This document is designed to give a detailed and explicit overview of how phonics is taught at Rolleston State School. Systematic, direct and explicit phonics instruction should occur so that children master the essential alphabetic code-breaking skills required for foundational reading proficiency;

We conduct an integrated approach to reading that supports the development of oral language, vocabulary, grammar, reading fluency, comprehension and the literacies of new technologies. This program is therefore considered a supplement to the following programs:

- Rolleston State School Reading Program
- Rolleston State School Spelling Mastery Program
Beliefs:

About Phonics:
The term phonics may be used in two different ways:

• describe the system of letter sound relationships used in the English written language,

• or a method of teaching reading

About teaching Phonics:
It is not productive to suggest that readers use only phonics to decode written symbols.

Research shows (Goodman, 1965) that readers use phonic information in association with other visual and non-visual information.

The visual information includes:

• conventions of print,

• illustrations,

• layout and context.

The non-visual information includes:

• prior knowledge of the real world,

• knowledge of language patterns, structures and sounds,

• reader’s semantic, technological and socio-cultural knowledge.

Good readers use these various sources of information together with their knowledge of phonics to problem solve texts.

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In the early stages of literacy learning phonic knowledge is an important part of the reading process, however it is one part. Teachers need to understand:

• how phonics relate to the **Bigger** picture of being literate,
• how successful readers flexibly integrate all sources of information to problem solve texts e.g. meaning structure and visual cues,
• the complex way that written symbols map onto spoken language - it is far more complex than a system of letter-sound relationships.

The problem for teachers is deciding the how, when, where and which aspects of phonics to teach.
The place of Phonics in Reading:

Graphophonic letter-sound correspondence
The system of rules that govern how letters map onto spoken language is called the graphophonic code.

Four main influences underpin the way in which the written language relates to the spoken language:

- **Phonological (alphabetic)** - expressing speech in writing is that the letters of the alphabet( symbols) are used to represent phonemes, the smallest segments of sounds into which a word can be broken.
- **Morphemic** - letters or letter sequences are used to represent that smallest unit of meaning (morphemes) within a word.
- **Etymological** - words in English have been derived from many different sources. The written form has remained constant, but the spoken form has changed e.g. *gh* in *enough, ph* in *phone*
- **Visual** - the written form is often a combination of etymological and morphemic factors and alphabetic associations.

Words such as *eight, the, thorough* appear to lack any letter-sound relationship and must be accessed through the reader’s visual memory (the patterns of these words just need to be learnt).
Knowledge of phonemes and of written words does not develop before literacy learning, but side by side with it as the learner acquires more understanding of the way letters and sounds are related and how this knowledge will assist when trying to read and write.

Teachers need to understand that before students can engage in identify phonemes or develop an ear for phonemic awareness they must have a certain amount of experience in spoken language and to have developed metalinguistic awareness (ways of thinking and talking about language)

**Metalinguistic Awareness:**

It has two facets:

1. Conscious awareness of concepts about language e.g.
   - concepts associated with letters and words e.g. long, short, first, last etc
   - difference between a letter and a word
   - segmenting spoken language into how many words etc
   - making judgments about the correctness of the language e.g. is this the way to say it

2. The language (metalanguage) to use to think about those concepts.

**Letter Awareness**
The ability to quickly and automatically name letters is a key factor in a student’s success with the code breaking aspects of reading. (Hill 1999, p32)

**Key Factors:**
- Letter names first
- Letter shapes that make them unique
- More about quick visual discrimination - being able to identify similarities and differences of letters
- Using writing as a means of learning letter shapes. It involves attention to direction as well as visual, auditory and kinaesthetic senses e.g. look, say and actions
- Confusion with upper case and lower case - teach them separately lower case first

**Phonological Awareness**
Concepts about the way spoken words sound

- words can be broken into smaller units e.g. syllables
- be aware of Rhyme
- demonstrate an awareness of onset and rime through rhyming words
- blend onset and rime to make a word

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Phonemic Awareness
Concepts about the structure of words (individual phonemes).

The only value phonemic awareness has in a literacy program is to contribute to reading or spelling success. It is seen to be essential in the beginning stages of reading. (Graphophonics p 57)

- words can be segmented into phonemes e.g. initial consonants and other consonants sounds
- words can be segmented into phoneme chunks e.g. consonant clusters e.g. st
  - vowels a as in cat
  - blend individual consonants s-t-r- str
- students being able to synthesis phonemes into meaningful words.
- the way a phoneme sounds within a word is influenced by the surrounding phonemes and whether it is stressed or unstressed.

A model of instruction

- Model and teach
  - Show students the correct way.
  - (I do it.)

- Guided practice
  - Students do it with teacher support and feedback.
  - (We do it.)

- Independent practice
  - Students practice alone with teacher monitoring and feedback.
  - (You do it.)

