Phonics Glossary

Phonics – the system of sounds we use to teach children to read

Phoneme – a sound

Grapheme – the letters that are used to record a sound

Digraph – 2 letters that are used to record a sound

Trigraph – 3 letters that are used to record a sound

Split digraph – a sound where the two letters are split up so the e sits on the end of the word

Fred - Fred is a frog puppet we use in sessions. He can only speak in sounds.

Fred talk/segmenting – when we split a word up into its sounds (oral segmenting)

Blending – push the sounds together

Fred fingers – when we press the sounds in a word onto our fingers to help us spell words

Green words – words which are decodable or follow the rules we teach children about which letters make sounds

White words – green words which we know really well and no longer need to Fred talk

Red words/tricky words – exceptions which don't follow the rules we have taught children about letters making particular sounds (you can't Fred a red), sometimes called 'high frequency words'

Fred in your head - still sounding out a word but doing so in your head rather than out loud, helps build fluency

Letter names – the alphabet which we use to refer to letters which make sounds

Special friends – 2 or 3 letters which make one sound (digraph or trigraph)

Split digraph – a sound where the two letters are split up so the e sits on the end of the word

Sound buttons – the markings we put underneath words to indicate sounds (a dot for a single sound and a line underneath letters which make a sound with 2 or more letters)

Syllables – a set of sounds which make a part of a word, you can hear them when you split a word up into 'claps'

Multisyllabic/Polysyllabic – a word which contains many syllables

Ascenders – Letters that reach up tall

Descenders – Letters where the tail dangles below the line

Letters without ascenders/descenders – letters that sit on the line