



**There are lots of suggestions here that would help your child to develop early reading skills.**

**The single most important thing you can do, however, is to share a book with your child. Let your child choose a favourite book even if you can only spare a few minutes.**

**Look at the cover, the illustrations, the text, the spine of the book, the title, the author. We talk to the children about the parts of the book and we use the words you see here.**

**Make reading fun. Don't ever feel you should force your child. Make sure they want to look at books by showing that you value this special time.**

**If you have the time, join the local library. There are so many books to choose from and if libraries aren't used we will lose them!**

**Happy reading!**

# **Help your child at home... Early Reading**



**Garretts Green  
Nursery School**



## A word about PHONICS....

### What is 'Phonics'?

Phonics is the relationship between the sounds of letters or groups of letters and their written form.

### Why teach phonics?

It is important to teach children the skills that help them to read, spell and write. Phonics activities teach those skills.

### When is phonics taught?

Phonics is taught when your child is ready to understand the relationship between letters and the sounds they represent, usually when your child starts school or is in the Nursery year.

### How is phonics taught?

Phonics is taught in a very structured order of skills that enables children to learn how to work out what words or groups of letters mean and to spell words using these skills. We begin by teaching a group of six initial sounds – s a t p i n

However, there is also a lot we can do to prepare children for understanding about letters and sounds, such as developing listening skills and immersing them in the language of sound.

## Beginning to break up words

This is the start of phonics work that your child will most likely do next year but it helps to start early!

Start stressing the sounds in words by breaking words up, for example...

'Pass the j-a-m.'

'Where's the b-a-g?'

'Look at the d-o-g.'

'Watch the c-a-t.'

If your child starts to show a real interest in wanting to read words before starting school then you could introduce the first few sounds-  
s/a/t/p/i/n

Come and talk to us and we can offer you some support.

You can also start to talk about the sounds in your child's name. Look at the shape of the letters, especially the initial letter. Talk about the names of other members of the family, too.

# Make it fun!

### Saying the sounds

It is important that the sounds are made correctly so that your child hears them and copies them accurately.

If you would like any information about how we make each sound please ask a member of staff.

### Voice play

Encourage your child to use their voice to make a wide range of sounds. For example, a trip to the park could offer plenty of opportunities for making sounds.

#### In the park:

Going up a slide– clunk, clunk, clunk

Coming down a slide – whoosh

On a roundabout – wheee

Digging in the sand – ch ch ch

Bouncing a ball – boing, boing



#### Going on a train:

The doors opening - schush

Getting on - clunk, clunk

The train moving– chuch-e-cut, chuch-e-cut

The horn - de-der

Slowing down– schhhhhh (long sound)

### What do we teach in Nursery?

In Nursery, we teach children the skills that underpin later phonics work. This is early or pre-reading.

- We encourage children to listen very carefully to sounds in the environment.
- We offer opportunities for them to listen to the sounds that they can make with their bodies, such as clapping and stamping.
- We listen to the sounds made by instruments and by their voices.
- We learn about sounds that are the same (alliteration) and about rhyming words.

Most importantly, though, we hope that children will develop a love of books, stories, rhymes and poems and that they will have fun with language, making up their own rhymes and playing with words.

### How you can help at home?

This booklet aims to give you some ideas that will help you to share early reading activities at home. If you would like further information please ask any member of staff who will be happy to answer any questions.

**Let your child see you reading** - This can be a newspaper, magazine, anything you like. This is a powerful message to send to your child so go on, put your feet up for 10 minutes and have a read.



**Read something with your child -**

It doesn't need to be a book. The secret is to find something that your child really wants to read - comics, magazines, football programmes, newspapers, internet, texts, e-mails, catalogues etc.

**Alliteration**

(Repeated sounds)

Make up your own silly sentences that repeat the same sound such as; 'Baby Billy blows bubbles', or 'Chatty chimps chew chips'

The sillier, the better!



This can be tricky, especially at first.

Make sure you offer lots of praise even if the child doesn't manage the alliteration.

Research has shown that reading improves if children are praised and believe they are doing well!

## Rhyming books

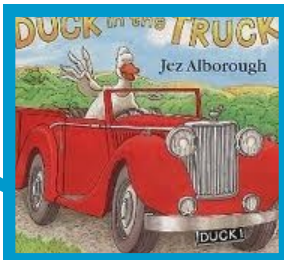
There are many books that have a rhyming text. When you read to your child, don't worry too much about having lots of different books. Children love to hear the same story over and over. This gives you the chance to become a performer– exaggerate the emotions, pretend to be horrified, pretend to cry or laugh.

Encourage your child to join in. When the story has been read a few times..pause before the rhyming word to allow your child to fill the gap.



There are lots of rhyming books for young children. Try The Gruffalo, Giraffes Can't Dance, Who Sank the Boat? Dear Zoo, Hairy Maclary or Duck in a Truck.

Don't forget nursery rhymes, too!



We use nursery rhymes to develop skills in all areas of learning.

## Toy sounds

When your child is playing with their toys encourage them to make the sounds, especially the sounds that animals make and toy cars, etc.



Farm animals, train sets, vehicles, dolls etc are great for this. Help your child to notice these sounds around and about. E.g. Listen to the sound that cars, trucks and fire engines make in the street. Practise making these noises, then use them with car, truck and fire engine toys.

### **Pretend to have Big Ears**

Cup your hands around your ears and listen to sounds all around. Talk about what sounds you can hear. Try doing this in the house, in the street, on a bus (if you don't feel too silly), in the park, on the beach etc.



Talk about the sounds: Are they loud or quiet? Are they short or long? Can you make a similar sound with your voice?

### **Body sounds**

Use clapping, tapping, stamping, clicking fingers, as well as vocal sounds to accompany songs and rhymes.

There are CDs available in all book shops and supermarkets that have a wide range of children's songs and rhymes but you can, of course, just sing some songs from memory and then clap or tap along.



Your child may have some new songs to sing to you, too. We teach songs that link with many themes in Nursery so ask your child to teach you!

### **Bang the drum**

Look in your kitchen cupboards and find old or unused kitchen utensils, pots and pans.

If you have a washing line you can hang the pans on the line and use the utensils such as wooden or metal spoons, brushes, etc to beat the pans.

Talk about the sounds, as before.  
Accompany songs and rhymes.  
Use the shakers, too.



Tap out a beat and ask your child to tap out the same beat or continue it.

You can do this with the shakers, too.

Tap out the pattern of your child's name, eg; *Is—a—belle.*

Encourage your child to tap it back or tap out the pattern of a brother or sister's name.

### **Shakers**

Save plastic bottles (with lids) and help your child to fill them with small objects such as marbles, pebbles, rice, pasta, beads, beans, lentils, etc.

Talk about the sounds that they make.  
Hide one behind your back and see if your child can identify the contents of the bottle by listening to the sound.  
What do the sounds remind you of?



Use the shakers to accompany favourite songs and rhymes?