

## Introduction to Phonics

We know that phonics terminology can be new and sometimes confusing. Here are some terms you might hear your child use and what they mean.

Word	What Does It Mean?
<b>blend/blending</b>	Blending is a skill that children learn as part of early phonics sessions. To blend, a child will say the individual sounds that make up a word, for example 'c'- 'a'- 't' and then will merge these sounds together to say a word, for example 'cat'.
<b>consonant</b>	Most letters of the alphabet (excluding the vowels: a,e,i,o,u).
<b>CVC words</b>	Abbreviation used for consonant-vowel-consonant words, used to describe the order of sounds. Some examples of CVC words are: cat, pen, top, chat (because ch makes one sound). Other similar abbreviations include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• VC words such as, on, is, it.</li><li>• CCVC words e.g. trap and black.</li><li>• CVCC words e.g. milk and fast.</li></ul>
<b>digraph</b>	Two letters which together make one sound e.g. ee, oa, ea, ch, ay.
<b>grapheme</b>	Written letters or a group of letters which represent one single sound (phoneme) e.g. a, l, sh, air, ck.  grapheme-phoneme correspondence (GPC) The relationship between a phoneme (sound) and the grapheme (letter) used to represent it
<b>phoneme</b>	A single sound that can be made by one or more letters – e.g. s, k, z, oo, ph, igh.

Word	What Does It Mean?
<b>segment/ segmenting</b>	Children are also taught the skill of segmenting as part of earl phonics sessions. Segmenting involves breaking down a word into its smallest unit of sound. For example in the word 'dog' there are three sounds d-o-g and in the word 'chat' there are also three sounds 'ch' 'a' 't' because the letters c and h become the digraph 'ch'.
<b>phonics</b>	Phonics teaches children to listen to and identify the sounds that make up words. This helps them to read and write words.
<b>pure sound</b>	Pronouncing each letter sound clearly and distinctly without adding additional sounds to the end e.g. 'f' not 'fuh.'
<b>tricky/common exception words</b>	These will be introduced as 'sight words' or words for children to remember as a whole. They contain alternative spellings of sounds that the children have not yet been exposed to, for example in the word to the 'o' is making the sound 'oo.'
<b>trigraph</b>	Three letters which go together make one sound e.g. ear, air, igh, dge, tch.
<b>vowel</b>	The letters a, e, i, o, u.