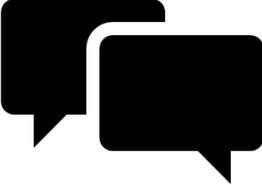
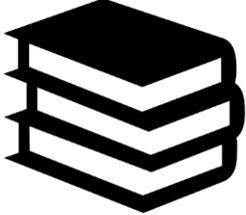


**A Guide for Parents and Carers of Children in The Early Years**  
**The First Steps to Reading and Writing**  
**Letters and Sounds Phase One**

*Letters and Sounds Phase One* is a play based early years programme that helps children to develop listening skills and to extend their vocabulary. This is needed as it is the beginning of early reading skills. *Letters and Sounds Phase One* is taught by our pre-schools and day nurseries. Following this play-based programme helps to prepare children aged three and four years old for when they start to learn phonics in school.

<b>Every Conversation</b>	<b>Talking</b>	<b>Listening</b>	<b>Books</b>
<p>Every time you sing and say rhymes, make and listen to music, listen to your child and join in conversations, play together, you are helping your child take the first important steps towards learning to reading and writing.</p> <p>Words are the core of reading and writing and by talking, singing and playing together you are helping your child to learn new words.</p>	<p>As parents and carers, you best understand your baby or young child’s communications; you are key people in helping them develop their speaking and listening skills.</p> <p>Talking about everyday activities such as preparing meals, tidying up, putting shopping away and getting ready to go out are all key opportunities to talk together.</p> <p>By explaining what you are doing and thinking aloud, you child will hear new words and relate these words to what he or she is doing.</p>	<p>Make time to listen to your child talking –as you walk, at mealtimes, bath times, bedtimes – any time!</p> <p>Switch off the TV, radio and mobile phones – and really listen!</p> <p>Show that you are interested in what they are talking about – look at your child, smile, nod your head, ask a question or make a response to show that you really have been listening, however old your child is.</p> <p><b>Word Challenge:</b> <i>listen for the words your child understands, listen for the words your child is</i></p>	<p>Books are an exciting source of new words for your child – words you would not use in everyday conversations appear in books.</p> <p>Children need to have a wide stock of words (<i>vocabulary</i>) to understand the meaning of books, so read aloud and share books as often as you can.</p> <p>They will enjoy it and it will be useful to them when they come across these words in their own reading later on.</p>



		<p><i>saying; what new words can you introduce?</i></p> <p><i>Can you add new words to your vocabulary so that a tree becomes an oak tree, a lime tree or a willow tree; a bird becomes a robin, a sparrow, or a pigeon; a beaker becomes a mug, a cup, a teacup, or a goblet!</i></p>	
<p><b>Songs and Rhymes</b></p> <p>Songs and Rhymes, in your home language, all help children to learn new words and develop their vocabulary, but also help children to tune into rhyme and rhythms.</p> <p>These are important early reading skills.</p> <p>Helping children to learn to tune into all the different sounds around them, such as sounds that rhyme, sounds that are the same and different. All will help children when they start to learn about the difference between the letter sounds 'b' and 'd' or 'm' and n'.</p>	<p><b>Early Writing</b></p> <p>In the early stages of learning to write, your child will experiment, making marks on paper with a variety of writing tools such as brushes, pens, pencils, sticks and twigs.</p> <p>They will often include drawings with their writing. Sometimes you might write for them.</p> <p>It is a good idea at this stage to use lower-case letters when you write for your child, introducing capital letters only for the start of people's names.</p>	<p><b>Letters and Sounds Phase One</b></p> <p>In Letters and Sounds Phase One your child will be learning to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• have fun with sounds;</li> <li>• listen carefully;</li> <li>• develop their vocabulary;</li> <li>• speak more confidently;</li> <li>• tune into sounds;</li> <li>• listen and remember sounds;</li> <li>• talk about sounds;</li> <li>• understand that spoken words are made up of different sounds.</li> </ul> <p>All the Letters and Sounds Phase One activities should be fun and interactive.</p>	<p><b>Speaking and listening are the foundations for reading and writing</b></p> <p>The more words a child has in his or her vocabulary at the age of five, the easier he or she will find learning to read and write when they get to school.</p>



**Song and Rhyme Challenge:**  
*sing together whenever you can; in the bath, on a walk, as you tidy away together, in your home language. Change the words to a song or a rhyme, add new and exciting new vocabulary. Make the song your own!*



Give your child lots of encouragement and cuddles as you play together.

Smiles and praise will help develop a sense of achievement and build confidence.

