



Phonics – supporting you with Letters and Sounds



The importance of phonics in the Ofsted Framework

Under the current Ofsted Inspection Framework, how pupils are taught to read is being prioritised as a key inspection activity in primary schools.

Phonics teaching plays a crucial part in ensuring that children are equipped with the skills they need to access the curriculum as a whole, and schools are expected to have a 'sharp focus' on making sure that children have **sufficient phonics knowledge, language comprehension** and **communication skills**. Schools' phonics teaching must match – and aim to exceed – the expectations of the English National Curriculum and Early Learning Goals.

Schools must show:

- **'Rigorous and systematic' teaching of synthetic phonics** from the beginning of Reception
- Clear expectations of pupils' phonics progress term by term from Reception to Year 2
- That pupils have plenty of opportunities to practise reading and re-reading the grapheme-phoneme correspondences they have learned

Structured teaching also shouldn't take away from the importance of reading for pleasure – in fact the two should go hand-in-hand. Schools should also be reading a wide range of texts aloud to pupils in the classroom, including stories, poems, rhymes and non-fiction to nurture a love of reading.



Call **0121 666 6646** or email **hello@peters.co.uk** to discuss your requirements.

What is phonics?

Phonics is a way of teaching children how to read and write, based on helping children hear, identify and use different sounds that distinguish one word from another in the English language.

It involves matching the sounds of spoken English with individual letters or groups of letters. For example, the sound 'k' can be spelled as c, k, ck or ch.

Written language can be compared to a code, so knowing the sounds of individual letters and how those letters sound when they're combined will help children decode words as they read.



Synthetic phonics

- Synthetic phonics is the most widely used approach to phonics teaching, and schools are now required to show they are using this approach
- Children are taught to read letters or groups of letters (graphemes) by saying the sound(s) (or phonemes) they represent e.g. taking a single-syllable word such as cat apart into its three letters, pronouncing a phoneme for each letter in turn – /k, æ, t/
- Pupils start to read words by blending (synthesising) the sounds together to make a word
- Initially children are taught a small group of sounds and how to blend them. Books provide consolidation as they progress through the Letters and Sounds phases



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Letters and sounds explained

Letters and sounds splits phonics teaching into six phases, from starting to learn sounds at nursery to becoming fluent readers around aged 7.

- **Phase 1** – developing speaking and listening skills to lay the foundations for Phase 2
- **Phase 2** – letters and their sounds are introduced one at a time, with a new set of letters taught each week
- **Phase 3** – children should already be able to blend and segment words containing the 19 letters introduced at Phase 2, and Phase 3 introduces 25 new graphemes
- **Phase 4** – children should be able to blend phonemes to read CVC words, and segment to spell them. Phase 4 consolidates pupils' existing knowledge, introduces some 'tricky words' (e.g. said, have, like), adjacent consonants CVCC/CCVC/CCVCC and polysyllabic words
- **Phase 5** – those entering Phase 5 will be able to read and spell words with adjacent consonants, and more graphemes and phonemes are introduced, as well as alternative pronunciations
- **Phase 6** – by now children will have learnt the most frequently occurring grapheme-phoneme correspondences, and will be able to read many familiar words automatically. When they come across unfamiliar words, they should be able to decode them confidently. The main aim of this phase is for children to become more fluent readers and more accurate spellers

sh th ng ai ee igh
oa oo ar or ur ow
oi er ph bl fr gl
ch qu ck ff wh oe

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Reading schemes

There are a range of reading schemes available which use synthetic phonics based on 'Letters and Sounds' to teach children to read.

Reading Planet Rocket Phonics

Developed by literacy experts to match the expectations of the national curriculum and Letters and Sounds, *Reading Planet Rocket Phonics* books are ideal for teaching under the current Ofsted Inspection Framework.

- *Reading Planet Rocket Phonics* books are **fully decodable** in accordance with the sequence of letter-sound correspondences in Letters and Sounds, and build in the common exception words specified in each phase
- Developed by Abigail Steel, a phonics expert, former primary teacher and recent advisor to Ofsted on the inspection of phonics teaching
- All the books are designed to deliver on reading for enjoyment and information alongside decoding, through a rich variety of fiction and non-fiction titles designed to capture every child's interest

Also available in Rising Stars Reading Planet range: Lift-Off (wordless books), Lift-Off First Words (simple decodable words).



Find out more at peters.co.uk/reading-planet

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Collins Big Cat Phonics for Letters and Sounds



Collins Big Cat Phonics for Letters and Sounds are fully decodable fiction and non-fiction books expertly aligned to the Letters and Sounds progression, to ensure a secure start to every child's reading journey in Reception and Year 1.

- 104 fully decodable readers aligned to Letters and Sounds as required by the current Ofsted Framework
- Supported by *Phonics Practice*, 72 phonics-based readers for further practice and development
- New grapheme phoneme correspondences are introduced gradually throughout the cumulative progression of the Letters and Sounds phases
- Focus phonemes and Common Exception Words are listed in the inside front cover of every book
- With supporting Teacher Handbooks

256 Letters and Sounds books available



Find out more at peters.co.uk/big-cat-phonics

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Project X Hero Academy



Hero Academy provides fully decodable and finely levelled stories to match the Letters and Sounds phases, as required by the current Ofsted Inspection Framework.

- Fine phonic progression that ensures all children can access the series
- Created with the help of author and illustrator duo Paul Stewart and Chris Riddell, former Children's Laureate, to motivate young readers
- 42 fully decodable readers aligned to Letters and Sounds phases 1–5
- 24 additional readers provide consolidation and a further 12 titles bridge the Key Stage 1/Key Stage 2 gap
- Teaching support in each book includes lists of common words, developing vocabulary and tips for independent and guided reading



Find out more at peters.co.uk/project-x-hero-academy

Call **0121 666 6646** or email hello@peters.co.uk to discuss your requirements.

Also available

Other schemes providing phonics support and decodable texts include Rocket Phonics, Word Sparks, Project X: Alien Adventures, Project X: Phonics, Little Blending Books, Bug Club Phonics, Ransom Reading Stars, Oxford Reading Tree: Floppy's Phonics Teaching Programme, Oxford Reading Tree: Floppy's Phonics Fiction, Traditional Tales and BookLife Readers.

Find out more at peters.co.uk/phonics



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