



## SPEECH SOUNDS: WHAT SHOULD I EXPECT?

Learning to speak is a very individual skill and learning to speak clearly can take a very long time. Your child may not learn at the same time and in the same way as his friends or his brothers/sisters.

Generally, sounds are acquired in the following order and at roughly these ages:

AGES	SOUNDS
By age 2+ your child should be using these sounds.	P as in 'pen', B as in 'baby', M as in 'mum', N as in 'no', W as in 'window', H as in 'horse'.
By age 3+ your child should be using these sounds.	T as in 'tea', D as in 'dog', K as in 'cat', G as in 'go', NG as in 'song', Y as in 'yellow', F as in 'four'.
By age 4+ your child should be using these sounds.	V as in 'van', S as in 'sun', Z as in 'zebra'.
By age 5+ your child should be using these sounds.	L as in 'lion', SH as in 'shop', CH as in 'cheese', J as in 'jump'.
By age 7 your child should be using these sounds.	R as in 'rabbit', TH as in 'thumb'.

Children tend not to start using a sound correctly all at once, rather you will notice it emerging gradually, for example, you might hear your child one day say 'cup' but he might still be saying 'tat' for 'cat', etc. Gradually, over a period of time, your child will begin to use the sound correctly more often until it is used consistently in every word.

The "r" and "th" sounds are the last to develop and many children will enter primary one without these sounds.

Remember that there is a wide range of 'normal' and many children cannot pronounce all speech sounds until around 7 years.

As a general rule, most children can be readily understood by their families at around 2½ years, and by less familiar adults at the age of around 3½ years.