Phonological Awareness

Phonological awareness helps children to recognise words that are part of their home language, to hear the difference between words, and to correct their own speech sounds errors.

Children who have delayed or disordered speech sounds development often have poor phonological awareness. This means they find the following things difficult:

* Knowing when one word ends and another begins
* Splitting words into syllables
* Naming the first and last sounds in a word
* Hearing the difference between similar sounding words
* Changing sounds to make new words.

**Before starting with the below activities, please first check your child’s understanding of the following words:**

* Beginning, Middle and End
* Start and Finish
* First, Next and Last
* Same and Different



**You could line up some objects (counters, coins, figurines etc) and ask your child to point to the following:**

* Which one is at the beginning/start of the line?
* Who is first in the line?
* Who is at the end of the line?
* Who is last?
* Can you show me two that are the same/different?

This will help you to use the language that your child understands best. For example, will you ask them to listen to the ‘**start**’ of the word, the ‘**first**’ sound or the ‘**beginning**’ sound? Agree what to call it with your child, and use that in your practice, so that they know what sound they are listening for.

Naming First and Last Sounds

* **Please ask your school which Phonics Scheme they use and ask for a copy of the pictures, so you can use these for home practice as well.**

It is important that adults only say the sound by itself, without adding any extra sounds (such as ‘uh’). For example:

‘s’ is a long, quiet ‘ssss’ sound- **not a ‘suh’ or an ‘ess’**

‘t’ is a short, quiet t, t, t sound- **not a ‘tuh’** **or a ‘tee’**

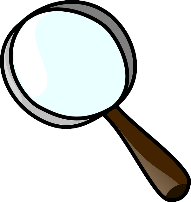
‘p’ is a short, quiet puff of air for p, p, p- **not a ‘puh’ or a ‘pee’.**

Activity 1: Magic box

Collect objects which begin with a particular sound, and hide them in a bag or box. Sing with your child: ***‘Magic box, what’s inside? What’s the sound you’re trying to hide?’*** Let your child guess what might be inside the box and then open it, name the object and talk about the sound the object starts with.

* To vary the game, include objects which start with two different sounds and support your child to sort them into groups by the sound they start with.

Activity 2: Letter sound activities

Say a range of words and ask your child to listen to the word and point to the sound they can hear at the start of the word, using their school’s phonics scheme pictures.

**Deleting Sounds**

Support your child to ‘chop off’ the first or last sound of a word. For example, you would say to your child:

* “Say ‘coat’, without saying ‘k’… (child says) “Oat!
* Say ‘house’ without saying ‘s’… (child says) “How!”

Practice activities which support your child to think of more words beginning with the same sound.

* **“I spy”:** Play the traditional game ‘I spy with my little eye something beginning with…’



* **“I went to market”:** Start the game by saying ‘I went to market and bought a….car’. The next person repeats what the first person has said, then adds another item beginning with the same letter. “I went to market and I bought a car and a cat” and so on. The person who can remember the most items wins!