Phonics for Parents



7th October 2026

Outcomes for parents

- Understand what phonics is and how children learn to read and write
- Understand how this approach links to our reading scheme
- Understand how to support your child at home



Reading



Reading to your child in the earliest months stimulates the part of the brain that allows them to understand the meaning of language and helps build key language, literacy and social skills. Evidence suggests that children who read for enjoyment every day not only perform better in reading tests than those who don't, but also develop a broader vocabulary, increased general knowledge and a better understanding of other cultures. In fact, reading for pleasure is more likely to determine whether a child does well at school, rather than their social or economic background.

Reading Skills

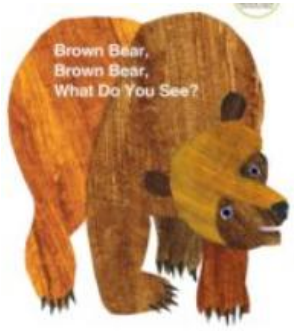
- Sound awareness
- Being read to every day
- Hearing engaging stories
- Reading picture books
- Reading logos and signs
- Phonics – letter sounds
- Sight reading – word recognition
- Repetition











I	the	and	no	cat
go	of	they	yes	get
come	we	my	for	said
went	this	see	a	to
up	dog	on	dad	in
you	me	away	can	
day	like	mum	he	
was	going	it	am	
look	big	at	all	
are	she	play	is	

What is phonics?

- Phonics is a way of teaching children how to read and write. It's like a code, so knowing the sounds of individual letters and how those letters sound when they are combined will help children to decode words as they read.

- Phonics sounds are not the same as letter names.

- Understanding phonics will also help children to know which letters to use when writing.

- There are 26 letters in the alphabet but 44 sounds in the English language!

What is phonics?

- Phase 1 – pre reading (environmental sounds, instrumental sounds, body percussion, rhythm and rhyme, alliteration, voice sounds, oral blending and segmenting)
- Phase 2 – single letter sounds
- Phase 3 – introduce digraphs and trigraphs.
- Phase 4 – consonant blends
- High frequency / common exception words / tricky words (eg. the, no, go)

Why teach phonics?

- Decoding words – rather than memorising thousands of words, they learn how to map sounds to letters.
- Independence and fluency – allows children to sound out unfamiliar words on their meaning faster and more accurate reading.
- Spelling and writing – understanding the letter sound relationships helps children break words down into sounds to spell
- Proven effectiveness – research backed by the EEF

1. Phonics has a positive impact on average (+5 months) with extensive evidence and is an important component in the development of early reading skills particularly for children from disadvantaged backgrounds.

Education Endowment Foundation

- Other benefits – can support speech. Support for the Year 1 phonics check.

Pure Sounds

Pure sounds are important, the video on our class page of the website shows you how to pronounce the sounds.

Phonics Pure Sounds

Learn how to pronounce all 44 phonics sounds, or phonemes, used in the English language with these helpful examples, from Oxford Owl.



Phonics Terminology

Phonemes: The sounds that are found within a word

Grapheme: The way we write down a sound

Digraph: Two letters that make one sound

Trigraph: Three letters that make one sound

Blending: Seeing a word and merging the phonemes together to read the word

Segmenting: Chopping up a word into separate phonemes to spell it out

Tricky words: Words that cannot be decoded.

Spelling: Writing words using the correct letters in the right order to be read by others.

Monster Phonics





- Phase 2 – Autumn: Single, commonly used sounds, blending consonants and vowels - CVC

E.g. cat, dog, sit, bun

- Phase 3 – Spring term: digraphs/trigraphs including consonant - sh, th, ch, ng - and vowel sounds 'ai' 'ee' 'igh' 'oa' 'oo'

