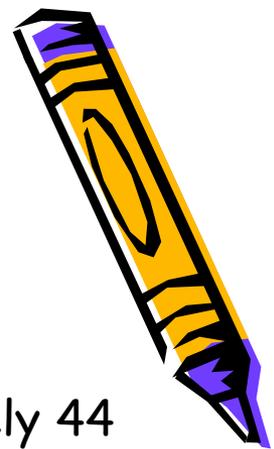


St. John's Catholic Primary  
School

**What is Phonics?**



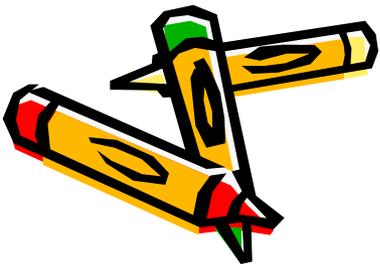
# Our phonic's glossary



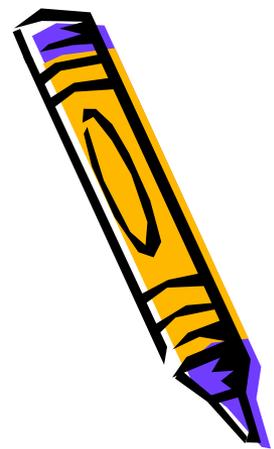
- **Phoneme** - The smallest unit of sound. There are approximately 44 phonemes in English (it depends on different accents). Phonemes can be put together to make words. E.g p-i-g, ch-a-t
- **Grapheme** - A way of writing down a phoneme. Graphemes can be made up from 1 letter e.g. p, 2 letters e.g. sh, 3 letters e.g. tch or 4 letters e.g ough.
- **GPC** - This is short for Grapheme Phoneme Correspondence. Knowing a GPC means being able to match a phoneme to a grapheme and vice versa.
- **Digraph** - A grapheme containing two letters that makes just one sound.(phoneme). E.g ll, ck
- **Tricky words/Common exception words**: Words that are phonically irregular. They can't be sounded out and need to be learnt.



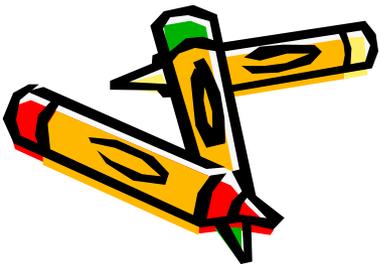
- **Split digraph** - A vowel digraph which has been split, but still makes one sound. E.g a - e as in cake. (This used to be known as 'Magic e')
- **Trigraph** - A grapheme containing three letters that makes just one sound (phoneme). E.g ear, igh, air
- **Blending**- This involves looking at a written word, looking at each grapheme and using knowledge of GPCs to work out which phoneme each grapheme represents and then merging these phonemes together to make a word. This is the basis of reading.
- **Segmenting** - This involves hearing a word, splitting it up into the phonemes that make it, using knowledge of GPCs to work out which graphemes represent those phonemes and then writing those graphemes down in the right order. This is the basis of spelling.
- **CVC words** - *Consonant-Vowel-Consonant*. These are simple words which children start with when they begin to blend sounds e.g. **sat pin**



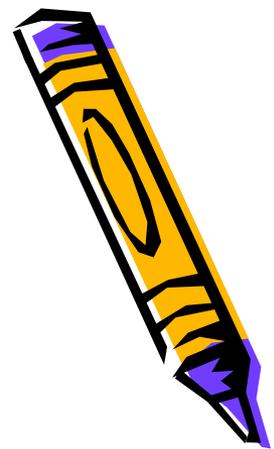
# What is Phonics?



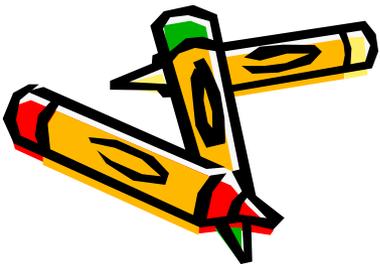
- Knowledge of letters, and the sounds they make.
- Skills of blending these sounds together to read words.
- Skills of segmenting the sounds in a word and choosing the correct letters needed to spell it.



