



How we teach phonics and how you can help at home

<https://www.littlewandle.org.uk/resources/for-parents/>

What is phonics?

Phonics helps children learn to **read and spell** by teaching them:

- the **sounds** letters make
- how to **blend** sounds to read words
- how to **segment** words into sounds to spell

Sounds, not letter names

At school we say **sounds**, not letter names.

- We say /s/ not “ess”
- We say /m/ not “em”

Sounds are written with **slashes** like this: /sh/ /ai/

Blending - for reading

Blending means **putting sounds together**.

Example:

/c/ /a/ /t/ → cat

At home you can say: “Can you blend the sounds?”

Segmenting - for spelling

Segmenting means **breaking a word into sounds**.

Example:

cat → /c/ /a/ /t/

At home you can say: “What sounds can you hear?”

How phonics lessons work

Each lesson follows a routine:

1. **Review** sounds we already know
2. **Learn** a new sound
3. **Practise** reading and spelling words
4. **Apply** sounds in reading or writing

This routine helps children feel confident.

Pronunciation tips

- Try to say **short, clear sounds**
- Your accent is **not a problem**
Clear sounds are more important than perfect pronunciation

Use these videos to help:

<https://www.littlewandle.org.uk/resources/for-parents/>

How to help at home (5 minutes is enough!)

You don't need to do everything — **little and often works best**.

You can:

- practise **sound cards**
- blend sounds to read short words
- ask your child to segment short words for spelling
- spot sounds in books, signs, or food packets

What to avoid

- Don't guess words from pictures
- Don't rush your child
- Don't worry if mistakes happen

You do **not** need to be an English expert to help your child.

Your support makes a big difference!