



Riversdale Primary School

Letters and Sounds

What is Letters and Sounds?

Letters and Sounds is a phonics resource published by the Department for Education and Skills in 2007. 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 sets out a detailed and systematic programme for teaching phonic skills for children, starting by the age of five, with the aim of them becoming fluent readers by age seven.

How does Riversdale use Letters and Sounds?

This is our core resource, but to ensure progression, we also use elements from the Jolly Phonics programme; a fun and child centred multi-sensory approach to phonics. Children work with all members of the EYFS team to move through phonics phases at their own pace, applying both a synthetic phonics (sounding out) and analytic phonics (teachers show children how to deduce the common letters and sounds in a set of words, which all begin with the same letter or sound) for example 'sit', 'sat' and 'sip'. This learning can be reinforced at home as the Riversdale Home School Book contains the actions that correspond with the phonics sounds, as well as the high frequency word trains that contain the most common words that children need to be able to read and spell. We continue to use phonics to support new arrivals (children new to English), allowing them to rapidly learn and develop their language skills.

The students are tested in Year 1 using the Phonics Screening Test and possibly year 2

Phonics Phases:

There are six overlapping phases. The table below is a summary based on the Letters and Sounds guidance for practitioners and teachers:

Phase	Phonic Knowledge and Skills
Phase One (Nursery and Reception)	Activities are divided into seven aspects, including environmental sounds, instrumental sounds, body sounds, rhythm and rhyme, alliteration, voice sounds and finally oral blending and segmenting.
Phase Two (Reception) up to 6 weeks	Learning 19 letters of the alphabet and one sound for each. Blending sounds together to make words. Segmenting words into their separate sounds. Beginning to read simple captions.
Phase Three (Reception) up to 12 weeks	The remaining 7 letters of the alphabet, one sound for each. Graphemes such as ch, oo, th representing the remaining phonemes not covered by single letters. Reading captions, sentences and questions. On completion of this phase, children will have learnt the "simple code", i.e. one grapheme for each phoneme in the English language.
Phase Four (Reception) 4 to 6 weeks	No new grapheme-phoneme correspondences are taught in this phase. Children learn to blend and segment longer words with adjacent consonants, e.g. swim, clap, jump.
Phase Five (Throughout Year 1)	Now we move on to the "complex code". Children learn more graphemes for the phonemes which they already know, plus different ways of pronouncing the graphemes they already know.
Phase Six (Throughout Year 2 and Beyond)	Working on spelling, including prefixes and suffixes, doubling and dropping letters etc.