# How do we teach phonics?



- Letters and Sounds Phases 1-6
- The children are set across their year group, according to the phase of Letters and Sounds they are working on.
- They receive 20 minutes focused phonics teaching each day.

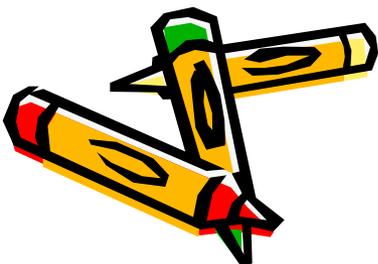


There are **44 phonemes** that the children learn throughout the Letters and Sounds Programme.

Unfortunately, these 44 phonemes are not spelt in the same way!

How many ways can we spell the f phoneme?  
e.g. family / photograph / rough / cuff

Children are gradually introduced to more alternative spellings as they progress through the Letters and Sounds Programme.



# High Frequency Words (HFWs)



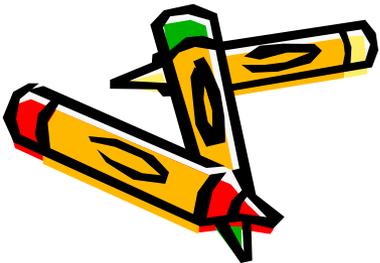
These are common words that are useful for children to learn to read and spell. As children progress through the phases of Letters and Sounds they are introduced to sets of HFWs.

Some words are *decodable*, children can blend them to read.

E.g. c-a-t, sh-ar-p.

Some are *tricky words* which are not phonically decodable and are learned by sight.

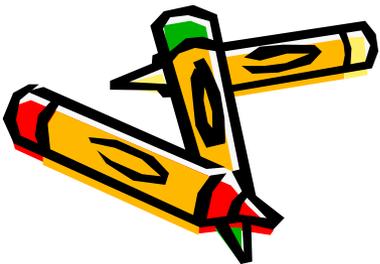
E.g so, said, because.



# Phase 1



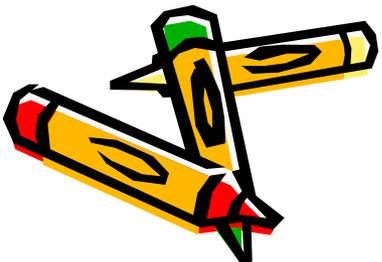
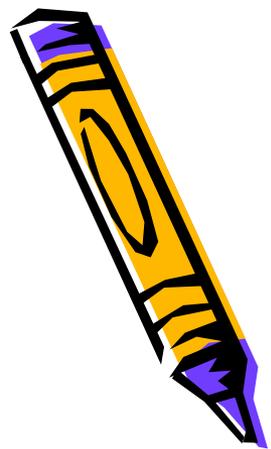
- Phase one of Letters and Sounds concentrates on developing children's **speaking and listening skills** and lays the foundations for the phonic work which starts in Phase 2.
- The emphasis during Phase 1 is to get children attuned to the sounds around them and ready to begin developing oral blending and segmenting skills.



Phase 1 is divided into seven aspects:

1. **Environmental sounds**-sounds all around us.
2. **Instrumental sounds**-focus on sounds made by different instruments.
3. **Body percussion**-awareness of sounds and rhythms (singing songs and action rhymes)
4. **Rhythm and rhyme**-focus on rhythm and rhyme in speech. (rhyming stories)
5. **Alliteration**-focus on initial sounds of words. (I spy)
6. **Voice sounds**-focus on different vocal sounds.
7. **Oral blending and segmenting**. e.g c-u-p=cup (blending)

shell=sh-e-ll (segmenting)



