talk' and whispers what they want to say into the adult's ear. As the toy whispers the adult repeats the sounds, looks puzzled and then says the word straight afterwards. For example: 'What would Charlie like for tea today?' The toy speaks silently in the adult's ear and the adult repeats 'ch-ee-se' looking puzzled and then, says with relief 'cheese!'

Try inviting your child to see if they can speak like the toy: 'Do you think you could try to toy talk?' Say ch-ee-se: (the children repeat 'ch-ee-se') Ask the toy again, 'What else would you like?' Be careful to think of items with names of only single syllables (e.g. fish, cake, pie, soup). Use different scenarios: What does the toy like to do in the playground? (hop, skip, jump, run, etc.). Encourage the children to ask the toy questions with yes/no answers (e.g. Can you sing? Y-e-s/N-o).

As your child begins to work on phase 2 phonics you could try the 'tuning into sounds' activity described below.

Tuning into Sounds -To develop oral blending and segmenting of sounds in words. Think of words using the letters 's, a, t, p, i, n' (eg' sat, pin, nip, pat, tap, pit, pip) and sound them out, clapping each phoneme with the children in unison, then blend the phonemes to make the whole word orally. As children's confidence develops, ask individuals to demonstrate this activity to others'

The links below contain some other phonics activities you might like to try at home with your child. Please remember to check the content of any link before sharing the activity with your child. We would love to hear more about your child's phonics home learning so please remember to post a photo, video or short message on Tapestry.

<https://earlyimpactlearning.com/oral-segmenting-activities-16-fantastic-games/>

<http://www.letters-and-sounds.com/phase-2-games.html>

Writing

During our phonics and literacy sessions, and when the opportunity arises in your child's free play, your child will be taught how to say, read and write the sounds (graphemes) accurately. Teaching the correct handwriting grip and writing position is important to ensure future success in writing. Below is a guide to show how handwriting grip develops over time.

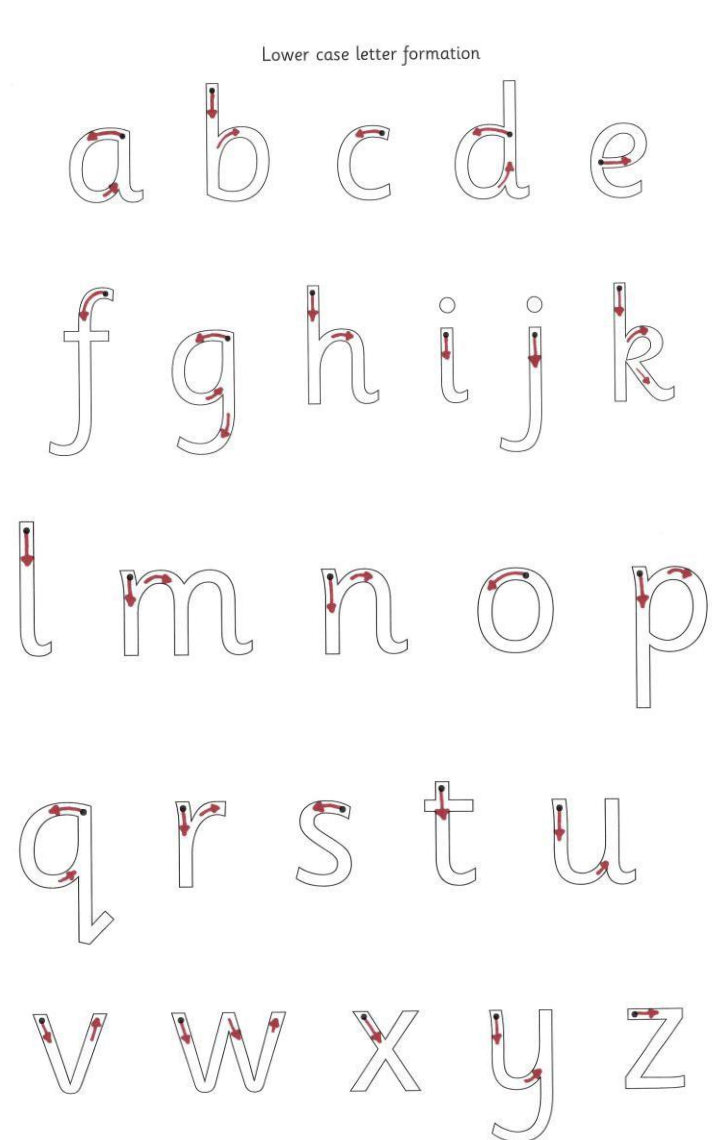


The first words children usually learn to write are things like their name and names for members of their family' Please remember to encourage and praise any attempt at 'writing' your child makes'

Here are some key points for you to remember:

- Your child may be happy to scribble, draw and make marks, often this will be on a large scale
- Before a child can write they need to develop their gross and fine motor skills for them to be able to hold a pencil, so let them play with toys and resources that help develop their arm, hand and finger muscles' ctivities like 'Dough Disco' are helpful to support this, here's a link <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3K-CQrjIOuY>
- Always encourage and praise your child for any mark making they complete, this will give them the confidence to continue
- Let your child write and draw with a variety of pencils, crayons, pens etc.
- As your child experiments with making marks encourage your child to say what their 'writing' means — often they will be able to tell you!
- Try to let your child see you writing and drawing, they will want to copy you

At Sandy Lane Nursery and Forest School we use following letter formation for lower case letters



Please remember the following when supporting your child:

- Always use lower case letters (as above) other than a CAPITAL letter for the first letter of your child's name
- Always start the letter where the dot is on the letter (as in the examples above)
- Other than letters f k t x try not to take your pencil off the paper from start to finish
- We always start at the dot and then go anti clockwise on the following letters c o a d g q

Your child's key worker is here to support you and your child on their phonics journey so if you have any questions or need any support please just ask.