

What is Phonics?

Schools in the UK, and increasingly around the world, teach children to read using 'Synthetic Phonics'. This is simply a way in which we break words down into the smallest sounds. The sounds are pronounced in isolation and blended together (synthesised).



Each week, as new GPCs* are introduced in phonics lessons, they are incorporated into the book your child reads. This gradual approach builds up a wider vocabulary of words that children can decode and read confidently.

On the front cover of each book, you'll find one or more GPCs printed in the top right-hand corner. These are the newly introduced sounds your child has learned that week. While they may still need some practice, reading words with these GPCs will help reinforce their learning.

Inside the front cover, you'll also find a list of '**Green Words**'—words that use the new GPCs. Children will practise reading these in class and revisiting them together at home provides valuable extra support.

Each book also includes a growing list of '**Red Words**', printed inside the front cover. These are technically known as '**Common Exception Words**', which are frequently used words that don't follow regular phonics rules and can't be easily sounded out. We encourage children to use their phonics knowledge to decode part of each word and to remember the '**tricky**' grapheme with support.



Fostering a Love of Reading

Help your child become a little explorer in the wonderful world of books! Create a cosy reading corner at home where books are easy to see, choose and enjoy. Visit your local library together and let your child discover new genres. Explore a rich variety of texts, including stories, picture books, poems, rhymes, non-fiction, comics and magazines. Read aloud often, sharing stories, talking about pictures, wondering what might happen next and enjoying favourite books again and again. Most importantly, let your child see that books bring joy, adventure, imagination and discovery. Nurture their curiosity and help them develop a love of reading that lasts a lifetime.

The QR code contains videos demonstrating the proper pronunciation of all ***Grapheme-Phoneme Correspondences (GPCs)** taught in the FFT Success for All Phonics programme. Your child will be learning them in the order of the videos. Please do visit: <https://parents.fft.org.uk/> for more information.



Strategies to support your child with reading at home

- Talk to your child about everything they see around them. There is so much to learn and the more they know, the easier it will be for them to understand what they read about in books.
- Taking your child to different places will broaden their experience and their understanding of the world. These experiences will give them background information that will really help them to understand books that relate to these experiences.
- Children sometimes struggle to understand what they are reading simply because they don't understand what some of the words mean. If you explain the meaning of unfamiliar words, they will understand more words when they are reading and use them when they are writing.
- Set aside some time every day when you and your child read together for pleasure. This will teach them so many skills! They will learn how to handle and enjoy books. Developing a love of books will help your child to develop positive attitudes to reading.
- It may seem odd but taking your child to the park and making sure they exercise is very good for their learning. Exercise is good for our brains as well as our bodies and children will also develop strength and coordination. This will help their writing as their arms and hands will be stronger.
- Little hands also need practise to become able to use fine motor skills. As with most skills, practise is what matters, so encourage your children to play with jigsaw puzzles, playdough, threading toys, colouring books or any other activity where they have to use their hands. This will make it so much easier for them to write neatly and well when they are taught at school.
- An excellent way to work on fluency is to choose a page of the Shared Reader and ask your child to read it aloud several times. Each time they read it they will become a little more confident and will read it better. You might choose to ask them to practise reading the same passage on two or three occasions. If you do this each week, your child will gradually start to become more fluent.
- You might also like to show your child how you would read a passage, using punctuation to show where to stop and take a breath. Once they can read quite smoothly you could introduce some expression, reading more loudly or softly for example, if that fits the text.

Questions for storybooks

What do you think will happen in this book?

What has happened in the story so far?

What will happen next?

What do you think a specific character is thinking?

How do you think a particular character is feeling?

Why do they feel that way?

Why did a character act the way they did?

What was the problem in this story?

How was the problem solved?

What happened in the end of the story?

Did you like the story? Why did you like it? Why did you not like it?

Questions for non-fiction books

What facts did you learn?

What did you find most interesting?

Was there anything you didn't understand?

What would you like to find out more about?