# Phase 2



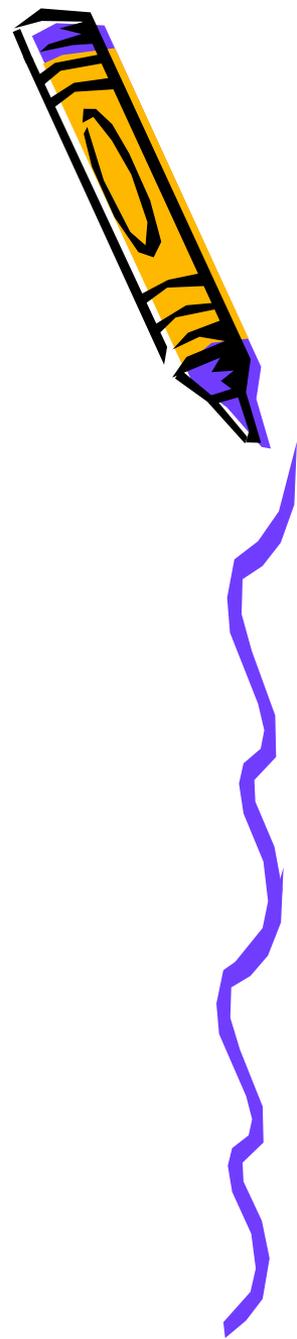
- During Phase 2, children are introduced to the graphemes on the sound mat above. These are introduced to the children in sets.
- Set 1: s a t p
- Set 2: i n m d
- Set 3: g o c k
- Set 4: ck e u r
- Set 5: h b f, ff l, ll ss

They then begin to read and spell simple CVC (**decodable**) words

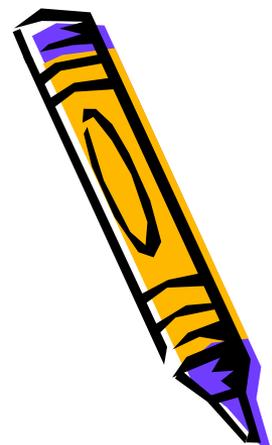
including

these graphemes. E.g sat, nip.

They also begin to read the **tricky words**: **no, go, I, the, to, into**



# Phase 3



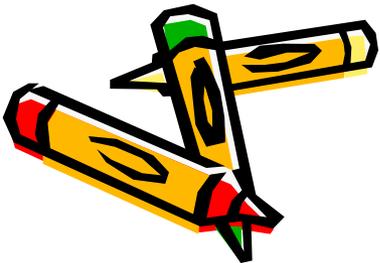
- Children are introduced to two more sets of letters,
- Set 6: j, v, w, x
- Set 7: y, z, zz, qu
- They learn one grapheme for each of a further 25 phonemes. These include consonant and vowel digraphs (e.g. ch, ng, ai, oa) and trigraphs (e.g. igh, air).

- Children begin to **read** the **tricky words**: he, she, we, me, be, was, you, they, all, are, my, her.
- They also begin to **spell** the **tricky words**: no, go, the, to, I, into

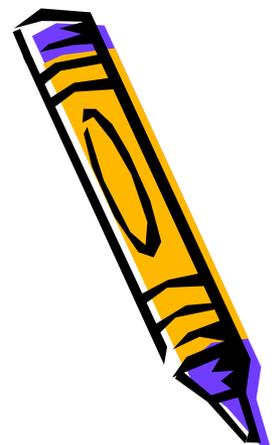


# Phase 4

- Children are not introduced to any new graphemes during this phase.
- The purpose of this phase is to consolidate children's knowledge of graphemes in reading and spelling words containing **consonant clusters**.
- These are 2 or more consonants, but when put together, each can be heard as individual phonemes e.g. **cl dr sk mp nd**.
- Words containing these are known as **CCVC** and **CVCC** words. e.g. **black, snip, chest**).
- Children begin to **read** the **tricky** words: **said, so, have, like, some, come, were, there, little, one, do, when, out, what**.
- Children begin to **spell** the **tricky** words: **he, she, we, me, be, was, you, they all are, my, her**.



