



# Teaching sounds

## A guide for parents

2020 - 2021

At St. Aidan's Primary School high priority is given to sounds in speech in the teaching of reading. We see reading as one of the key components in producing excellence. During the academic year 2020 – 2021 we are introducing the Sounds-Write programme as our approach to the teaching of reading.



## Reception Class



Children will be following the Sounds-Write programme and sounds will be taught in the following order:

Unit 1: a, i, m, s, t

Unit 2: n, o, p

Unit 3: b, c, g, h

Unit 4: d, f, v, e

Unit 5: k, l, r, u

Unit 6: j, w, z

Unit 7: x, y, ff, ll, ss

Every two weeks or so, we will begin a new unit and build the new sounds into what we have already introduced. We will always be talking about sounds not letters, and you can help most effectively by not using letter names, only sounds.

### **What are we trying to teach?**

We want the Children to learn that letters are spellings for sounds, so that when they see the spellings

< m > < a > < t >, they say and hear /m / /a / /t /, 'mat'.

To begin with, we shall be working only with 2- and 3-sound words. Your child needs to say the sounds and listen to hear what the word is. For this reason, sounds need to be said very precisely. For example, when we see the spelling <m>, we say /m / and not 'muh'. Of course, some sounds are more difficult to say without adding a bit of an 'uh', but, with practice, it can be done. When your child has said all the sounds in a word and then read the word, ask them to write the word on a piece of paper or a small white board.

Playing games with the sounds in words can be good fun and will help your child to understand that everyday words are made up of sounds and that we can pull these sounds in words apart: 'Cat' can be separated into /c / /a / /t /; and we can put these sounds back together again to form recognisable words: thus, /c / /a / /t / gives us 'cat'. Names often make useful example to begin with: 'Jack' would be /j / /a / /k / and 'Emily' would be /e / /m /

/i / /l / /ee /. If you are not sure, just read the word, close your eyes and say the sounds in the word to yourself.

Children taught using Sounds-Write will be able to write almost anything they want to write by using plausible (phonetic) spellings for sounds.

### Key to alphabetic code knowledge:

Unit 1: a, i, m, s, t

/a / as in 'cat', /i / as in 'pin', /m / as in 'map', /s / as in 'sip' and /t / as in 'ten'

Unit 2: n, o, p

/n / as in 'not', /o / as in 'pop' and /p / as in 'pen'

Unit 3: b, c, g, h

/b / as in 'big', /c / as in 'cup', /g / as in 'get' and /h / as in 'hen'

Unit 4: d, f, v, e

/d / as in 'dog', /f / as in 'fun', /v / as in 'vet' and /e / as in 'leg'

Unit 5: k, l, r, u

/k / as in 'kit', /l / as in 'leg', /r / as in 'run' and /u / as in 'bun'

Unit 6: j, w, z

/j / as in 'jug', /w / as in 'wig' and /z / as in 'zip'

Unit 7: x, y, ff, ll, ss

The letter X represents two sounds /k /s/ or /g /z/ (depending on the word and/or the speaker's accent), so /k /s/ as in 'fox'; /y / as in 'yes'. The double consonants <ff>, <ll> and <ss>, represent the sounds /f /, as in 'sniff', /l / as in 'fill', and /s / as in 'miss'.

## Reading with your child

When you are reading a reading book with your child, do all the things you would normally do, such as talking about the story, discussing the characters, predicting what is going to happen next, and so on. But, whenever you come to a two- or three-sound word which has in it the sounds your child has already come across, ask them to have a go by saying the sounds and listening for the word.

If you do this, you will find that your child will quickly move on to more complex words, such as words with four and five sounds, such as 'lamp' and 'crisp'.

After your child has tackled three-sound words, they will be moving on to words with four and five sounds and, again, you can best support your child by giving them as much practice as you can.

## Key Stage 1

Children will continue to work on the Sounds-Write programme. From Y1 onwards, all the remaining common **vowel** and **consonant** sound to spelling correspondences are taught until all the common spellings for the forty-four sounds in English have been covered. In parallel with this, pupils are taught how to read and spell **polysyllabic** words, progressing from two-syllable to five- and six-**syllable** words. This ability to express oneself in writing gives children enormous confidence, which naturally feeds back into the other kinds of learning taking place within the school curriculum.

## Key Stage 2

From 2020 / 2021 onwards children will be introduced to the Sound-Write way of teaching polysyllabic words. Spelling rules will be taught in class and children will be given a list to practise. Alongside this, they will also be given words from the statutory word lists for Year 3 – 4 or Year 5 – 6.

Reinforcement of general reading skills will be taught during shared reading sessions and within literacy lessons.

## **Glossary of terms**

**Consonant** – A sound produced with the breath at least partly obstructed to impede the airflow or create a short burst of air.

**Vowel** – A sound in spoken language, produced with an open vocal tract so that there is no build-up of air pressure at any point above the glottis.

**Syllable**- A unit of pronunciation having one vowel sound, with or without surrounding consonants, forming the whole or a part of a word; for example, there are two syllables in *water* and three in *inferno*.

**Polysyllabic** - A word) having more than one syllable.

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