

St Anne's and St Joseph's RC Primary School, a Voluntary Academy

Early Reading Policy (Spring 2025)

Approved by:	LGB	Date: February 2025
Last reviewed on:	February 2025	
Next review due by:	31.08.2025	

With love and faith, we achieve together.

For we are nothing without Christ.

Nihil Sine Christo

Intent

At St Anne's and St Joseph's, high quality phonics is the prime means for how we teach children early reading, alongside our curriculum which is underpinned by quality texts, language, and vocabulary. Our intent is to provide a rigorous and thorough planning programme to strengthen the teaching and learning of phonics, and ensure children become enthusiastic and successful readers and writers. We teach direct, focused phonics every day in the Early Years and KSI, following the Red Rose Letters and Sounds systematic, synthetic phonics planning programme.

Implementation

The children are taught in groups organised by their phonics phase in response to ongoing assessment. Red Rose Letters and Sounds teaches phonics through an interactive, multisensory approach. We are passionate about maximum participation in phonics and all children are encouraged to be active throughout the sessions with simple strategies such as pushing phonic buttons or writing the new grapheme in the air and using phonic fingers to segment. The children also love to help our very own Red Rose Rodney who struggles with his phonics and needs lots of support from the children to blend!

Each session is approximately 25 minutes long and children will revisit previously taught knowledge, learn new skills through explicit teaching, practise together and apply what they have learned. In the revisit/review section, children will recap previously taught grapheme-phoneme correspondences (GPC's) before hearing and saying, seeing, and saying and saying and writing a new grapheme (3-part example when introducing a new GPC). They will then practise reading/writing words with the new GPC through a variety of games. The phonics session will end with an application to reading or writing.

Alongside the skills of blending (for reading) and segmenting (for writing), the children are also taught 'tricky words' which they learn to read and spell from memory within each phase.

Children are exposed to phonics terminology such as phoneme (sound), grapheme (written representation – letters), digraph (two letters that makes one sound), trigraph (three letters that makes one sound), split-digraph (two letters that make one sound but they are split by another grapheme), blending (the process of putting individual sounds together to read a word), segmenting (the process of breaking a word into individual sounds to spell a word) and sound buttons (markings under graphemes to highlight the phonemes to indicate whether the sound is a single letter sound with a dot or digraph/trigraph with a dash). All staff are trained to deliver Red Rose Letters and Sounds, and we have fidelity to the structure of Red Rose to allow for consistency and progression.

When children start school in EYFS in reception class, before they learn grapheme-phoneme correspondences (GPCs), they will secure their Phase 1 phonics knowledge which is based on listening

skills. Children in reception will then follow the programme from Phase 2 and work through the progression (as shown below), where they will be exposed to one sound at a time.

Phase 1

Aspect 1 - General sound discrimination (environmental)

Aspect 2 - General sound discrimination (instrumental sounds)

Aspect 3 - General sound discrimination (body percussion)

Aspect 4 - Rhythm and Rhyme

Aspect 5 - Alliteration

Aspect 6 - Voice Sounds

Aspect 7 - Oral Blending and Segmenting

Phase 2

Graphemes/Phonemes: s,a,t,p,i,n,m,d,g,o,c,k,ck,e,u,r,h,b,f,ff,l,ll,ss

Tricky Words: the, to, I, no, go, into

Phase 3

Graphemes/Phonemes: j,v,w,x,y,z,zz,qu,ch,sh,th,ng,ai,ee,igh,oa,oo,ar,or,ur,ow,oi,ear,air,ure,er

Tricky Words: he, she, we, me, be, was, my, you, they, her, all, are

Phase 4

The children learn to read and spell words containing adjacent consonants. Phase 4 adjacent consonants are also included within phase 2 and 3 words for reading and writing for early exposure before consolidation in Phase 4.

Tricky Words: said, so, have, like, some, come, were, there, little, one, do, when, out, what

Phase 5

Graphemes/Phonemes: ee (ea e e-e y ie ey), oo (o ue u-e ew ui), ay (a-e igh ey), igh (ie y i-e i), oa (o ow o-e oe), ow (ou ough), oi (oy), ar (a), or (au aw our augh ough), oo (ou u), ur (or ir er ear), ear (eer ere), air (ere ear are), w (wh), f (ph), n (kn gn), r (wr), s (c), ch (tch), sh (ti ch s c), m (mb), j (dge zh).

No Nonsense Spelling/Red Rose Spelling complements our phonics learning, ensuring coverage of the National Curriculum for spelling.

Throughout EYFS and KSI, reading books are matched to the children's phonic knowledge. Our reading scheme is organised by phases to support children's reading development, ensuring that each stage provides an appropriate level of progression and challenge within the text. Our reading scheme is
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organised according to the phonic phases so that children read books that contain the GPCs that they know. We are passionate about encouraging reading for pleasure. Alongside a home reading book, children choose a book from our school library to explore at home and they also enjoy taking part in weekly reading buddy sessions where children from other classes join us for shared reading time.

Guided reading takes place in all year groups. This is where children sit in a group with an adult and we all read together and discuss the text. EYFS have two guided reading sessions per week, alongside regular 1-1 reading of their home reading book with an adult. KS1 have daily guided reading sessions, focusing on fluency and comprehension (in relation to the appropriate Learning and Progression Steps). Children develop their understanding of a text through effective adult questioning and opportunities to independently respond to the text. We use reading toolkits to support children during guided or independent reading. The toolkits consist of finger lights, microphones, reading glasses, magnifying glasses, coloured reading overlays, reading eyes, finger pointers and more.

SEND

In line with our SEND policy, teachers ensure children are taught within their phonic phase at their own level of development, with adaptive teaching so that lessons cater for individual needs.

Impact

Children's progress is continually reviewed to allow for fluid movement between ability groups and children change phonics groups when necessary to meet their needs. Children are formally assessed at the end of each half term using Phonics Tracker. This helps to identify gaps in knowledge which leads to any necessary individualised intervention programmes. However, weekly interventions (Bounce Back Phonics) are ongoing in response to assessment which follow the structure of class teaching and use the same procedures, resources, and mantras, but in smaller steps with more repetition so that every pupil secures their learning.

The national Phonics Screening Check is administered in June of Year 1. The purpose of the screening check is to confirm that all children have learned phonic decoding to an age-appropriate standard.

Parent Partnership

We are passionate about encouraging a strong parent partnership and supporting you to guide your children in their passion and development of reading. Therefore, throughout the year we invite parents in to watch phonics lessons, take part in phonics workshops and strongly encourage all parents to read with their children at home and sign reading diaries to communicate with their class teacher.