

St. Joseph's Catholic Primary School



Phonics Policy

MISSION STATEMENT

“Live, love and learn in a caring Catholic community.”

As a Catholic school community with Christ at its centre, St Joseph's seeks to bear witness to the Catholic faith, which is the foundation and inspiration of all its endeavours.

1. WHAT IS PHONICS?

Phonics is a method of teaching reading and writing where children are systematically taught the relationship between the sounds in our language and the letters used to represent those sounds. Once children have been taught which sounds are linked to which letters they are able to ‘crack the code’ and can confidently have a go at reading and writing anything.

WHAT IS READ WRITE INC. Phonics (RWI)?

At St Joseph's, we strive to teach children to read effectively and quickly using the Read Write Inc. Phonics programme (RWI). This is a programme of systematic, synthetic phonics teaching, including sight vocabulary, decoding and encoding words as well as spelling and accurate letter formation. RWI Phonics is an inclusive literacy programme for all children learning to read. It teaches synthetic phonics. Children learn the 44 common sounds in the English language and how to blend them to read and spell. The scheme includes both a reading and a writing focus.

2. AIMS

At St Joseph's we teach pupils to:

- Apply the skill of blending phonemes in order to read words.
- Segment words into their constituent phonemes in order to spell words.
- Learn that blending and segmenting words are reversible processes.
- Read high frequency words that do not conform to regular phonic patterns.
- Read texts and words that are within their phonic capabilities as early as possible.
- Decode texts effortlessly so all their resources can be used to comprehend what they read.
- Spell effortlessly so that all their resources can be directed towards composing their writing.

3. EXPECTATIONS

Phonics sessions will:

- Be taught every day without fail;
- Follow the RWI Phonics programme.
- Teach ability groups defined by the pupils' performance on RWI phonic assessments. Children are assessed regularly.
- Be no longer than 20 minutes; (However, sessions may be shorter than this in the Foundation Stage in the Autumn Term.)

- Be taught using the 5 Ps: Praise, Pace, Purpose, Passion and Participation.
- Teach initial sounds in a specific order.
- Teach 'pure' sounds ie 'b', not 'buh' as this is central to phonic teaching and ability to recognise sounds in words.
- Teach pupils that the number of graphemes in a word always corresponds to the number of phonemes. This greatly aids spelling.
- Introduce letter names with Set 3.
- Build up pupils' knowledge of sounds so that they are able to apply their decoding skills daily to unfamiliar words – real or nonsense.

RWI across the school:

Foundation Stage

RWI is fully implemented in Reception but the class will not be split into groups until the initial sounds have been taught. Once the sounds have been taught assessments will take place to determine groupings. The sessions will occur daily for 20 minutes. Within this time a 10 minute speed sounds session will occur with follow up handwriting sessions while pupils access continuous provision, in line with the EYFS.

Key Stage One

RWI groups will be set across Year 1 and Year 2 following assessments carried out by the English Lead, teachers or teaching assistants. The sessions will occur daily for 30 minutes. These sessions will include a 15 minute Speed Sounds session followed by Reading session. Once pupils 'come off' the programme they will then move onto Year 2 Support for Spelling.

Key Stage Two

RWI Phonics programme continues as an intervention across Key Stage 2 for pupils not yet meeting the standard at the end of Year 2.

Teachers should:

- Ensure they are using the correct pronunciation of all phonemes, paying special attention to not annunciating the 'schwa';
- Use RWInc rhymes for teaching phonemes; 'Fred Talk' for segmenting and blending; 'Fred in the Head' for blending; 'Fred Fingers' for spelling; 'Hold a sentence' for writing.
- Use the following terms where appropriate: phoneme, grapheme, digraph, split digraph, sound button, segmenting and blending; real word; nonsense word; red words; green words.
- Display phonemes, graphemes and words that have been taught in the classroom to be a learning support for the children;
- Make Phoneme Mats available for independent learning across the school day;
- Use modelling;
- Scaffold phonics learning to ensure all pupils make good progress;
- Give children frequent opportunities to apply phonic skills in writing;

- Ensure all children have daily access to fully decodable texts to apply their learning in phonics through reading;
- Aim for all children to be secure in Set 3 by the end of the Summer Term in Year 1.

4. ASSESSMENT

- Pupils work within ability groups which are defined by their performance on RWI phonic assessments. Pupils are re-tested each term and the groups are reorganised accordingly. Teacher generated planning is minimized as the planning is integrated into the teacher's handbooks and follows set routines. TAs will be responsible for planning for their RWI groups, with the support of the English Lead as required.
- Children are assessed throughout every lesson. Every time partner work is used the teacher assesses the progress of the children. The teacher assesses how children:
 - ✓ read the grapheme chart
 - ✓ read the green and red word lists
 - ✓ decode the ditty/story (during Guided Reading)
 - ✓ comprehend the story (during Guided Reading)
- Each group leader is requested to keep a register to identify pupils that need extra reinforcement of a particular element that has been covered.
- At the end of Year 1, it is statutory for all children to complete the Year 1 Phonics Screening Check. This takes place in June. Children who do not achieve the required standard retake the test in Year 2.

5. SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

- Where a child is making limited progress in phonics, this is discussed with the parents, SENCo and English Leader.
- Extra phonics sessions and intervention are planned to meet individual needs.
- SEN pupils are fully involved in RWI lessons as all pupils work in ability groups and teaching is geared to the speed of progress of each group. 1:1 or small group tuition will be identified by the class teacher and English Lead if required.
- Able pupils are catered for as groups are based on ability and there is the flexibility to accommodate gifted younger pupils within groups of older pupils.
- Phonics intervention is provided in KS2 for children who have not achieved the Phonics Check resit.

6. INVOLVING PARENTS

The teaching and learning of phonics can only truly succeed with the support, involvement and understanding of parents. We endeavour to support parents as their child learns to read and write by:

- Holding phonics information sessions for parents to explain specialist vocabulary and how the teaching of phonics works;
- Letting parents know what their children has been working on in class and what they can do at home;

- Offering them the opportunity to see phonics taught in school;
- Giving parents resources and strategies for supporting phonics at home via the website or home learning activities.

7. MONITORING AND REVIEW

The English lead:

- Ensures all pupils are assessed and designates pupils to the correct groups assigns leaders to groups.
- ‘Drops in’ on RWI groups to give advice and to informally check that pupils are in the correct groups.
- Where necessary models lessons
- Attends up-date meetings when they occur and reports back to the Leadership Team
- Speaks with the Head teacher regarding groupings, teaching spaces and other pertinent matters

9. EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

At St Joseph’s we believe that all children regardless of their gender, age, ethnicity, academic or physical ability are given equal opportunities to reach their full potential successfully and confidently.

10. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

This policy has been written and reviewed with due regard to the legal duties set out in the Equality Act 2010, to ensure that no member of our school community suffers discrimination or disadvantage regardless of age, race, gender reassignment, disability, civil partnership, religion and belief (or lack of belief), pregnancy and maternity, gender or sexual orientation.

APPENDIX 1

Definitions

Phoneme	Sound made by a letter or group of letters; the smallest unit of sound in a word.
Grapheme	The written spelling of a sound.
Digraph	Two letters which work together to make one sound.
Trigraph	Three letters which work together to make one sound.
Split digraph	Two letters which work together to make a sound with another letter between them.
Blending	Saying the sounds in a word one after another to read it.
Segmenting	Breaking words down into their phonemes in order to spell them.
Sound button	A dot or line written under each phoneme in a word.
Phoneme frame	A box divided into sections for each phoneme to aid spelling.