A Guide to Phonics

Phase	Phonic Knowledge and Skills
Phase One (Nursery/Reception)	Activities are divided into seven aspects, including environmental sounds, instrumental sounds, body sounds, rhythm and rhyme, alliteration, voice sounds and finally oral blending and segmenting.
Phase Two (Reception)	Learning 19 letters of the alphabet and one sound for each. Blending sounds together to make words. Segmenting words into their separate sounds. Beginning to read simple captions.
Phase Three (Reception)	The remaining 7 letters of the alphabet, one sound for each. Graphemes such as ch, oo, th representing the remaining phonemes not covered by single letters. Reading captions, sentences and questions. On completion of this phase, children will have learnt the "simple code", i.e. one grapheme for each phoneme in the English language.
Phase Four (Reception)	No new grapheme-phoneme correspondences are taught in this phase. Children learn to blend and segment longer words with adjacent consonants, e.g. swim, clap, jump.
Phase Five (Throughout Year 1)	Now we move on to the "complex code". Children learn more graphemes for the phonemes which they already know, plus different ways of pronouncing the graphemes they already know.
Phase Six (Throughout Year 2 and beyond)	Working on spelling, including prefixes and suffixes, doubling and dropping letters etc.

Glossary

Term	Meaning
CVC	A consonant-vowel-consonant word, such as **cat**, **pin** or **top**. You may also come across the abbreviation CCVC for consonant-consonant-vowel-consonant words such as **clap** and **from**. Also CVCC for words such as **mask** and **belt**.
Phoneme	Phonemes are the smallest unit of speech-sounds which make up a word. If you change a phoneme in a word, you would change its meaning. For example, there are three phonemes in the word **sit** /s/-/i/-/t/. If you change the phoneme /s/ for /f/, you have a new word, **fit**. If you change the phoneme /t/ in fit for a /sh/, you have a new word, **fish** - /f/-/i/-/sh/.
Grapheme	Graphemes are the written representation of sounds.
Segment	Break a word up into phonemes; s-i-t/ c-a-t/ d-o-g/ g-oa-t
Blend	Blend the segmented word back together; s-i-t becomes sit.
Tricky Word	Words that cannot be decoded phonetically; the, was, etc.
Diagraph	A phoneme (sound) made up of two letters; ai, oo, th, oa.
Trigraph	A phoneme made up of three letters; igh, ear.
Split Digraph	A phoneme that is split up in the word but said together; the a-e in make/ the i-e in like.