



# Welcome to Little Acorns

Reception  
2024-25

Phonics

Mathematics

# Welcome

Slides from our **Welcome Meeting** in June will be on our website for parents to refer back to.

Our **Reception Welcome Booklet** contains lots of useful information about our curriculum, the school day, uniform, and expectations.

**Seesaw** - please sign up using the QR sent home if you haven't already done so.

## Other useful information:

- Observations of Play and Learning (OP&L) letter (sent home via PING)
- Curriculum Newsletter (half termly)
- Little Acorns Long Term Curriculum Plan (website)

Our curriculum covers the 7 areas of learning set out in Early Years Foundation Stage.

## 3 prime areas

- Communication, Language and Literacy
- Personal, Social and Emotional Development
- Physical Development

## 4 specific areas

- Literacy
- Mathematics
- Understanding the World
- Expressive Arts and Design

These slides focus on the teaching of phonics and mathematics and how to support your child at home.

# Jolly Phonics

Developing Phonological awareness

- Sound discrimination
- Rhythm and rhyme
- Hearing and saying sounds in words
- Orally blending
- Orally segmenting

We will continue to work on these pre-reading skills as we move through the Jolly Phonics programme.

5 key skills taught in Jolly Phonics

- Learning the letter sounds
- Learning letter formation
- Blending (building words to read)
- Segmenting (identifying sounds in words to spell)
- Tricky words (reading and spelling)



# 1. Learning the letter sounds

In Jolly Phonics, the main sounds of English (42 sounds) are taught, not just the alphabet sounds. For each sound there is an action, which helps the children to remember the sound the letter makes. As the letter sounds are taught, they are stuck into a sound book that will be brought home. If possible, go through the sound book with your child every day and aim for a minimum of four times per week.

The letter sounds are not introduced in alphabetical order. The ones in the first group - s, a, t, i, p, n - have been chosen because they make more simple words than any other six letters.

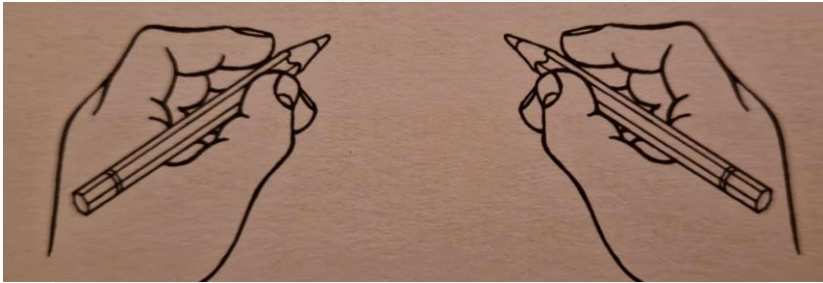
Some sounds can be written in more than one way, but the children are taught only one at the beginning; for instance, the sound /ai/, as in *rain*, is taught initially, while alternatives, a\_e (as in *cake*) and ay (as in *day*), will be taught later.

It is important to use the pure letter sounds, as demonstrated in video below, e.g. 't' and not 'tuh'. This helps children with blending and segmenting and also supports the correct development of speech sounds.



## 2. Letter Formation

It is very important that your child holds a pencil correctly. The pencil rests between the thumb and the first finger; the next finger prevents the pencil falling down, and the last two fingers are tucked away.



Letter formation is taught daily in our phonics lessons as each letter is introduced and letters previously taught are revisited.

In addition, we have three separate handwriting lessons each week. In these lessons we initially focus on name writing and pre-handwriting patterns, before moving onto letter formation. In these lessons, letters are taught in letter families defined by the letter shapes, for example, all of the curly caterpillar letters - c, a, o, d, g, q are taught together.

### 3. Blending

Blending is the process of saying the sounds in a word and then running them together to make the word: for example c-a-t, cat. It is a technique your child will learn and it improves with practise, although this takes longer for some children than others. To start with, you should say the individual sounds in a word and see if your child can hear it. The sounds must be said quickly to hear the word, and it is easier if the first sound is said slightly louder, as in **b**-u-s. Initially, Some support with be needed, and you many have to run the sounds together and almost say the word before your child will hear it.

Once your child knows the first one or two groups of sounds, and has started blending words in school, they will start to bring home a Word Box. There are 18 lists of words for the word box. The lists of words should chopped up into individual word cards and stored in your child's Word Box. Word Boxes can be kept at home. Please listen as your child blends the sounds and reads the words. The words will be checked in school regularly and once your child is blending them confidently, they will be given the next list. Word Box lists will only contains words with sounds that have been taught in school.

## Reading books

Initially, your child will be given a wordless reading book. These have many benefits including supporting your child's comprehension of stories, their use of language and confidence with books.

Once your child is able to recognise some letters sounds and is gaining confidence with blending sounds to read words, they will be given a decodable reading book to bring home. Please listen to your child read as often as possible and ideally a minimum of four times a week, as per our homework policy.

Please record in your child's diary to say when they have practised their Sound Book, Word Box words and / or reading book. Your child will be heard read regularly in school and this will be communicated to you via their reading record.

