

Phonics in Nursery

At Gade Valley we use the Letters & Sounds phonics scheme. In the Nursery we generally focus on phase 1. People often think of phonics as relating to linking sounds to letters, but before children are able to do this, they need to develop their listening skills and their awareness of the sounds they hear daily and their ability to reproduce sounds.

Phase 1 is divided into 7 aspects. Aspects 1-6 are taught throughout the year, Aspect 7 builds on the children's knowledge of aspects 1-6 and so is taught when children are secure in these aspects.

The 7 aspects are:

1. Environmental sounds – listening to the sounds they hear around them. The difference between sounds indoors and outside, the sounds animals make, sound effects in stories.
2. Instrumental sounds – exploring the different sounds instruments make. Describing & reproducing different sounds, fast & slow, loud & quiet.
3. Body percussion – stamping their feet, tapping, clapping etc. making patterns with the sounds to develop awareness of beat. Joining in action songs.
4. Rhythm and Rhyme – building up familiarity with a range of songs, changing familiar rhymes, encouraging children to make up their own songs. Recognising rhyming words, making up rhyming names.
5. Alliteration – to develop awareness of words which start with the same sound. Recognising the sound at the beginning of their name and other things which start with the same sound.
6. Voice Sounds – looking at the different sounds we can make with our voices - high, low, fast, slow etc. looking at the shapes our mouths make when we make different sounds. Using different voices for characters in stories. Recognising different voices.
7. Oral Blending – talking about the different sounds (phonemes) which they can hear in words. Saying the phonemes in a word in order and blending them together to say the word. This aspect is taught orally – we do not expect the children to match the phonemes to letters in reading or writing at this stage although some children may have some awareness of some letter sounds.

When the children do begin to work in aspect 7 it is important that they hear the phonemes correctly and that adults model saying them correctly.

There are some websites which have video clips of how the phonemes are pronounced which you may wish to look at. If the phonemes are pronounced correctly it helps the children to blend them to say the word.

www.oxfordowl.co.uk – there is a section for home & phonics

www.mrthorne.com

If you have any questions about phonics in the Nursery, please see a member of the Nursery team.