



10 September 2025

New Phonics Scheme – Unlocking Letters and Sounds

This year, we have introduced a new phonics scheme – **Unlocking Letters and Sounds (ULS)**. Previously, we have taught Phonics and early reading using our own, Raglan Phonics Scheme. However, all schools now need to teach Phonics and early reading using a Department for Education (DfE) *validated* phonics scheme. After careful research, we selected ULS because it closely matched our existing approach and the core principles we value in teaching early reading.

What is new?

ULS is very similar to the Raglan Phonics Scheme and uses the same phonics terminology and a very similar progression. ULS does use new routines and mantras such as 'stretching' words to segment them for spelling, using 'phoneme fingers' to count how many phonemes are in a word and 'chunking' longer words to read and spell them. The children also 'tick or fix' the words, captions and sentences they have written. The children have already embraced the new routines and mantras and are really enjoying their Phonics lessons!

Year 1 pupils are currently learning the new *actions* linked to the images on the ULS sound mats and wall friezes. These actions help to embed their phonic knowledge. Reception children will begin this journey next week as they start Phase 2 Phonics. Please note, Year 2 will not be learning the new actions as they are revising Phase 5 spelling rules before moving onto Year 2 Spelling lessons.

You can watch and learn the actions by clicking on the following links:

Phase 2: [ULS Phase 2 Actions](#)

Phase 3: [ULS Phase 3 Actions](#)

We have also attached:

- The **sound mats** with common exception words. We recommend reviewing the sound mats alongside the action videos to help you see how they are linked.
- A **concise ULS phonics progression** so you can see what your child is learning.
- A **phonics glossary** so you can see the terminology that the children are learning and using in their Phonics lessons.

Want to learn more?

If you have any questions, please speak to your child's class teacher. We will be also be holding information meetings to explain how we teach phonics and early reading for Reception, Year 1 and ARP parents and carers:

- **Reception and ARP:** 6:30pm, Monday 22nd September
- **Year 1 and ARP:** 6:30pm, Thursday 2nd October

Letters explaining how to sign up to the meetings will be sent home shortly.

