



Teaching of phonics for pre school children

In accordance with Early Years Guidance Little Star Nursery gradually focuses on introducing the pre school children to phonic understanding over the course of the next academic year.

The emphasis is on enabling children to distinguish the *sounds* of letters, using language in an exciting cross- curricular way. This is the government's National Strategies explanation:

“Phase One activities concentrate on developing children's speaking and listening skills, phonological awareness and oral blending and segmenting. These activities are intended to be used as part of a broad and rich language curriculum that has speaking and listening at its centre, links language with physical and practical experiences, and provides an environment rich in print and abundant in opportunities to engage with books. Phase One activities pave the way for children to make a good start in reading and writing and are designed to underpin and run alongside activities in other phases”

In addition to continual exposure (for example books, role play, creative work and music), we will plan specific activities, circle times and games that heighten phonological awareness. The initial term will have a focus of rhyme, stories and general language and listening skills and then *after Christmas* we will follow the phonic sequence of letters as follows:

: s, a, t, i, p, n, : ck, e, h, r, m, d, j, g, o, u, l, f, b.z, w, v, y, x,

(don't worry if you think you may “miss” a certain week as we constantly reiterate sounds and embed phonics as a way of thinking and learning in our everyday practice)

In order to help your child along the way we will be offering ideas and suggestions to run parallel with the work done at nursery, but as a general guidance you can help your child in the most simple ways: by concentrating on the sounds at the beginning of words (“I spy something beginning with the sound ‘ssss’), writing out your shopping list together, or simply enjoying a good book. (Please ask if you want any advice as to how to sound out letters: for example ‘m’ is ‘mmm’, not ‘muh’, if that makes sense?!)

We reinforce the phonological “teaching” with positive modeling of writing and encourage the children to mark make at every possible opportunity. We **do not** endorse

copying over dotted lines as this only teaches children to trace and not to think actively about handwriting in preparation for independent writing. The starting point is to help them with writing their name and then as we follow the letters of the week, reinforce the learning with the letter formation. But most importantly, encourage, support and praise your child for *every effort they make to write* (even if it appears to you no more than a scribble or random marks on a page).

If you have any questions about our phonic teaching please do not hesitate to speak to Kate who is the literacy coordinator, or your child's key person.

Alternatively the following web sites provide useful information:

<http://www.education.gov.uk/>

<http://www.letters-and-sounds.com>

“To learn to read is to light a fire; every syllable that is spelled out is a spark.”

– Victor Hugo