



Our Approach to the Teaching of Phonics

Phonics at Clare House

At Clare House we use the Sounds Write approach to phonics. This is a scheme which is very effective in teaching pupils to read, spell and write. It starts from children's knowledge of sounds and builds on this through a carefully sequenced set of steps through each of the 44 sounds in the English language and how they can be spelt.

The sounds are introduced in a simple way in Reception and gradually increase in complexity. For example, as single letter sounds are being learned children learn to read and build simple CVC (consonant, vowel, consonant) words. They quickly learn to read and spell words such as 'mum', 'jam', 'hat' and so on. Following this, they progress through more complex one syllable words which have more letters, such as 'hand', 'swim', 'scrub' and 'trust'. The next step is learning that two letters can represent one sound and more common two-letter spellings such as 'ch', 'sh' and 'th' in words like 'shop', 'thin', or 'chip'. Finally, two, three and four letter spellings of the vowels are introduced and pupils are taught how to read and spell polysyllabic words, starting with simpler words (such as 'bedbug') and moving on to more complex ones (such as 'mathematical')

All of this is taught within a well-structured, incremental and coherent framework which leads to the conceptual understanding needed to become an effective reader. Reading and spelling also require expertise in the skills necessary to make use of the alphabet code and pupils need to be able to:

- segment, or separate sounds into words
- blend, or push sounds together to form words
- manipulate sounds: take sounds out and put sounds into words.

Sounds Write provides opportunities for practising these skills on an everyday basis until pupils achieve the automaticity required for fluent reading and spelling.