Activities to try at home

◊ **Box of sounds-** place letter cards in a box. Children choose a letter and say the sound it makes. They could then match the letter to an object or picture of something beginning with that sound.

◊ **Sound sorting**- gather a selection of objects from around the house and sort them in to tubs labelled with the letter sound that the object begins with.

◊ **Bucket of sounds** – Label 3 or 4 buckets or ice cream tubs with a letter on each, say a sound and your child throws a ball in to the matching bucket and says the sound.

◊ **What's in the box?** Place 'post its' with simple words on in to a box or bag. Children choose a word, sound talk it and blend the sounds to read the word. This could also be done with objects or pictures.

◊ **Common word bingo**– Place words in a bag. Start off with the bingo caller showing them the word, then see if they can identify the word without it being shown.

◊ **Run to the word-** write words on separate pieces of paper or in chalk outside. You 'sound talk' a word and your child runs to the word and reads the word by blending the sounds together.

◊ **Countdown-** make a list of words. See if your child can sound talk, blend and read them before the time runs out on an egg timer.

Useful links:

http://www.letters-and-sounds.com/	Free printables and information about Phonics.
www.phonicsplay.co.uk	Blending games– click on parents
www.ictgames.com/literacy.html	Literacy based interactive games.
https://www.oxfordowl.co.uk/for-home/reading-owl/reading	Reading top tips and fun ideas.
http://www.wordsforlife.org.uk/3-5/fun	Information and book related activities.
http://mrthorne.com/	Phonics pronunciation and terminology
http://jollylearning.co.uk/overview-about-jolly-phonics/	Phonics songs and actions.
http://www.ruthmiskin.com/en/parents/	Information and letter ditties.
www.espresso.co.uk/online	Cross-curricular video-rich resources

Top tips for helping your child begin to read

Sharing stories

1. Make story time magical

Sharing stories with your child is a special time, you may choose to read in a quiet space, in the garden or even at bath time! Take time to talk about stories with your child and let their imagination run wild!

2. Motivating topics

Pick books that interest your child; modelling
reading for pleasure is one of the most important things you can do for your child.

3. Reading all around

Encourage your child to engage with print wherever they go, this may include reading signs in the
environment, reading words on-screen, looking for labels in the super-market or on uncovering clues for a treasure hunt!

4. Remember when…

Compare events in stories or information books with things you've done together, so your child starts to make connections between these things and their own experiences: 'That's just like when we went to Thorpe Park. Do you remember? Dad was scared...'

Reading skills

1. Sound awareness

There are lots of ways you can help to prepare your child for reading. These include: singing nursery rhymes, "I spy with my little eye," sharing stories with patterned language.

Letter-sound awareness can be developed using a multi-sensory approach, such as: magnetic letters/ foam letters, paint, chalk and shaving foam.

2. Word recognition

Phonics gives children a strategy for reading unfamiliar words. Encourage your child to 'sound talk' words they don't know. It is ok to model blending for your child, this will help them to hear the sounds in the word.

Some words are irregular and cannot be decoded, these words need to be learned by sight.

3. Reading for meaning

◊   Check children are reading print from left to right.

Running their finger underneath the text will help.

◊   If they make a mistake ask 'Does that sound right?'

What is happening in the picture that could help?'

◊   Have a conversation with your child as they are reading, e.g.: "I wonder why the girl did that?" or "How do you think this character was feeling? How do you know?"

P.S. don't forget to check the back of your child's Reading reflection book for 'read aloud think aloud activities!'