

Participates in phase one phonics activities

Phase 1 Phonics is the first stage of the Department for Education's Letters and Sounds programme. It focuses on developing children's speaking, listening, and phonological awareness skills, laying the foundations for future phonics learning before children begin learning letter-sound correspondences. It should be embedded within a language-rich environment, with daily opportunities for storytelling and book sharing, singing nursery rhymes, playing sound games, engaging in meaningful conversations, exploring sounds indoors and outdoors, and participating in child-led play supported by skilled adult interactions.

Activities, Ideas and Resources for Phase 1 letters and sounds

Aspect 1: Environmental Sounds

- **Sound Lotto** Use a sound lotto game to help children listen to and identify environmental sounds. This can be delivered as an adult-led small group activity or as a freely chosen activity within continuous provision. Provide a quiet listening space, sound cards, counters, and recorded sounds or sounds made by adults. Encourage children to talk about what they hear and develop vocabulary to describe different sounds.

Aspect 2: Instrumental Sounds

- **Sock Sounds** Fill several socks or small bags with different sound-making objects. Encourage children to listen carefully, compare sounds, and describe what they hear using simple vocabulary. This activity helps children develop awareness of sounds and promotes communication and listening skills.

Aspect 3: Body Percussion

- **Action Rhymes and Songs** Use familiar songs and action rhymes, such as Two Little Dickey Birds, and vary the volume by singing loudly, quietly, or whispering. Encourage children to listen carefully, join in with actions, and recognise patterns of sound. Daily opportunities for singing and rhyme support listening and attention skills.

Aspect 4: Rhythm and Rhyme

- **Rhyming Soup** Collect objects or pictures that rhyme and add them to a pretend bowl of "silly soup" while singing the rhyme. Encourage children to identify and suggest rhyming words. This activity develops awareness of rhyme and helps children recognise similarities in word sounds.

Aspect 5: Alliteration

- **Digging for Treasure** Hide objects with the same initial sound in a sand, water, or sensory tray. As children find items, emphasise the initial sound, for example, car, cup, cow. Encourage children to repeat the words and notice how they start with the same sound.

Aspect 6: Voice Sounds

- **Can You Make Your Voice...?** Encourage children to make different vocal sounds, such as a snake (ssss), a train (ch, ch, ch), or a quiet sound (shhh). Model mouth movements and sounds clearly. This helps children distinguish between different voice sounds and supports early phonological awareness.

Aspect 7: Oral Blending and Segmenting

- **Clapping Sounds in Words** Say simple words and break them into individual sounds, for example, sat (s-a-t) or pin (p-i-n). Encourage children to clap each sound and then blend them together to make the word. This activity supports the development of oral blending and segmenting skills, which are important foundations for reading and spelling.