**Phonics**

In school, we use the Letters and Sounds which is supported by Jolly Phonics Songs and actions, Phonics Play and other interactive resources. Letters and Sounds is a systematic approach for teaching children to read using phonics which is used in many schools in England.

**The Terminology**

**Phoneme**

A phoneme is the smallest unit of sound in a word. It is generally accepted that most varieties of spoken English use about 44 phonemes.

# Graphemes

A grapheme is a symbol of a phoneme. It is a letter or group of letters representing a sound.

**Segmenting and blending**

Segmenting consists of breaking words down into phonemes to spell and read. Blending consists of building words from phonemes to read and spell. Both skills are important.

**Digraph**

This is when two letters come together to make a phoneme. For example, /oa/ makes the sound in ‘boat’ and is also known as a **vowel digraph.** There are also **consonant digraphs**, for example, /sh/ and /ch/.

**Trigraph**

This is when three letters come together to make one phoneme, for example /igh/.

**Split digraph**

A digraph in which the two letters are not adjacent – e.g. m**ake**

## Abbreviations

VC, CVC, and CCVC are the respective abbreviations for vowel-consonant, consonant vowel-consonant, consonant-consonant-vowel-consonant, and are used to describe the order of graphemes in words (e.g. *am* (VC), *Sam* (CVC), *slam* (CCVC), or *each* (VC), *beach* (CVC), *bleach* (CCVC).

**Sound Buttons**

These are used to help children identify phonemes in a word to sound out often used for reading e.g. ch a t

**Phoneme frames**

These are used to help children identify phonemes in a word, often used for writing and spelling

e.g.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| ch | a | t |