Parent guide



Dearest Parents,

"Reading Makes You Brainy" is The Phonic Fairy's mantra. She will guide your child through a magical fun way to learn to read and write. Using phenomenal writers of quality story books, she aims to instil a lifelong love of books.

The Phonic Fairy isn't a woodland fairy nor will she collect teeth hiding under pillows at night. She is a book fairy who flies inside books with the help of her book wings, magically transforming into various characters to read stories to children. She teaches the focus letters and sounds with the help of her magic pencil wand whilst saying her 'sparkle marks' to help guide children to form their letters correctly.

Storytime Phonics is a systematic, multisensory synthetic phonics programme. Written by an English Consultant and partnership tutor from the Faculty of Education, Cambridge University. Michelle Larbey AKA The Phonic Fairy worked closely with leading teachers and children to develop this fun dynamic approach to learning to read and write. We know your son or daughter will be excited to learn to read and write using the Storytime Phonics programme.

How can you support your child at home?

Most importantly enjoy reading stories together, without any pressure. Create a lovely, warm, cuddly experience; after all it is our job as parents to inspire a hunger for books. Trips to libraries are a must as there is a huge wealth of all kinds of books to satisfy their appetite and to top it off, books are free!

Once you have finished reading the story have a chat about it, looking back over the pictures identifying the parts you enjoyed or discuss anything that puzzled them to help support their understanding of the story. Ask them questions and get them to ask you questions!

When your child brings home their reading book, support them to sound out the words when required, blending the letter sounds (phonemes) from left to right through a word. For example in the word 'bird' you hear three sounds, so sound out the word like this b-ir-d.

Your child will learn an action and phrase for each letter sound; so look out for the "Caption Action cards" and check your child knows these – they're fun to learn and will be linked to a storybook too.

For example; Caption: ar ar shark in the park

Action: Place straight hand on top of your head creating a fin shape.

Here is the order of sounds that your child will learn in Reception, we teach four sounds per week:

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	Set 6: j, v, w, x	
Set 7: y, z,zz, ch, sh	Set 8: th, ng, ai, ee	Set 9: qu, igh, oa, oo	
Set 10: ar, or, ur, ow	Set 11: oi, ear, air	Set 12: ure, er	

Once the children are confident saying and reading the majority of these sounds, we systematically teach the year 1 children all the most common alternative ways of pronouncing and spelling sounds, relating them to 'real books'. This is so we can develop the children's language and vocabulary but mainly excite and engage children so they read for pleasure.

The Phonic Fairy's tips to saying precise sounds:

Biggest tip: avoid saying 'uh' at the end of each letter sound

E.g. we say /mmm/ not m-uh, /sss/ not s-uh, /fff/ not f-uh.

Below are some examples of the 44 phoneme sounds your child will learn:

Hard to say sounds without adding the 'uh' schwa:

- d dig (tap tongue behind teeth) d d dig dig. Caption Action: d d dig, (pretend to dig with a spade) Storybook used: Sam and Dave Dig a Hole by Mac Barnett.
- **g gruff** (close the opening at the back of your throat with the back tongue against rear roof of mouth) Caption Action: g g Gruff the grump (clench fists under chin) Storybook used Gruff the Grump by Steve Smallman.
- **b baby** (Press both lips together then open your lips suddenly) Caption Action: b b baby Brains (open close hands by the side of your head) Storybook used: Baby Brains by Simon James.
- w whiffy (keep tight lips pursed/round) Caption Action: w w whiffy Wilson (wave hand in front of your nose) Storybook used: Whiffy Wilson the Wolf who Wouldn't Wash by Caryl Hart.
- **j- jelly** (push lips forward) Caption Action: j j jiggle jelly (Jump to your right two spaces then shake whole body like a jelly) Storybook used: Don't Put your Finger in the Jelly Nelly by Nick Sharratt.
- y yeti (keep edges of tongue against top teeth) Caption Action: y y yeti (Create the Y shape with your arms and body, stretching arms in the air whilst standing with your feet together) Storybook used: Yeti and the Bird by Nadia Shireen.
- qu quiet (keep lips pursed as you say kw two letters and two sounds) Caption Action: qu qu quiet for the Queen (Place hand across your chest then bow your head, whisper qu, quiet for the Queen). Please note this is a quiet/whispered sound. Storybook used: The Queen's Hat by Steve Anthony.

Tricky to pronounce – three letters one sound:

ure – cure with manure (initially we teach using the pronunciation 'your') Caption Action: ure, cure with manure (Dig hand into a bag of manure then sprinkle). Storybook used: The Farmer's Rat by Michelle Larbey.

Some words are known as "Tricky Troll words" e.g. the, to, go, no because it's tricky to use phonics; the letters do not match the sound they are supposed to make. Children need to use as much of their phonics as possible and then memorise the tricky bits of these sorts of words.

Please don't hesitate to ask your teachers if you have any further questions.

With thanks from the Phonic Fairy

Remember: Reading Makes You Brainy Brainy, Brainy!

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