



Howbridge Infant School

Phonics Factsheet

What is phonics?

Phonics is the system of blending sounds together to read, and segmenting sounds to spell. They are both skills which are taught together.

A phoneme

Is the smallest unit of sound that we use in the English language. A phoneme can be made up of one letter as in the alphabet sounds – s, a, t, p, i, n.

Digraphs and Trigraphs

Phonemes that are made up of two letters are known as digraphs, e.g. sh, ch, th, ng.
Phonemes that are made up of three letters are known as trigraphs, e.g. igh, air, ure.
Phonemes can not be broken down into separate words.

Grapheme

Is the way that we write a phoneme. A phoneme may have only one grapheme e.g. b. Or may have several different spellings, e.g. **or** can be spelt 'or' in torn, 'aw' in claw, 'au' in naughty, 'ore' in more.

The children will initially be introduced to one common grapheme for each phoneme, but as they progress through the school they will be taught the less common spelling alternatives.

How we teach and support your child at school

- We follow a systematic program called Letters and Sounds
- We teach two sessions of phonics everyday of the week
- We learn 2 phonemes a week
- We learn words by sight that you can not blend

How you can support your child at home

- Practise the phonemes of the week with your child, we put these on the weekly newsletter
- Read everyday, and, practise sounds and words
- Use Bug Club
- Look for words in the environment that your child can use their phonic skills to decode, for example shop names

Useful websites:

www.mrthorne.com

www.bbc.co.uk/cbeebies - alphablocks

www.phonicsplay.co.uk – this website has some free resources but does ask for a subscription for full access

www.bugclub.co.uk – your child has their own log on and password for this site