

# Common Exception Words

In the early years, it is important the children understand that individual letters and groups of letters (graphemes) represent sounds in spoken words. This idea is fundamental to the children's reading and spelling of all words. As the children build up their knowledge of grapheme–phoneme correspondences (GPCs), they also need to be aware that some high frequency words have unusual GPCs. These words are known as 'common exception words' and the children need to learn to recognise them, as they cannot decode them by relying just on their phonic knowledge.

Some words can be classed as common exception words if the children have not yet learnt the sounds that are represented by some graphemes. This means that once the children learn these GPCs, the words are no longer classed as common exception words. Other words have such unusual GPCs that they will always be regarded as common exception words.

## English National Curriculum Common Exception Words

The English National Curriculum includes a list of common exception words that the children need to recognise by the end of Year 1. These words are so common in the English language that the sooner the children learn them, the more confident they will be in their reading.

Note that this list is not exhaustive. Different phonics programmes may include more or fewer words than shown in this list.

a	here	our	they
are	his	pull	to
ask	house	push	today
be	I	put	was
by	is	said	we
come	love	says	were
do	me	school	where
friend	my	she	you
full	no	so	your
go	of	some	
has	once	the	
he	one	there	

## Letters and Sounds Common Exception Words

The Early Years *Letters and Sounds* teaching programme contains a similar list of common words containing GPCs that are unusual, or not taught at the earliest levels. This list contains words that the children are expected to be able to read by the end of Year 1. Note that many words are covered in both lists.

again	different	laughed	no
all	do	like	oh
any	eyes	little	once
are	friends	looked	one
asked	go	many	out
be	have	me	people
because	he	mouse	please
called	her	Mr	said
come	I	Mrs	she
could	into	my	so