

## Reading

At St. John's our children learn to read using the **phonic** method. We begin at **Phase 1:** The children will begin to recognise sounds within words, words that begin with the same sound and words that rhyme. This stage is very much play based and most children will have been given the opportunity to develop this at their pre-school setting.

Very quickly the children begin to work at **Phase 2:**

During this Phase your child will begin by learning the sounds that letters make (Phonemes). We teach the children to recognise the letter shape, to know the alphabet name for the letter and the sound that letter makes. The children will begin to form the letters using a multisensory approach: painting the letters, making them out of dough, sky writing in the air, drawing them in sand. The children will bring work home at this stage so that you can support your child's learning. When the children know the first set of letters and sounds (s, a, t, p, i, n, m, d) we begin to teach them to **blend** the sounds in order to read simple words, e.g. t o i n

Later in the school year your child will move onto **Phase 3:**

This Phase introduces the sounds made by two letter (Digraphs) and three letters (Trigraphs). Some you will already be familiar with: /th, /sh/, /ch/, /oo/, /ee/, others you will be less familiar with: /ai/, /igh/, /oa/. There is a list of all phonemes and corresponding actions in the middle of this booklet. The children will also begin to learn *tricky words* by sight. These are words that it is not possible to blend, such as: to, no, go, *where, here, the*. The children will be given homework books so that you can reinforce the work being done at school. The books contain the sounds your child is learning each week, the letter formation pattern and the tricky words we are learning to read by sight.

Once your child is secure at phase 3 they will move onto **phase 4.**

This phase introduces longer words including 2 syllable words.

**Phase 5** will introduce alternative ways of making the sounds they have learned at phase 3 e.g. ai, ay, a-e.

**Phase 6** consolidates prior learning and includes: future/ present and past tense; prefixes and suffixes; grammar.

## How you can help at home

Your child should read at home on a daily basis ó a little and often is a great way of improving fluency when reading.

When meeting unfamiliar words, the children are encouraged to use a range of strategies:

- Stretching out the word and blending the sounds that they can hear e.g. t-r-ai-n
- Chunking a word into smaller chunks e.g. s-and-w-i-ch-es
- Thinking about a word that would make sense in the sentence.
- Using clues in the illustrations.

The children are also encouraged to spot the punctuation (initially just full stops) and to begin to use this to develop their sense of expression ó we love to hear different character voices too!

It's a good idea to talk about the text as you read together, e.g. Why is Cinderella crying? Where is the wolf hiding? How do you think the story will end? This encourages the children to see the story as a whole and to develop an understanding of beginning, middle and end

We want children to develop a love of reading. Please encourage them to read their own books or comics at home ó maybe reading a bedtime story to younger siblings or their teddies! Audio books are another popular treat and enable younger children to gain confidence with longer texts. Joining the local library is also a good way of developing your child's love of books and there are always great reading activities going on in the holidays.

