

Phonics Presentation

September 2026



What is Phonics?

Phonics involves matching the sounds of spoken English with individual letters or groups of letters, then teaching children to blend the sounds of letters together, to help them **decode** (**read**) unfamiliar or unknown words by sounding them out.

This then allows children to learn to **encode** (**write**) by segmenting each sound to write words accurately.

Terminology

Phoneme: A single letter sound e.g. m/a/s

Grapheme: The individual letters or groups of letters that represent the individual sounds.

Digraph: Two letters that make one sound e.g. sh/ch/ar

Split digraph: A digraph that is split by a consonant.
E.g. 'a-e' (cake), 'i-e' (five), 'o-e'- (code)

Trigraph: Three letters that make one sound e.g. air/ear

Quadgraph: Four letters that make one sound e.g. eigh-sleigh

Harder to read and spell words (HRSW) Words that cannot be decoded by sounding out e.g. the, no, go, I

Phonics Phases

Phonics is split typically into phases, from phase 1-5. In nursery children focus on phase 1 which is split into 6 aspects covered throughout the year and include things like hearing environmental sounds, instrumental sounds, alliteration and rhythm and rhymes. When we feel that they are ready, they are introduced to phase 2.

In reception children will focus predominantly on phases 2-4 and will be introduced to phase 5 during the summer term.

Year 1 is consolidating phase 4 and 5 and Year 2 is consolidating phase 5 then moving on to spelling.

Phonics Screening Check

When the children are in Year 1, they take a Phonics Screening Check in June.

This Phonics Screening Check is an assessment, carried out 1:1, where the children apply their knowledge of phonics to read 40 words.

20 real words, 20 pseudo words. The assessment checks the children's ability to decode and application of phonics.

This is done in a child appropriate manner and more information will be shared with Year 1 parents in the Summer term.

Phonics at St Roses

ELS Essential Letters and Sounds

developed by Knowledge Schools Trust

Getting all children to
read well, quickly.



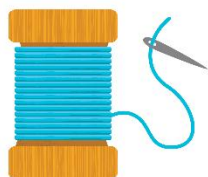
OXFORD

What is ELS?

Essential Letters and Sounds (ELS) is the name of our chosen phonics programme at St Roses.

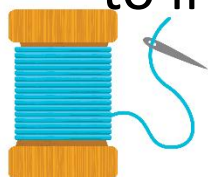
Children will experience the joy of books and language whilst rapidly acquiring the skills they need to become fluent independent readers and writers.

They will have the opportunity to read physical books both in school and at home.



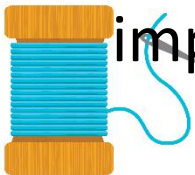
How does it work?

- A simple, consistent approach to teaching phonics.
- Mnemonics and rhymes are used to support learning, recall and letter formation
- Phonics is taught every single day. It follows the same structure and formats throughout the school, especially as children move from Phonics to spelling. Children are all familiar with the language, routines and terminology helping to increase their confidence.



How do we teach phonics?

- Dedicated lesson each day following the ELS program of study. Phonics learning is referred to throughout the day to review new sounds & graphemes taught
- Lots of opportunities for oral blending- /c/ /oa/ /t/
- We teach the 'code' (decoding and encoding) for reading, alongside teaching vocabulary.
- We also teach children high frequency words and harder to read and spell words to learn by sight, to improve their reading fluency.



How do we teach phonics?

In ELS we do not ask children questions before we have taught them.

For example, when teaching a new sound, rather than asking children if they know any words with the sound in - we give the children 3 words that contain that sound. You can try this with your children at home.