- 2 syllable words e.g. cobweb, rooftop

- Phase 4 – Summer term – variety of consonant blends e.g. frog, lost, spend





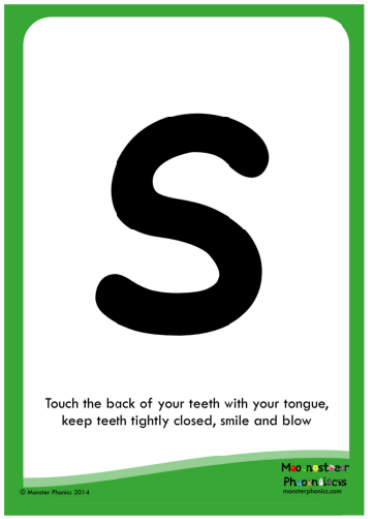
Monster Phonics

“Monster Phonics is a fun way to teach phonics and is multi-sensory. Sounds are categorised into 10 colour groups , and each colour has a corresponding monster character”



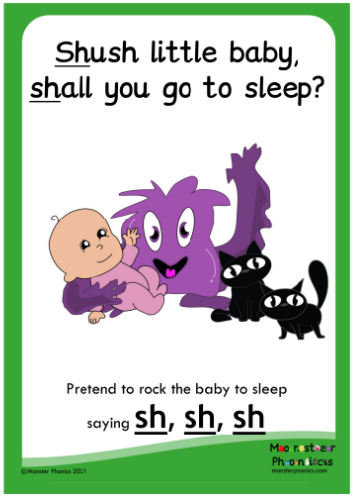
Monster Phonics

Every letter has a name
Every letter has a phoneme
Every letter has a grapheme
Every letter has a mnemonic
Every letter has an action



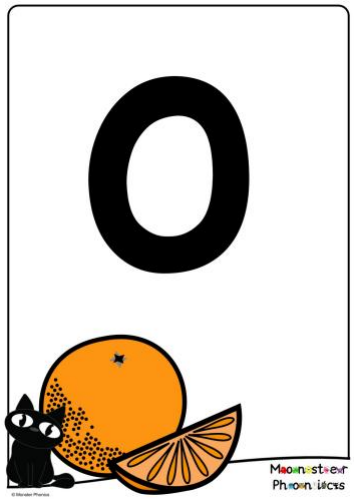




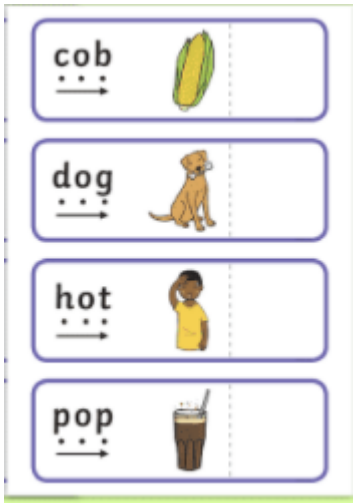


A typical phonics session…

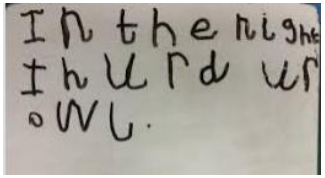
- Review
- Teach
- Practise
- Read HFW's











Our reading scheme

- Lilac – no words
- Phonic readers – follow sounds learnt in school
- Colour levels – blending using Phase 2 (pink), 3 (red) and 4 (yellow)

Reading books should be matched to a child's phonics stage. If they cannot decode a book, this will lead to frustration for the child and the parent/carer.

Writing Skills

We are seeing more and more children starting school with underdeveloped fine and gross motor skills; a prime area of learning. This could be due to the increase of children of pre-school age using iPads etc. at home. The ability to write is a complex one, not only do children need to have the confidence to pick up a pencil and make marks on paper, they also need to be developmentally ready to write with a strong core and hand muscles.



