



Phonic Milestones

St James' approach to teaching phonics



At St. James' we believe reading is the a gateway skill that makes all other learning possible, and phonics is crucial to unlocking the reading code. We use **Essential Letters and Sounds (ELS)**, a DfE validated phonics programme, which teaches children to read using a **systematic synthetic approach**.

(Also see Phonics On a Page document for further detail)

ELS has clear expectations which are mapped out term by term from Reception to the beginning of Year 2.

ELS Overview – Phase 1 to Phase 5

Phase 1*	Phase 2	Phase 3**
Nursery/Pre-school Seven aspects: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental • Instrumental sounds • Body percussion • Rhythm and rhyme • Alliteration • Voice sounds • Oral blending 	Reception Autumn 1 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oral blending • Sounding out and blending with 23 new grapheme-phoneme correspondences (GPC) • 12 new harder to read and spell (HRS) words 	Reception Autumn 2, Spring 1 and 2 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oral blending • Sounding out and blending with 29 new GPCs • 32 new HRS words • Revision of Phase 2
Phase 4**	Phase 5 including alternatives and lesser-known GPCs	Beyond Phase 5
Reception Summer 1 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oral blending • No new GPCs • No new HRS words • Word structures – cvcc, ccvc, ccvcc, cccvc, cccvcc • Suffixes • Revision of Phase 2 and Phase 3 	Reception Summer 2 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction to Phase 5 for reading • 20 new GPCs • 16 new HRS words Year 1 Autumn 1 and 2 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revision of previously taught Ph 5 GPCs • 2 new GPCs • 9 new HRS Year 1 Spring 1 and 2 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alternative spellings for previously taught sounds • 49 new GPCs • 4 new HRS words • Oral blending • Revision of Phase 2, 3 and 4 	Year 1 Summer, Year 2 and Key Stage 2 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • With ELS, phonics teaching does not stop at the end of Year 1, but continues as children move through the school, with links being made between their GPC knowledge and spelling • Revision of all previously taught GPCs for reading and spelling • Wider reading, spelling and writing curriculum

*Phase 1 of Letters and Sounds (2007) can be used in Nursery/Pre-School settings before starting ELS in Reception and can still be used throughout the school day in Reception. However, direct phonics teaching – the teaching of sounds, graphemes, word reading and vocabulary – starts from the very beginning of Reception.

**Phase 3 of ELS covers more than just the Phase 3 graphemes – we introduce some challenge from Phase 4 (in the form of adjacent consonants) alongside the Phase 3 teaching to extend children’s sounding out and blending skills.

From September 2021, Year 2 have been using Jane Considine’s ‘The Spelling Book’ in order to continue the children’s phonic journey and support the children in becoming increasingly accurate spellers by building on the fundamentals of teaching spelling through practise, exploration and investigation, with a strong phonics foundation. ‘The Spelling Book’ ensures that the coverage and expectation of the National Curriculum are met and exceeded.

In addition to ELS, phonics is applied throughout the curriculum (Explore reading/use of PoR and Whole Class Reading sessions). Contextualised phonics teaching enables children to develop early phonological awareness, and provides opportunities for children to practise the skills of segmenting and blending and to spell and segment for writing, within a meaningful context; also enabling children to experience a breadth and range of quality literature and to develop a love of reading, and to support well-being and vocabulary development.

ELS Term-by-term Progression

Reception Autumn Term

Reception/Primary 1 Autumn 1: Phase 2					
Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4	Week 5	Week 6
/s/ <s>	/i/ <i>	/g/ <g>	/k/ <ck>	/s/ <ss>	/h/ <h>

Reception/Primary 1 Spring 1: Phase 3-4					
Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4	Week 5	Week 6
Review week R:4 /oo/ <oo> (book)	/ar/ <ar> /ur/ <ur> /oo/ <oo> (food) /or/ <or>	/ow/ <ow> /oi/ <oi> /ear/ <ear> /air/ <air>	/ure/ <ure> /er/ <er> /oa/ <ow>	Assess and review week R:5	Review week R:6
	they, all, are		ball, tall	when, what	

Reception/Primary 1 Spring 2: Phase 3-4					
Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4	Week 5	Week 6
Review week R:7	Review week R:8	Review week R:9	Review week R:10	Assess and review week R:11	Review week R:12
said, so, have	were, out, like	some, come, there	little, one, do	children, love	

Reception Spring Term

Reception Summer Term

Reception/Primary 1 Summer 1: Phase 4					
Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4	Week 5	Week 6
Phase 4:1 CVCC -ed /ed/	Phase 4:2 CCVC -ed /t/	Phase 4:3 CCVCC -ed /d/	Phase 4:4 CCCVC	Assess and review week R:13	Phase 4:5 CCCVC -er -est