- Cumulative practice
  - Students practice new items along with items already learned.
About Resources:
It is important to use a range of phonics resources that include traditional and hybrid forms (new combinations of texts that have been brought about through new technologies)

Jolly Phonics
Letter Sound Order

The sounds are taught in a specific order (not alphabetically). This enables children to begin building words as early as possible.

How does Jolly Phonics work?

Using a synthetic phonics approach, Jolly Phonics teaches children the five key skills for reading and writing. Complemented by Jolly Readers and Jolly Grammar, it provides a thorough foundation for teaching literacy over three years in school.

The five skills taught in Jolly Phonics are Learning the letter sounds, learning the letter formation, blending, identifying the sounds in words and tricky words.

1. Learning the letter sounds:

In Jolly Phonics the 42 main sounds of English are taught, not just the alphabet. The sounds are in seven groups. Some sounds are written with two letters, such as ee and or. These are called digraphs. Note that oo and th can make two different sounds, as in book and moon, that and three. To distinguish between the two sounds, these digraphs are represented in two forms. This is shown below.

Each sound has an action which helps children remember the letter(s) that represent it. As a child progresses you can point to the letters and see how quickly they can do the action and say the sound. One letter sound can be taught each day. As a child becomes more confident, the actions are no longer necessary.

Children should learn each letter by its sound, not its name. For instance, the letter a should be called a (as in ant) not ai (as in aim). Similarly, the letter n should be nn (as in net), not en. This will help in blending. The names of each letter can follow later.

The letters have not been introduced in alphabetical order. The first group (s,a,t,i,p,n) has been chosen because they make more simple three-letter words than any other six letters. The letters b and d are introduced in different groups to avoid confusion.

Sounds that have more than one way of being written are initially taught in one form only. For example, the sound ai (train) is taught first, and then the alternative ae (gate) and ay (day) follow later.
2. Learning letter formation

It is very important that a child holds their pencil in the correct way.

The pencil should be held in the “tripod” grip between the thumb and the first two fingers. The grip is the same for both left and right handed children. If a child’s hold starts incorrectly, it is very difficult to correct later on.

A child needs to form each letter the correct way. The letter c is introduced in the early stages as this forms the basic shape of some other letters, such as d. Particular problems to look for are:

- the o (the pencil stroke must be anti-clockwise, not clockwise)
- d (the pencil starts in the middle, not the top)
- m and n (there must be an initial downstroke, or the letter m looks like the McDonald’s arches)

In time a child will need to learn joined-up (cursive) writing. It helps the fluency of writing and improves spelling. When words are written in one movement it is easier to remember the spelling correctly. Jolly Phonics uses the Sassoon Infant typeface which is designed for children learning to read and write. Many of the letters (such as d and n) have a joining tail at the end (an ‘exit’ stroke) to make it easier to transfer into joined-up writing. (You should check your school’s policy as some schools do not teach joined-up writing to young children).

3. Blending

Blending is the process of saying the individual sounds in a word the running them together to make the word. For instance sounding out d-o-g and making dog. It is a technique every child will need to learn, and it improves with practice. To start with you should sound out the word and see if a child can hear it, giving the answer if necessary. Some children take longer than others to hear this. The sounds must be said quickly to hear the word. It is easier if the first sound is said slightly louder. Try little and often with words like b-u-s, t-o-p, c-a-t and h-e-n.

Some sounds (digraphs) are represented by two letters, such as sh. Children should sound out the digraph (sh), not the individual letters (s-h). With practice they will be able to blend the digraph as one sound in a word. So, a word like rain should be sounded as r-a-i-n, and feet as f-e-e-t. This is difficult to begin with and takes practice.

Students need to be able to distinguish between a blend (such as st) and a digraph (such as sh). In a blend the two sounds, s and t can each be heard. In a digraph this is not so. Compare mishap (where both the s and h are sounded) and midship (which has the quite separate sh sound). When sounding out a blend, encourage children to say the two sounds as one unit, so fl-a-g not f-l-a-g. This will lead to greater fluency when reading.

Some words in English have an irregular spelling and cannot be read by blending, such as said, was and one. Unfortunately, many of these are common words. The irregular parts have to be remembered. These are called the “tricky words”.

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Two-Letter Blends

*bl*, which blends the /b/ and the /l/ sounds together to make the /bl/ sound as in *blend* and *blight*

*br*, which blends the /b/ and the /r/ sounds together to make the /br/ sound as in *break* and *brown*

*cl*, which blends the /c/ and the /l/ sounds together to make the /cl/ sound as in *cluster* and *class*

*cr*, which blends the /c/ and the /r/ sounds together to make the /cr/ sound as in *crash* and *cross*

*dr*, which blends the /d/ and the /r/ sounds together to make the /dr/ sound as in *drive* and *drab*

*fl*, which blends the /f/ and the /l/ sounds together to make the /fl/ sound as in *flu* and *flake*

*fr*, which blends the /f/ and the /r/ sounds together to make the /fr/ sound as in *freedom* and *frost*

