

Targeted support in Phase Five

Some children may have gaps in their knowledge, or specific skills they need to develop, which are preventing them from making progress. This could include children who have been absent for a period, children who enter the school mid-year, children who have not developed key skills earlier in Reception or children who have specific problems, such as difficulty with short-term memory.

Your assessments will help you to identify the key phonics knowledge or skills that the children have not yet grasped. You then need to plan additional small group or one-to-one sessions to help them overcome these specific problems. Set a clear target and a realistic time frame for achieving the target. Use on-going assessment to check each child's progress during this time and at the end of the period to see if it was successful.

The guidance below suggests strategies and activities to help secure some key phonics knowledge that children may not have grasped.

Children who have difficulty blending CVCC, CCVC and CCVCC words

Some children have difficulty holding more than three sounds in their head at a time and so they find blending four (or even five) sounds together difficult.

Target: Children will be able to blend four sounds to read CVCC and CCVC words (or children will be able to blend five sounds to read CCVCC words).

Provide additional practice of blending to read words that have adjacent consonants using the **Phase Five Term 1 Short and Long vowel revision word cards** (and/or **Phase Four Word cards** from the **Reception Teacher's Handbook**).

Start with oral blending of CVCC and CCVC words so the children listen to the sounds being spoken and then have to blend them together. For example, you might say /s/o/f/t and see if the children say the word 'soft'. You can make this into a game (for example, *Simon says g/r/i/n*, *Simon says j/u/m/p*). See if the children can blend the sounds together and do the action.

Revisit oral blending activities from Phase One of the **Reception Teacher's Handbook**, using CVCC and CCVC words to reinforce the blending skills.

Practise reading the **Word cards** by saying the sounds and blending them. Start by covering the last letter and encouraging the children to sound and blend the first three sounds and then add the final sound onto the end when you reveal it (for example, blending /l/e/n in 'lend' and then holding the /n/ sound and adding /d/ on the end, or blending /s/t/ar in 'start' and adding /t/ on the end).

Continue to practise reading the **Word cards**. Notice how the children say the sounds. If they say the sounds too slowly, they may have difficulty blending them together. In this case, repeat the sounds, saying them clearly so that the children can blend them. Ask the children to repeat the sounding and blending after you.

Once children have grasped blending four sounds, build up to blending five sounds in CCVCC words. Use the same techniques as described above, for example, blending /s/t/a/m in 'stamp' and then holding the /m/ sound and adding /p/ on the end.

Children who cannot see the digraphs or trigraphs in words (and continue to read them as individual letters)

This usually indicates that the children need more practice at recognising the digraphs and trigraphs they have been taught. Children need to continue practising these GPCs to the point where they are recognising them instantly 'on sight', so they can quickly identify the two or three letters together in words and say the one sound. 'Over-learning' is key here and children need to continue to practise these GPCs beyond the point where they seem to know them.

First, identify which digraphs or trigraphs the children are not recognising in words. If it is all vowel digraphs, then start with some of the Phase Three digraphs that the children are most familiar with.

Target: Children will be able to read words with the identified digraphs and trigraphs.

Practise recognition of the identified graphemes using activities such as **Quick-fire graphemes** (p.148) or you could use the downloadable **Star-blazer game** for Phase Three graphemes to vary the activity. Keep practising them in every session, focusing on achieving instant responses. Children could also take copies of these resources home for additional practice.

Practise recognition of the same graphemes in words using the **Phase Five Term 1 Short and Long vowel revision word cards** for Phase Three graphemes. Show a **Grapheme card** and ask the children to say the sound. Then give the children a **Word card** with that digraph and ask them to 'spot the digraph' in the word. Ask them to underline the digraph (or draw in the sound buttons) and then sound-talk and read the word. You could make this into a **Points accumulator** activity (p.39), awarding two points for spotting the digraph and another two points for reading the word.

As the children become quicker at recognising the graphemes, use the **Lucky dip** activity (p.34) to practise recognition of graphemes in reading words. Select a **Word card** for each of the graphemes. Put the word cards in a bag or box. Produce a word from the bag or box and ask the children to spot the digraph/trigraph. Ask them then to blend and read the word.

Children who have difficulty recalling or retaining the GPCs they have been taught

Some children may have significant gaps in their knowledge of GPCs from Reception or from previous terms. They may know them for a time but then not retain them. These children in particular need a great deal of repetition to ensure that learning moves into their long-term memories. 'Little and often'

is the best way to ensure the necessary level of repetition. First, use information from the **Grapheme recognition check group record sheet** and/or the **Grapheme recognition check** to identify exactly which graphemes each child really knows and which need to be consolidated.

Target: Children can recognise the focus GPCs consistently.

Practise the GPCs daily for about 5 to 10 minutes using activities such as **Quick-fire graphemes** (p.148). This could be one-to-one or in a small group if there are a number of children having difficulty with the same graphemes. Keep practising them every day, even if the children seem to know them. Focus on achieving instant responses. Children could take copies of the **Grapheme cards** home for additional practice. Some of these graphemes could also be incorporated into the **Revisit and review** section of the daily lessons.

These children may also benefit from multi-sensory approaches to help secure the GPCs. For example, writing the letter(s) on a whiteboard/paper or in the air using large gestures as they say the sound multiple times could help to link the letter or combinations of letters to the sound.