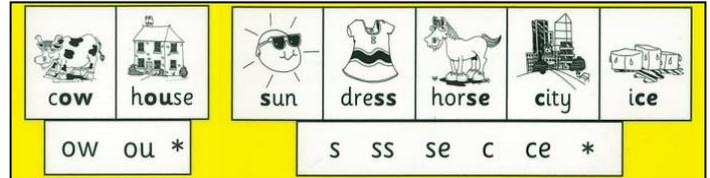


### What is the THRASS chart?

The THRASS chart is a memory and reference aid for the reading and spelling choices for each sound. So the long a sound can be written as *a* as in *baby*, *ai* in *snail*, *ay* in *tray*, *a-e* in *tape*. The \* shows that there are other choices that are less common so are not shown.

Each phoneme box shows the most common ways of recording that sound. A key word is included for easy reference: This helps children when making choices and provides a way of remembering the spelling choice or sound that the letters make. For example we may say, is it the *s* in *sun*, the *ss* in *dress*, the *se* in *horse*? If we are investigating the /s/ sound, children might say *ice*, and we can say, 'Yes! That does have an /s/ sound at the end. On the thrass chart it shows us that it is the letters *ce* that are making that sound.'



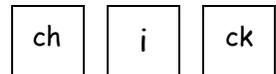
### What are the hotwords?

Hotwords are the most common words children will come across as they start to read and write. When your child is ready, they will begin to learn hotwords by sight for reading, and then will begin to learn them for spelling. The teacher will let you know when this happens. This will continue in Year 1. The first 20 hot words are:

*I, and, the, a, it, is, at, of, to, as, my, in, said, was, they, be, with, if, do, for.*

### What can I do to support my child's phonics development?

- ☺ Enjoy books together. Read a range of books that excite your child and captures their imagination
- ☺ Enjoy poems and nursery rhymes together. Play with rhyme and alliteration e.g. *cat, sat, mat. Silly Sarah sat in the sand eating sandwiches*
- ☺ Encourage children to write for different purposes: shopping lists, birthday cards, emails, letters to teddy bears and grannies!
- ☺ Play games that involve tuning into sounds. Games like I spy and sound lotto help. Try to use pure sounds all the time (sssssss not s-uh, t not t-uh.)
- ☺ Join in with the raps.
- ☺ Use the key words on the English phonics/THRASS chart to help children link sounds.
- ☺ Practise counting phonemes in words:
  - These words have three phonemes: *cat, tree, catch, house*
  - These words have four phoneme: *stop, crash, quick*
- ☺ Use sound buttons under words to support reading each sound in order.
- ☺ Consider ordering your own THRASS materials (due to copyright there are only a few that we may photocopy). Charts and Apps are available from this website: [www.englishphonicschart.com](http://www.englishphonicschart.com)
- ☺ Practise hot words together for reading and spelling, play hunt the word, my pile/your pile, use magnetic letters, write them with bath crayons on the tiles or with chalk outside.



### Need more help?

Attend one of our **Phonics for Parents** workshops or early reading and writing workshops. Look out for dates in **Life and Learning**. The class teacher will also be able to give you specific ideas to help your child.





In the  
Spotlight

Parent Information: Helping children  
in the Early Learning Phase with...

## Phonics



At Christ the Sower, phonics is part of a language, story-rich curriculum. There is a focus on the centrality of speaking and listening as these are essential preparation skills for learning phonic knowledge and skills, as well as being valuable in their own right. Phonics is taught separately in a daily session, with opportunities to apply new knowledge and skills throughout the day. High quality phonics teaching is seen as the main way to teach children to learn to read - with the aim that eventually they can use their skills successfully to read to learn.

### What is the school approach to Phonics?

Our approach to phonics is securely rooted in the THRASS scheme. THRASS is a program for **teaching the letters, speech sounds and spelling choices** of English. THRASS teaches both phonemes and graphemes.



- **Phonemes** are the speech sounds. There are 44 phonemes in spoken English
- **Graphemes** are spelling choices. Graphemes use the 26 letters of the alphabet. A grapheme may have more than 1 letter. The **ea** in *beach* is a digraph (one sound = 2 letters), the **eer** in *deer* is a trigraph (3 letter=1 sound)

Knowledge of the **alphabet** and naming of the lower case letters (d) and their capitals (D) is taught alongside.



As children become aware of different sounds and different letters, they are taught to begin to link sounds and letters. Then they apply their knowledge to reading and spelling.

- **Reading:** we look at graphemes and transfer these to phonemes, blending to make the word
- **Spelling:** we say the word, segment (split) into the phonemes, choose the graphemes to represent the phonemes and write it down.

### What is the main difference to other schemes?

We don't teach one letter one sound. the letter **A** says many sounds, not just **a** as in *ant*! Say these words, listen to the sound the letter a makes in each one: *rain, car, square bread, beach, saw, zebra*. Hmmm.... The letter **A** can make quite a lot of different sounds, can't it! (Analogy. A dog has the name dog and can make different sounds: bark, woof, howl.... The letter A is named A and can make different sounds.) These are words children come across very early in reading, so if we taught that the letter A only said a as in ant we would be doing children a disservice.

We don't talk about silent letter. The **kn** digraph is the letters k and n working together to make a /n/ sound as in *knee*. We don't talk about tricky words. We can all learn how to spell these words so one day they won't be tricky. We may say, 'this is the part you are finding tricky right now.'