



Letters and Sounds

The ability to read is a necessity to survive and thrive in today's society. Phonics is taught through the programme letters and sounds. Letters and sounds develops a child's phonics knowledge and skills in order to help them learn to read. Phonics is a method for teaching **reading** and **writing** by developing learners' **phonetic awareness** — the ability to hear, identify, and manipulate **phonemes**—in order to teach the correspondence between these sounds and the **spelling** patterns (**graphemes**) that represent them.

In school, we follow the Letters and Sounds programme. Letters and Sounds is a phonics resource published by the Department for Education and Skills, which consists of six phases.

It aims to build children's speaking and listening skills as well as to prepare children for learning to read by developing their phonic knowledge and skills. It is a systematic programme for teaching phonic skills to children with the aim of them becoming fluent readers.

However, we know that each of our pupils is different so we may use other strategies to support and embed their learning such as jolly phonics, sight words or mnemonics for writing. At Arbourvale, phonics is taught at the pupil's stage of development across the school so phonics lesson may look different in different classes.

The five basic skills for reading and writing are:

Learning the letter sounds: Children are taught the 42 main letter sounds. This includes alphabet sounds as well as digraphs such as sh, th, ai and ue.

Learning letter formation: Using different multi-sensory methods, children learn how to form and write the letters

Blending: Children are taught how to blend the sounds together to read and write new words

Identifying sounds in words: Listening for the sounds in words gives children the best start for improving spelling.

Spelling the tricky words: Tricky words have irregular spellings and children learn these separately

We all know that our pupils learn in different ways, at our school, we believe that offering a range of activities and approaches alongside the Letters and Sounds programme means that every pupil will be able to participate and find a fun and motivating way to participate and enjoy learning to read. Phonics is implemented through discrete sessions and cross-curricular approaches ensuring it has

relevance and is embedded into the curriculum offering pupils a variety of opportunities to learn practice and develop their reading skills and comprehension.



Phoneme – The **smallest unit** of sound in a word.

Grapheme – **Graphical representation** of a sound/ phoneme – what the sound looks like when written. For some phonemes, this could be more than one letter e.g. t, ai, igh

Digraph – a phoneme represented with 2 letters

Trigraph – a phoneme represented by 3 letters.