Reception/Primary 1 Summer 2: Phase 5 introduction					
Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4	Week 5	Week 6
/ai/ <ay> /ow/ <ou> /igh/ <ie> /ee/ <ea> -le	/oi/ <oy> /ur/ <ir> /(y)oo/ <ue> /or/ <aw>	/w/ <wh> /f/ <ph> /(y)oo/ <ew> /oa/ <oe>	/or/ <au> /ee/ <ey> /ai/ <a-e> /ee/ <e-e>	Assess and review week R:14	/igh/ <i-e> /oa/ <o-e> /(y)oo/ <u-e> /s/ <c>
oh, their	people, Mr, Mrs	your, ask, should	would, could, asked	house, mouse, water	want, very

Year 1 Autumn Term

Year 1/Primary 2 Autumn 1: Phase 5					
Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4	Week 5	Week 6
Assess and review week Y1:1	Review week Y1:2	Revise: /ai/ <ay> /ow/ <ou> /igh/ <ie> /ee/ <ea>	Revise: /oi/ <oy> /ur/ <ir> /(y)oo/ <ue> /or/ <aw>	Assess and review week Y1:3	Revise: /w/ <wh> /f/ <ph> /(y)oo/ <ew> /oa/ <oe>

Year 1/Primary 2 Autumn 2: Phase 5					
Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4	Week 5	Week 6
Revise: /or/ <au> /ee/ <ey> /ai/ <a-e> /ee/ <e-e>	Revise: /igh/ <i-e> /oa/ <o-e> /(y)oo/ <u-e> /s/ <c>	/ee/ <y> /or/ <al> (walk) Review week Y1:4	Review week Y1:5	Assess and review week Y1:6	Review week Y1:7
please, once	any, many, again	who, whole	where, two		

Year 1 Spring Term

Year 1/Primary 2 Spring 1: Phase 5					
Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4	Week 5	Week 6
Review week Y1:8	/ai/ <a> (acorn) /ai/ <ey> (they) /ai/ <ea> (great) /ai/ <eigh> (weight) /ar/ <a> (father) /ee/ <e> (he) /igh/ <i> (find) /igh/ <y> (by)	/oa/ <o> (go) /o/ <a> (was) /oo/ <u> (push) /y/+/oo/ <u> (music) /c/ <ch> (school) /sh/ <ch> (chef) /e/ <ea> (head)	/ur/ <or> (world) /ur/ <ear> (learn) /oo/ <ou> (soup) /oa/+/l/ <oul> (shoulder) /ee/ <ie> (brief) /v/ <ve> (have) /i/ <y> (gym)	Assess and review week Y1:9	/air/ <are> (care) /air/ <ere> (there) /air/ <ear> (pear) /ch/ <tch> (catch)
		here, sugar, friend	because		

Year 1/Primary 2 Spring 2: Phase 5					
Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4	Week 5	Week 6
/u/ <o> (brother) Review week Y1:10	/j/ <g> (gem) /j/ <ge> (fringe) /j/ <dge> (bridge) /s/ <st> (listen)	/s/ <ce> (fence) /s/ <se> (house) /n/ <gn> (sign) /n/ <kn> (knee) /r/ <wr> (wrap) /m/ <mb> (lamb)	/z/ <se> (cheese) /z/ <ze> (freeze) /ear/ <eer> (cheer) /ear/ <ere> (here) /sh/ <ti> (patient) /sh/ <ti> -tion (station)	Assess and review week Y1:11	/ar/ <al> (half) /or/ <augh> (caught) /sh/ <ss> (session) /zh/ <si> (vision) /sh/ <ti> -tious (scrumptious) /sh/ <ci> (delicious) -ous, -ion, -ian

Year

Year 1/Primary 2 Summer 1, Summer 2 : all phases					
Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4	Week 5	Week 6
Review all previously taught GPCs for reading and spelling, and teach further rarely-used GPCs (see Appendix ii).					

1 Summer Term

Continuing the phonics journey – Beyond Phase 5

With ELS, phonics teaching does not stop at the end of Year 1, but continues as children move through the school. Children identified as having gaps in their phonic knowledge and understanding, including children who did not meet the expected standard in the PSC at the end of Year 1 and 2 are entitled to continued phonics teaching to address gaps and secure learning.

As children move into Key Stage 2, transition information and baselining of children's phonic knowledge in the first few weeks of the Autumn term, will determine what support is required in order to target intervention appropriately. ELS interventions may be organised into small groups or one to one, depending on need, and will support in making links between their GPC knowledge and spelling, revision of all previously taught GPCs for reading and spelling, and also wider reading, spelling and writing curriculum.

Reading books are also closely monitored to ensure that the books the children are accessing are matched to their phonic knowledge and understanding, allowing them to practise skills and embed learning. Teachers and TAs working with these children are aware of phonic ability when hearing readers and provide continued encouragement of use of phonic skills when necessary e.g. decoding longer or unfamiliar words, alongside developing fluency and comprehension skills.