



At Iford & Kingston, we are committed to using the Sounds-Write phonics approach to assist the children from Reception – KS2 to learn to read, write and spell independently with accuracy, understanding and confidence.

Sounds -Write is a quality first phonics programme. Its purpose is to provide classroom professionals with a comprehensive system with which to teach reading, spelling and writing. It is effective in teaching pupils to read, spell and write because it starts from what all children know from a very early age – the sounds of their own language. From there, it takes them in carefully sequenced, incremental steps and teaches them how each of the 44 or so sounds in the English language can be spelt.

The Sounds-Write method is a multi-sensory approach. It teaches children to discriminate the exact shapes of the letters, by looking at them and copying them, as well as by saying the precise sounds they represent in speech. As children are copying and also saying the sounds, they are using touch, sight, sound and speech and, through these means, they are learning there is a direct connection between what they see and what they hear.

Sounds-Write teaches children the following skills:

Conceptual Knowledge

1. Letters are symbols (spellings) that represent sounds.
2. Each sound may be represented (spelled) by a 1, 2, 3 or 4-letter spelling.

dog	street	night	dough
-----	--------	-------	-------

3. The same sound can be spelled in more than one way.

One sound - different spellings			
rain	break	gate	stay

4. Many spellings represent more than one sound.

One spelling – different sounds		
head	seat	break

Skills

1. **Blending** – the ability to push sounds together.

Example: /k/ /a/ /t/ → cat

2. **Segmenting** – the ability to push the individual sounds into words.
Example: pig → /p/ /i/ /g/
3. **Phoneme manipulation** – the ability to insert sounds into and delete sounds out of words. This skill is necessary to test alternative for spellings that represent more than one sound.

Example: spelling <o>. Is it /o/as in **h**o**t**, /oe/as in **n**o or /u/as in **s**o**n**?

It is important to note that speed and accuracy need to be achieved for all three of the above skills in order for them to become automatic.

Sounds-Write Code

Sounds-Write is divided into three units, Initial Code, Extended Code and Polysyllabic Words. The code (phonic sounds) will be taught throughout Reception and Key Stage 1. From Year 3 onwards, staff will continue to teach using the Sounds-Write approach to finely tune the spelling and reading of all children at Iford & Kingston. It provides fast and effective teaching for children at all levels.

The Sounds-Write programme teaches the children to understand the way the alphabet (referred to as 'code') works. Because of the complex system of the alphabet code in the English language, often, in the early stages of learning to read and spell, pupils will not be able to spell some sounds using the correct spellings. However, pupils taught using Sounds-Write are more likely to be able to write almost anything they want using plausible (phonetic) spellings for sounds. As they progress through Key Stage 1, pupils learn systematically how words are spelled in English. The ability to express oneself in writing from the start of school gives children enormous confidence, which naturally feeds back into the other kinds of learning taking place within the school curriculum.

Initial Code

In Reception the children will be learning the **Initial Code**. The initial code comprises of single sounds of the alphabet, double consonants ff,ll, ss,zz and digraphs (two letters that represent one sound) sh,ch,th,wh and ng. Children also learn that <q> <u> represents the sounds /k/ and/w/ and is two letters that represent two sounds.

Extended Code

From Y1 and in Y2 the children will continue following the systematic phonics teaching but will work through the **Extended Code**. Children will learn, one sound –different spellings (e.g. boat, slow, note, toe) and one spelling different sounds (e.g. head, seat, break). This will be when the children learn how to read and spell words using a variety of different alphabet code.

Polysyllabic Words

Children in KS1 – KS2 will learn to spell and read polysyllabic words (words that have more than one syllable). Example: window has two syllables win-dow.

It is estimated that 80% of words in the English language are polysyllabic. To encode or decode these words, the earlier skills of segmenting and blending requires a higher level of development.

Children will segment:

- separating words into syllables
- take each syllable, in turn, and segment into sounds

Children will blend:

- blend sounds into syllables
- blend the syllables, in turn, into a word

Rehearsal and Consolidation

Sounds-Write is cumulative: that is, whatever the children are exposed to, whether it is practising skills, learning the alphabet code or enhancing their conceptual understanding of how the code works, will be encountered again and built upon at the next stage and again after that. For example: when children have learned that we represent the sound /m/ with the symbol <m> in Unit 1 of the Initial Code, neither sound nor sound symbol disappear at the end of the unit. Thereby ensuring knowledge and understanding is embedded into long term memory.

Reading

Decodables

At Iford & Kingston we will be using Sounds-Write and Dandelion Readers. These books demonstrate a cumulative progression in phonics knowledge, matched to the sequence taught through Sounds-Write phonics.

Decodables are a tool to practise reading words within connected text that contain core knowledge children have already learnt as part of phonics teaching in school. Decodable' books make children feel successful from the very beginning as they do not encounter words that include GPCs (the relationship between sounds and the letters that represent the sounds) they have not been taught.

The National Curriculum states children should be taught to: 'read aloud accurately books that are consistent with their developing phonic knowledge and that do not require them to use other strategies to work out words.'

The Reading Framework published in July 2021 also states that: 'Schools should invest in books that have been carefully structured in cumulative steps for children to learn to read. A systematic phonics programme includes sufficient decodable books or texts, so that children can practise, at school and at home, their increasing knowledge of GPCs and their blending skills in meaningful contexts'.

Your child will bring home a decodable text matched to the phonics code previously taught. It is vital that your child reads the text more than once to develop fluency and accuracy with reading.

Colour Banded Books

Once half of the Extended Code has been taught in Year 1, your child may also bring home a colour banded book. The banded book will be more of a challenge for your child to read independently. However, please support your child to read using only the phonics skills taught.

Reading for Pleasure

At Iford and Kingston we want to instil a love of reading. Each week, you child will bring home a book that they have chosen from the library or class reading area. Please encourage your child to share their favourite book with an adult as either a shared reading experience or as a bedtime story. Listening to someone else read is just as important in the children's learning.

How to Support Your Child at Home

Reading at home, every day, has the biggest impact on your child's learning and progress. Please find below some suggestions that will support you with supporting your child.

- Use letter sounds **not letter names**. This will avoid confusion for the children and will reinforce the learning being done at school.

- Avoid adding an extra vowel when pronouncing letter sounds e.g. 'buh' 'duh'.

Some children at I&K have put together a series of fantastic video clips on how to say the sounds correctly.

- When listening to your child read encourage them to have-a-go at unfamiliar words by encouraging them to: "say the sounds and read the word". Please do not use other strategies e.g. picture cues/miss a word out and re-read as these do not support early reading development.

Free Training

Learn more about how we teach phonics and how you can support your child at home by doing a free online course.

Part 1 – Units 1- 7 of the initial code.

<https://www.udemy.com/course/help-your-child-to-read-and-write/>

Part 2 – Units 8 – 11

<https://www.udemy.com/course/help-your-child-to-read-and-write-part-2/>

Further Support for Parents/Carers

Visit the Sounds-Write website for further information, support and resources:

<http://www.sounds-write.co.uk/>