



Reading and Phonics at

Happisburgh CE VA Primary & Early Years School

At Happisburgh, we teach systematic synthetic phonics using the '**Letters & Sounds**' programme, supported by the website, '**Phonics Play.**'

Phonics is the first method that children learn in order to be able to decode words and children at Happisburgh begin learning synthetic phonics as soon as they enter the Reception class. The teaching of phonics runs alongside a rich, language based environment which develops speaking, listening, reading and writing skills. We aim to ensure that phonics teaching is multi-sensory and will involve singing, chanting, using 3D letters, painting, drawing, using the outdoors, playing games and using computers in order the embedding of sounds and grapheme correspondence.

Children in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 will engage on a phonics lesson every day which could last from 15 minutes to 45 minutes.

The lessons will include:

A **Revisit and Review session** where the children will practise the phonics they have learning so far. This is likely to be a quick-fire session.

An **Introduction** to the new sound / grapheme which will be multi-sensory. The children will be taught how to pronounce the sound correctly, how it appears in common words and how the sound can be represented graphically (which letter/s are written).

A **practise session** which will allow the children to use the sound aurally and to identify it in written form.

A chance to **Apply** the new knowledge through the reading of books containing this sound and in writing simple sentences.

The children will be given plenty of opportunity to continue to practise the phonics they learn

The reading books are carefully matched to the phonics the children have learnt using the '**Big Cat**' reading books from Collins, allowing the children to practise their phonics and decode books successfully. Children are also able to choose a book from the library to share at home to instill a love of books and motivation to read. Children are heard read in school regularly. They read individually with teachers and teaching assistants and also read daily as part of their phonics sessions. We provide all children with a reading record for parents to comment in and sign and a book to take home. We believe that reading is extremely important and encourage parents and carers to share books and read with their children every day.

Phonics are special sounds, the sounds which make up 'talk'. Children progress naturally from talking to writing, and from listening to reading. We need to encourage this process.

How can you help your child learn to read?

Phonemes are the sounds we make when we speak. These sounds form words and phrases.

These sounds are 'phonemes'. Take the sound 'shhh'. (Make it by putting your finger on your lips as if you were telling someone to be quiet). This is a **phoneme** because it forms part of the words 'shark', 'flash', 'nation', 'ambition' and many others. There are generally agreed to be 44 different phonemes or sounds that make up spoken English. This will vary from area to area as different accents use different sounds.

Letters are graphemes - ways of writing down the sounds that come out of our mouth. We use the term 'grapheme' rather than letter because many sounds are written using more than one letter. E.g. the 'shhh' sound is often written using the letters s and h as in 'shark' or it is written using the letters 'ti' as in 'nation'. The grapheme representing this sound here is 'ti'. One sound can be written in different ways and often using two (or more) letters.

Learning Phonics

Children need to learn three things:

1. The words that we SAY can be broken up into single sounds (phonemes). 'c' 'a' 't' is cat.
2. Written script is a code – we learn how to write each sound we hear in a word (grapheme).

When we read, one of the things we do is to 'decode' the words.

3. Any one sound (phoneme) can be written in more than one way (grapheme).

How can I help my young child?

- Encourage your child to listen for the first sound in a word, e.g. the /sh/ sound in 'ship' or 'shark' or the /d/ sound at the start of 'dog'.
- Help children to spot words starting with the same sound as their name. Amy can spot 'apron' and 'April' but not 'apple'! They may also recognise 'their' letter, but get them to listen out for the sound too.
- Rhyming games help children listen out for middle and end sounds in words by asking them to spot and create rhymes. Best, guest, west, VEST... can be part of a game where you take turns to say a rhyming word. The words do not have to be 'real' – ants, lants, fants, PANTS... cause great giggles!
- Sounding out to read and write. Help your child to sound out and blend simple words. Words like 'this', 'that', 'thing' and 'then' are best read by sounding each phoneme: /th/ - /a/ - /t/. This really helps children to read small common words like 'in', 'an', 'on', 'at', 'it', 'is', 'up', 'us', 'we', etc.
- Tricky words Some words cannot be sounded out! Often they are common words: 'once', 'one', 'was', 'because', etc. When there is no easy way of sounding these out children need to memorise them.
- Most importantly try to make reading fun and interesting for your child, practise a little and often. Please ask your child's teacher if you are unsure about helping your child with reading at home.

Further information about phonics is available at

<https://www.phonicsplay.co.uk/parents/helping-my-child>