

Phonics is the way that most children are now taught to read. It supports children by helping them to understand the relationship between the sounds of spoken language and the letters in the written language.

When your child has learned some sounds (phonemes) and can recognise the letters that represent these sounds (graphemes) it is important that they build on this knowledge as they learn to read.



One of the things that children will learn to do as they begin to read is to break a word down into its separate sounds. This is called segmenting. They will then say the sounds together to make a word. This is called blending. So, when your child segments the word 'cat' they would say the 3 sounds (phonemes) separately c-a-t. They would then blend the sounds together to read the word 'cat'. At St-Margaret's we follow the Read Write Inc. phonics programme which coins the term 'Fred Talk' to describe the process of orally segmenting and blending to read.

Top tips for phonics

- Say the sounds (phonemes) very clearly and try not to add in extra bits - so 'c' is a short sound that does not need an 'uh' at the end. 'c' not 'cuh'.
- Encourage your child to read new words using segmenting and blending (Fred Talk) rather than trying to guess the word or use the pictures as clues.
- Be patient and offer lots of encouragement. Phonics can be challenging for some children so don't worry if they need to take a little time.



Local support for literacy

For information on how to access books in Liverpool you may wish to contact Liverpool Library Service:

<https://liverpool.gov.uk/libraries/find-a-library/central-library/>

Dual language books are also available to loan through some of the Liverpool children's centres:

<http://search3.openobjects.com/kb5/liverpool/fsd/service.page?id=2uEkVlrCBLE&familychannel=7-7>

You can also find supportive resources including recommended reading lists on the Liverpool Learning Partnership website:

<https://www.liverpoollearningpartnership.com/resources-to-help-during-social-distancing-and-self-isolation/>

Activity suggestions for phonics - Online

Oxford Owl https://home.oxfordowl.co.uk/reading/reading-schemes-oxford-levels/read-write-inc-phonics-guide/	Lots of free resources to help support your child's reading development. Guidance with supporting reading at home and free Read Write Inc. e-Books to help your child practise blending.
Fred Talk https://www.edubuzz.org/dunbarprimary/wp-content/blogs.dir/529/files/2017/06/fred_talk_games.pdf	Ideas for helping children to Fred Talk (sound out) words for reading and writing.
PhonicsPlay https://www.phonicsplay.co.uk/	Free interactive phonics games.
Bug Club https://www.activelearnprimary.co.uk/login?c=0	Free interactive books that can support reading at home. Decodable books that children can segment and blend to read (Fred Talk).

Activity suggestions for phonics - Offline



Practice segmenting and blending (Fred Talking)

While playing with your child make up games to help them segment and blend. Simon Says is a useful one to start with. Instead of 'Simon says jump' break down the word jump into its separate sounds, j-u-m-p. Try with other words like h-o-p and r-u-n.



Sounds all around

Ask your child to be as quiet as they can for 1 minute and listen to the sounds all around them. Ask them to remember what they could hear and in what order. This game can be played anywhere and will help your child to tune into different sounds.



Which toy?

Collect some of your child's toys together. Say the name of one of the toys using the sounds (phonemes) in the word, for example 'I am looking at the d-o-g.' Ask your child to choose which toy you are referring to. Your child could then take a turn and ask you to guess which toy.



Show and tell

Show children how to read new words using phonics. You could try this in the supermarket or while you are out for a walk. When you come to a word on a road sign or food packet, segment and blend the word out loud to show your child how it's done.