Writing Skills



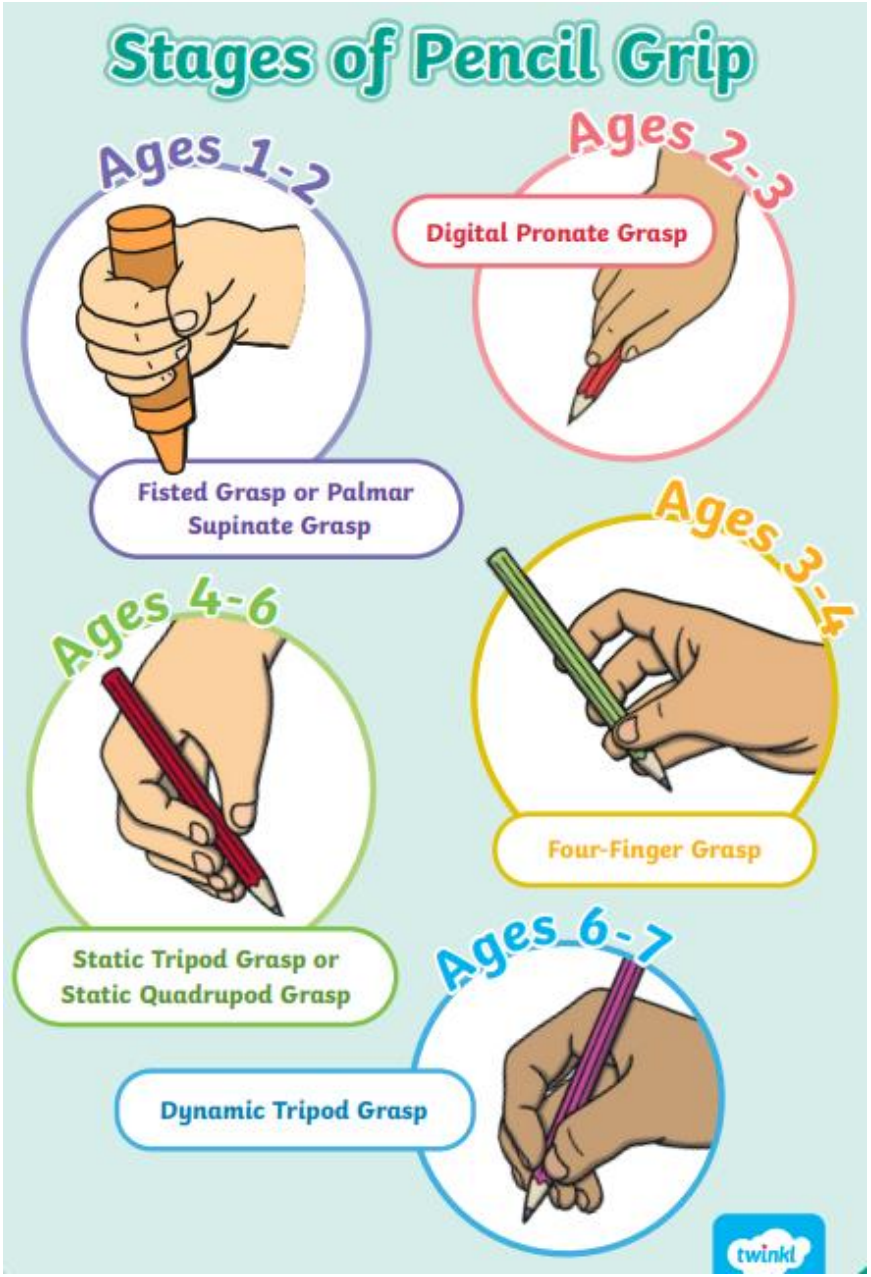
The hand is a really complex piece of machinery and is made up of lots of joints and muscle groups that interconnect and work together to provide maximum dexterity. Fine motor skills are activities in which the small muscles in the hand and wrists make precise movements. However, it is important to remember that a child cannot master fine motor activities until gross motor skills are developed. Going to the park, ball games, trampoline, climbing, obstacle courses and dancing are a few activities that can help develop gross motor skills.

Writing involves transcription (spelling and handwriting) and composition (talking about ideas and structuring them in speech, before writing.