As well as listening to your child read, reading to your child and sharing books continues to be hugely important.

Our [Acorns Reading Prompt](#), which can be found in the homework section of our school website, provides a useful guide to hearing your child read at home.

## 4. Identifying sounds in words

To write independently, your child needs to be able to hear the sounds in words and to write the letters for those sounds.

Segmenting words to spell is taught daily in our phonics lessons, alongside letter formation. Once children are able to write some simple words, other skills are steadily introduced including writing simple phrases and sentences, remembering finger spaces and eventually using a capital letter and a full stop. Other composition skills are taught in our literacy lessons.

Once your child has completed the 18 Word Boxes for blending practise and is confidently able to hear the sounds in words to spell, we will send home a Dictation Book for your child along with a list of words. We ask that one by one, you call out each word. Your child has to listen for the sounds and write down, in pencil please, the letters to make the word. Dictation Book and lists should be returned to school to be checked and when ready a new list will be sent.



## 5. Tricky Words

Some common words that are needed to read and write sentences are not entirely regular. You cannot simply blend the sounds together to read the word or listen for the sounds and write the letters to get the correct spelling. This is either because the spelling is irregular (e.g. the spelling of *one*), or, more commonly, because the word has a letter sound spelling that has not been taught yet.

These parts of the word are 'tricky' and have to be learnt. As your child becomes more fluent at reading and writing, they will be taught how to cope with tricky words.

Once taught in school, lists of tricky words will be sent home for additional reading practise.

# Mathematics

Through our mathematics curriculum, we aim to support children to:

- Develop a strong grounding in number so that all children develop the necessary building blocks to excel mathematically.
- Count confidently
- Developing a deep understanding of the numbers to 10, the relationships between them and the patterns within those numbers.
- develop their spatial reasoning skills across all areas of mathematics including shape, space and measures.

It is important that children develop positive attitudes and interests in mathematics, look for patterns and relationships, spot connections, 'have a go', talk to adults and peers about what they notice and not be afraid to make mistakes.

## Autumn Maths topics

- Match, sort and compare
- Measure and patterns
- It's me 1, 2, 3
  - Counting, subitising, number formation, one more, one less, making 1, 2 and 3.
- Circles and triangles
- 1, 2, 3, 4, 5
  - Counting, subitising, number formation, one more, one less, making 4 and 5.
- Shapes with 4 sides

## Spring Maths topics

- Alive in 5
  - Counting, subitising, introducing zero, one more, one less, number bonds to 5.
- Mass and capacity
- 6, 7, 8
- length, height and time
- Building 9 and 10
- Explore 3d shapes

## Summer Maths topics

- To 20 and Beyond
  - Introducing teen numbers and counting beyond 20.
- How many now?
  - Adding and subtracting
- Shape and spatial reasoning
- Sharing and grouping
- Visualise, build and map
  - Patterns, positional language and directions
- Consolidation of Reception concepts ready for Year 1.

# Numbots

We use the NumBots app for homework to support your child's understanding of number bonds and to help their addition and subtraction skills. These are the essential building blocks for higher-level maths concepts.

Children are requested to regularly practise their basic numbers skills on the Numbots app using their individual login.

Short sessions of 5 minutes three times a week will be hugely beneficial in supporting the development of their maths fluency.

Numbots provides opportunities to practise number activities, including subitising, counting, addition and subtraction, and supports children in working towards gaining their Total Recall badges.



We will share with you the parent guide and your child's login details. Any problems please let us know and we will be happy to help.

# Total Recall

Our Total Recall badges recognise when children have achieved fluency in a particularly mathematical skill.

In Reception, we focus initially on the first two badges, Number Bonds to 5 (turquoise badge) and One more, one less to 10 (purple badge). Many children also move onto their orange and yellow badges once the knowledge for those skills has been taught later in the school year.

When working towards a specific badge, additional practise of that skill will be needed. The aim is for children to be fluent in their recall of these number facts without relying

on practical resources or counting on their fingers to support their calculations.

Badges are tested once a week, usually on a Friday, as and when each child feels ready to have a go.



Regularly revisiting skills once a badge has been achieved is important to ensure fluency is maintained and there is a strong foundation on which to build further skills.

## Homework

We believe that homework is important in developing independence, resilience and resourcefulness in our children as well as reinforcing the learning which takes place in school. We also believe that it should not be onerous to children, parents or staff and we acknowledge the importance of children taking part in activities with their families and developing other interests out of school as a means of developing the 'whole' child. We believe that parents/carers should be empowered to achieve a happy homework/life balance for their child/ren. We hope that you will support your child with the homework tasks at a time that fits in with your family routines. We find that little and often is usually the best approach.

Please remember, that whilst we have covered the full year of our phonics and mathematics curriculum in these slides, your child's skills are built up gradually over time. The Reception year is certainly a busy one, but also an exciting and hugely rewarding one, that is filled with rapid growth as children learn and develop new skills and abilities across all of the areas of learning.

**Thank you**