*gl*, which blends the /g/ and the /l/ sounds together to make the /gl/ sound as in *glad* and *glory*

*gr*, which blends the /g/ and the /r/ sounds together to make the /gr/ sound as in *green* and *gravy*

*nd*, which blends the /n/ and the /d/ sounds together to make the /nd/ sound as in *blend* and *send*

*pl*, which blends the /p/ and the /l/ sounds together to make the /pl/ sound as in *play* and *plow*

*pr*, which blends the /p/ and the /r/ sounds together to make the /pr/ sound as in *prime* and *prowl*

*sl*, which blends the /s/ and the /l/ sounds together to make the /sl/ sound as in *slogan* and *sloppy*

*sm*, which blends the /s/ and the /m/ sounds together to make the /sm/ sound as in *small* and *smart*

*sn*, which blends the /s/ and the /n/ sounds together to make the /sn/ sound as in *snail* and *snore*

*sp*, which blends the /s/ and the /p/ sounds together to make the /sp/ sound as in *special* and *spackel*

*st*, which blends the /s/ and the /t/ sounds together to make the /st/ sound as in *stop* and *start*

Three-Letter Blends

*shr*, which blends the /sh/ digraph and the /r/ sound together to make the /shr/ sound as in *shroud*

*spl*, which blends the /sp/ blend and the /l/ sound together to make the /spl/ sound as in *splash* and *splendid*

*spr*, which blends the /sp/ blend and the /r/ sound together to make the /spr/ sound as in *spring* and *spray*

*squ*, which blends the /s/ sound and the /sq/ digraph together to make the /squ/ sound as in *squid* and *squelch*

*str*, which blends the /st/ blend and the /r/ sound together to make the /str/ sound as in *struggle* and *strap*

*thr*, which blends the /th/ digraph and the /r/ sound together to make the /thr/ sound as in *throw*
4. **Identifying the sounds in words (Segmenting)**

   The easiest way to know how to spell a word is to listen for the sounds in that word. Even with the tricky words an understanding of letter sounds can help.

   Start by having your child listen for the first sound in a word. Games like I-Spy are ideal for this. Next try listening for the end sounds, as the middle sound of the word is the hardest to hear.

   Begin with simple three letter words such as cat or hot. A good idea is to say a word and tap out the sounds. Three taps means three sounds. Say each sound as you tap. Take care with digraphs. The word fish, for instance, has four letters but only three sounds, f-i-sh. Rhyming games, poems and the Jolly Jingles also help tune the ears to the sounds in words. Other games to play are:

   Add a sound: what do i get if i add p to the beginning of ink?  Answer: pink. Other examples are m-ice, b-us, etc.

   Take away a sound: what do I get if i take away p from pink? Answer: ink

   Other examples as above, and f-lap, s-lip, c-rib, d-rag, p-ant, m-end, s-top, b-end, s-t-rip, etc.

5. **Tricky words**

   There are a number of ways to learn tricky words:

   1. Look, Cover, Write and Check. Look at the word to see which bit is tricky. Ask the child to try writing the word in the air saying the letters. Cover the word over and see if the child can write it correctly. Check to make sure.

   2. Say it as it sounds. Say the word so each sound is heard. For instance, the word was is said was “wass”, to rhyme with mass, the word Monday is said as Mon-day.

   3. Mnemonics. The initial letter of each word in a saying gives the correct spelling of a word. For instance, laugh – Laugh At Ugly Goat´s Hair.

   4. Using joined-up writing also improves spelling.
### Learning Sequence

#### Prep

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<th>Term 3</th>
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Year 1, 2 & 3 students to receive individualised support with Phonics Instruction as necessary.

### How do we assess phonics?

Assessment takes various forms and fulfils a variety of purposes:

- Assessment for learning-enabling teachers to use information about student progress to inform their teaching.
- Assessment as learning-enabling students to reflect on and monitor their own progress to inform their future learning goals.
- Assessment of learning-assisting teachers to use evidence of student learning to assess student achievement against goals and standards.

**Assessment – for**

At Rolleston State School we have a data gathering schedule and year level targets. For specific information, refer to the Whole School Plan and Whole School Assessment and Reporting Schedule.

- Ability to recognise letters and sounds.
- Running Records-PM, Probe (fluency, decoding, comprehension, level).

**Assessment – of**

At Rolleston State School we collate data on distance travelled by collecting work samples through a variety of means as an indication about assessment of learning in reading.

- Phoneme Awareness Test
- PM Benchmark Prep-Yr 7 each term.

At Rolleston State School we provide students with assessment tasks in a variety of learning areas to inform the teaching of reading.

**Assessment – as**

At Rolleston State School we provide students with opportunities to monitor their progress at different junctures through the teaching and learning cycle in order to reflect on their learning in reading.

- Individual sound / letter goals-checked every term
- Work sample / checklists

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