

How we teach phonics:

- Phase 1 learners follow the Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised 'Foundations for Phonics' guidance and our own Strathmore Planning. The focus is on daily oral blending and language development through high quality stories and rhymes, listening and attention skills.
- Phase 2, 3, 4 and 5 learners follow the progression within Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised programme. Phonics is taught daily and is differentiated to match the learner's phonic ability. The learners may focus on a particular grapheme for a set amount of time and then develop their segmenting and blending skills throughout the term. This will include different Strathmore Strategies to support their working memory, engagement, and focus.
- Each phonics sessions (Phase 2 up) is always working on the same structure each day, revise and revisit, teach and practice, practice and apply.
- The session can be taught through whole class activities, small groups or 1:1 depending on the class cohort.

Learning to read matters for every child or young person, regardless of their starting points or learning needs. This is why Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised offers several pathways, enabling schools to create a suitable route to reading for every child.

Phase 1:

At Strathmore Phase 1 phonics fall within our Communication Framework. This phase is intended to develop children's listening, vocabulary and speaking and communication skills. Phase 1 phonics is based around different aspects linked to listening and attention. These aspects are:

- Environmental sounds
- Instrumental sounds
- Body percussion (e.g., clapping and stamping)
- Rhythm and rhyme
- Alliteration
- Voice sounds
- Oral blending and segmenting (e.g., hearing that d-o-g makes 'dog')

Typical activities we do at Strathmore for teaching Phase 1 phonics include 'listening' walks, playing, and identifying instruments, action songs, learning rhymes and enjoying messy play and sensory activities.

Phase 2

In Phase 2, our learners at Strathmore begin to learn the sounds that letters make (phonemes) There are 44 sounds in all. Some are made with two letters, but **in Phase 2, children focus on learning the 19 most common single letter sounds.**

Phase 3

Phase 3 introduces our learners to the remaining, more difficult and/or less commonly used phonemes. These are mainly made up of two letters such as /ch/, /ar/, /ow/ and /ee/.

Alongside this, **children are taught to recognise more tricky words, including 'me,' 'was,' 'my,' 'you' and 'them'.** They learn the names of the letters, as well as the sounds they make. Activities might include learning mnemonics (memory aids) for tricky words, practising writing letters on mini whiteboards, using word cards and singing songs like the Alphabet Song.

Phase 4

In Phase 4 learners should be confident with each phoneme. From here on, phonics teaching is about consolidating and refining their knowledge, introducing more spelling patterns and tricky words, and increasing vocabulary.

In Phase 4 phonics, the learners will, among other things

- Practise reading and spelling CVCC words ('bump', 'nest', 'belt,' 'milk', etc)
- Practise reading and spelling high frequency words.
- Practise reading and writing sentences.
- Learn more tricky words, including 'have,' 'like,' 'some,' 'little'.

The learners should now be blending confidently to work out new words. They should be beginning to read words straight off, rather than having to sound them out. They should also be able to write every letter, mostly correctly.

Phase 5

In phase 5 we start introducing alternative spellings for sounds. Our learners will master these in reading first, and as their fluency develops, we begin to see them using them correctly in spelling.

Children learn new graphemes (different ways of spelling each sound) and alternative pronunciations for these: for example, learning that the grapheme 'ow' makes a different sound in 'snow' and 'cow'.

They should become quicker at blending and start to do it silently. They learn about split digraphs (the 'magic e') such as the a-e in 'name.'

Phase 6

Little Wandle have integrated Phase 6 throughout much of the programme as children need to be able to read words in the past and progressive tenses and with the suffixes in Phase 6 so that they can read fully decodable books that have a normal syntax and are not constrained by a restriction on verb tenses.

Cued Articulation:

Alongside our phonic session we use Cued Articulation. This is a set of hand cues for teaching the individual sounds in a word. The hand movements are logical – each hand movement represents one sound, and the cue gives clues as to how and where the sound is produced.

The speech and language therapists at Strathmore work alongside the staff to implement Cued Articulation and support the learners with learning new phonemes.

Cued articulation is extremely useful for developing skills in articulation, language, communication, and literacy in the classroom.