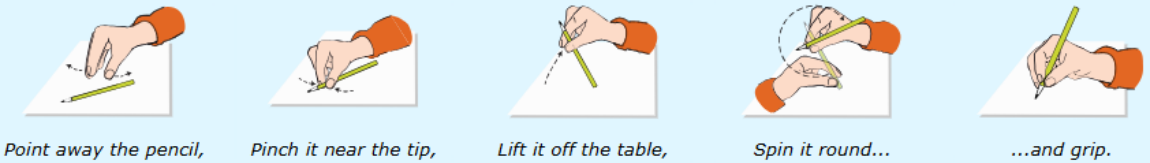


Pencil Grip


Stages of Pencil Grip
Ages 1-2
Fisted Grasp or Palmar Supinate Grasp
Ages 2-3
Digital Pronate Grasp
Ages 3-4
Four-Finger Grasp
Ages 4-6
Static Tripod Grasp or Static Quadrupod Grasp
Ages 6-7
Dynamic Tripod Grasp
twinkl

Pencil Grip

Right Handed Grip

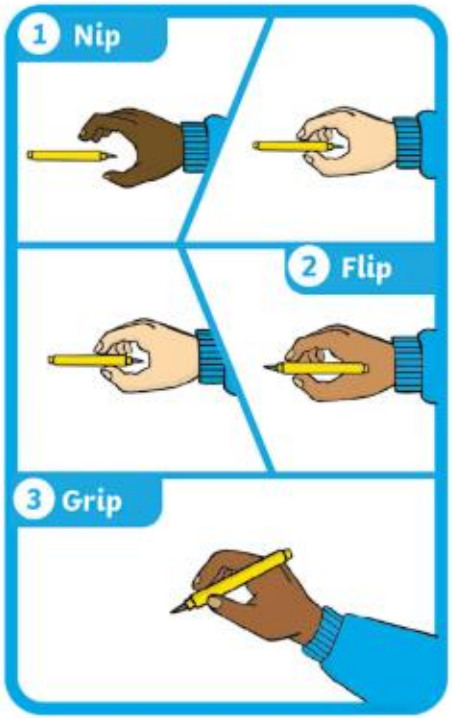


Point away the pencil, *Pinch it near the tip,* *Lift it off the table,* *Spin it round...* *...and grip.*

Left Handed Grip



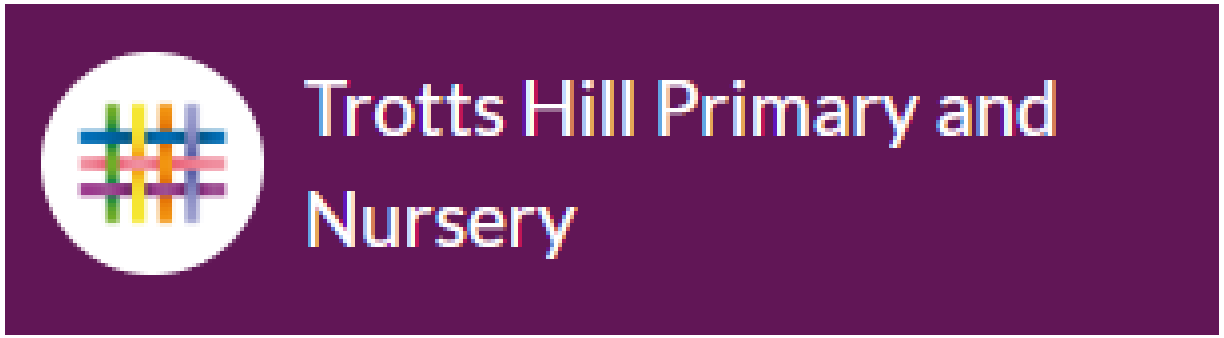
Point away the pencil, *Pinch it near the tip,* *Lift it off the table,* *Spin it round...* *...and grip.*



How to help at home

- Read **every** day
- Reading book (5-10mins max)
- Repeat same book at least 3 times for confidence / fluency
- Bedtime stories are sharing books and should be more challenging – do not expect children to read these books. These should include rhyme, repetition etc and a chance to talk about the story!
- Look for sounds **everywhere**
- Talk about sounds – first letter of names, segment words e.g. 'what sounds are in 'egg''? 'Pass me the b-o-x'
- Make birthday cards, invitations, messages
- Make time for physical play
- Encourage children to query unfamiliar words
- Follow a simple recipe together
- Encourage children to help with the shopping – gathering items, reading and writing shopping lists
- Look at traffic signs, labels, shop names and adverts
- Model reading and writing positively

Please add home learning, next steps or any other activities your child would like to share.



Thank you for attending

- Any questions?
- Please ask at any time!