# Phase 5

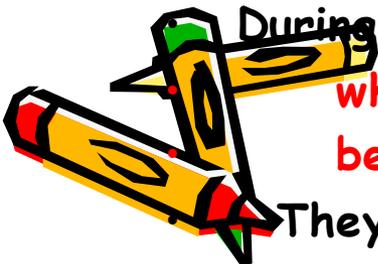


- Children learn alternative ways of pronouncing the graphemes and spelling the phonemes that have already been taught.
- Phase 5 is split into two parts 5a and 5b
- During 5a, children begin to **read** the **tricky** words: **oh, their, people, Mr, Mrs, looked, called, asked.**
- They begin to **spell** the **tricky** words: **said, so, have, so, like, some, come, were, there, little, when, one, do, what, out.**

During 5b, children begin to **read** the **tricky** words: **water, where, who, again, thought, through, work, mouse, many, laughed, because, different, any, eyes, friends, once, please**

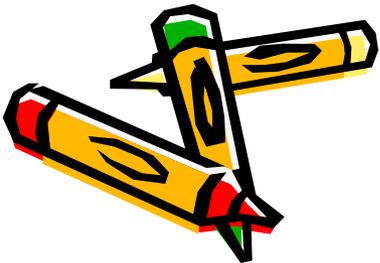
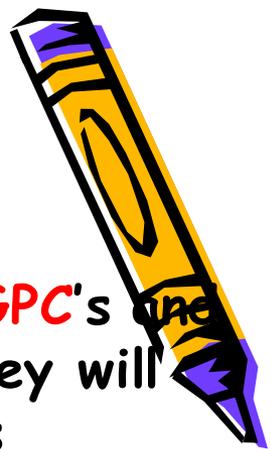
They begin to **spell** the **tricky** words: **oh, their, people, Mr, Mrs,**

**looked, called, asked**

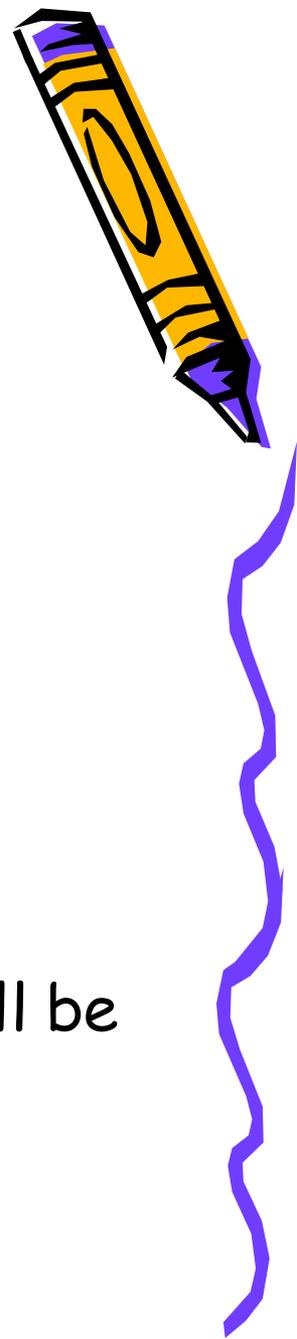


# Phase 6

- By this stage, children will know most of the common **GPC's** and will be able to read hundreds of words! In addition, they will be able to spell words phonemically although not always correctly.
- During this stage, children become fluent readers and increasingly accurate spellers. They do this by gaining knowledge of different spelling patterns. For example:
  - prefixes and suffixes
  - past tense
  - plurals
  - compound words



# Useful websites to support your child's learning



- [www.phonicsplay.co.uk](http://www.phonicsplay.co.uk)
  - [www.oxfordowl.co.uk](http://www.oxfordowl.co.uk)
  - [www.focusonphonics.co.uk](http://www.focusonphonics.co.uk)
  - [www.bbc.co.uk/schools/wordsandpictures/](http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/wordsandpictures/)
  - [www.bbc.co.uk/schools/magickey/](http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/magickey/)
- If you have any further questions about your child's phonics learning, their class teacher will be happy to answer these for you.