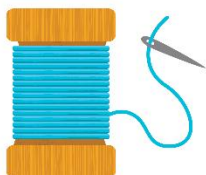
Teach

These objects all have the /ng/ sound in.

ng



ng ... ng ... ring
ng ... ng ... wing
ng ... ng ... sing



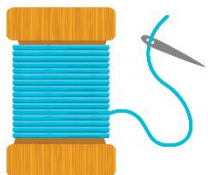
The link between reading and phonics

- Children are only reading from books that are entirely decodable
- Children therefore should be able to read their book confidently with increasing independence and fluency
- Expectation is daily reading at home if possible, minimum 3 times across the week working on these skills:

decode

fluency

expression



Reading in School

In Reception, once the children have been taught the first 4 sets of phonemes, they will start Guided Reading.

The books we use are fully decodable readers are fully aligned to ELS.

These books can be used with confidence to provide decodable reading books suitable for children at each stage of ELS.

The books are grouped according to the phase and week of ELS that they relate to.

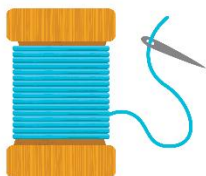
Each child will be sent home with at least one decodable book each week matched to their phonics knowledge and application, alongside any sharing texts or picture books. The decodable books are to be kept for one week. In school, session one focuses on phonemes, key words, blending, and session two focuses on fluency and comprehension. Please practice reading this text at home with your child.

How do we assess phonics?

We use a separate program linked to ELS called Phonics Tracker.

The children are assessed every half term on their phonics phoneme recognition, blending and reading of harder to read and spell words. Their assessment on phonics tracker informs which reading books the children are issued.

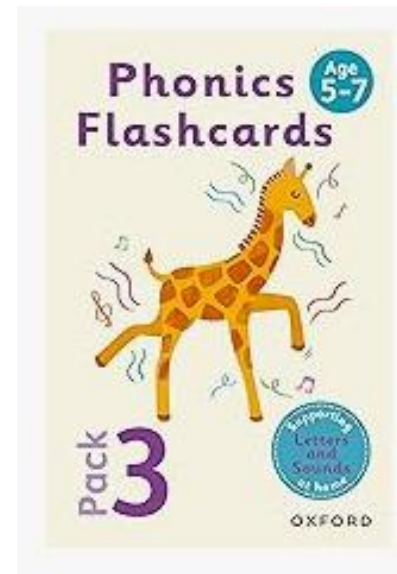
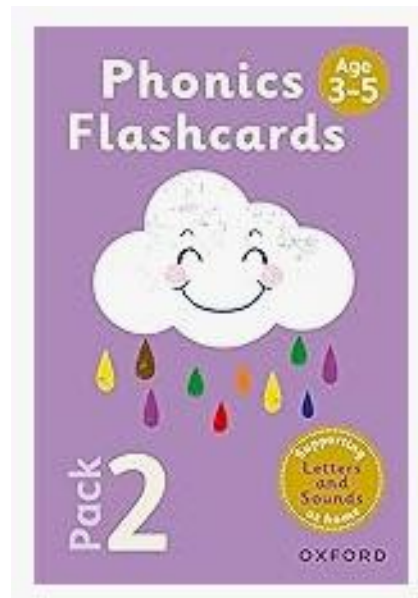
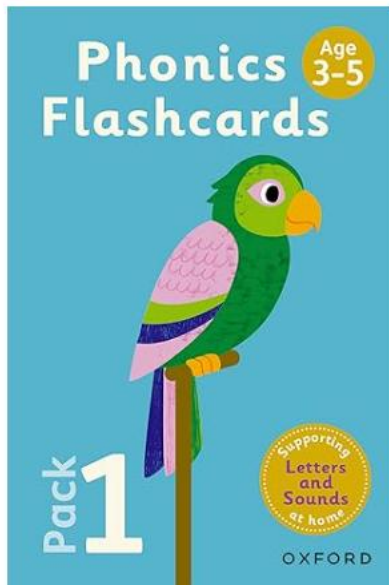
We will also send home gaps that children have so you can support them at home, if you are able too.



Parental Resources

- [Essential Letters and Sounds - Oxford Owl](#)

Optional (can be purchased on Amazon)



Questions