

## **Phonics and early reading policy**

### **Intent**

#### **Phonics (reading and spelling)**

At St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, we believe that all our children can become fluent readers and writers. In order for the children to achieve and excel within reading we follow Read, Write Inc (RWI), which is a systematic and synthetic phonics programme. The program allows the children to build on their growing knowledge of the alphabetic code, in order to master phonics to read and spell phonetically as they move through school.

As a result, the children are able to tackle unfamiliar words as they read by applying their segmenting and blending skills. At St Joseph's, we also model the application of the alphabetic code through phonics in shared reading and writing, both inside and outside of the phonics lesson and across the curriculum. We have a strong focus on language development for our children to allow them to build upon their speech and language skills which are so crucial for their social skills as well as reading and writing across all areas of learning.

#### **Comprehension**

At St Joseph's, we value reading as a crucial life skill. By the time children leave us, they read confidently for meaning and regularly enjoy reading for pleasure. Our readers are equipped with the tools to tackle unfamiliar vocabulary. We encourage our children to see themselves as readers for both pleasure and purpose.

Because we believe teaching every child to read is so important, we have fully trained all our staff (Spring 2022) and purchased many new resources to drive the early reading programme in our school.

### **Implementation**

#### **Daily phonics lessons in FY and Year 1**

- We teach phonics for 30-40 minutes a day. In FY, we begin teaching the children from set 1, where they learn their initial sounds and begin to blend CVC, CVCC and CCVC words. The children partake in regular phonics games and lots of oral blending practise.
- Children make a strong start in FY: teaching begins once the children have settled into school life and baseline is near completion.
- We follow the RWI programme of progression.
- The children are taught to read and write red words (words which cannot be segmented and blended).
- Children in foundation year are exposed to green words on a daily basis to implement their blending skills using set 1, set 2 and set 3 sounds, we expect the children to read with fluency and accuracy.
- The children are taught two new sounds a week beginning with initial sounds and moving through diagraphs and trigraphs.
- Children in year one review set 2 and set 3 sounds implementing them into their reading and writing with greater accuracy.

#### **Additional support to close the gap.**

- Any child who needs additional phonics practise has daily flashcard recognition targeted practise to embed the basic skills to allow them to then develop their blending skills. We then move onto oral blending skills and then word reading.
- We then provide additional opportunities during CIP for those children to access targeted phonics activities.

- As the year progresses and the children move onto books, the lowest 20% of children are heard to read daily.
- Children who need additional practice are also exposed to the flashcards on a daily basis

### **Daily Keep-up lessons ensure every child learns to read**

- We timetable daily phonics lessons for any child in Year 2 or 3 who is not fully fluent at reading or has not passed the Phonics Screening Check. These children urgently need to catch up, so the gap between themselves and their peers does not widen. We use the RWI assessments to identify the gaps in their phonic knowledge and teach to these using the RWI resources.
- If any child in Year 3 to 6 has gaps in their phonic knowledge when reading or writing, we plan phonics 'catch-up' lessons to address specific reading/writing gaps. These short, sharp lessons last 10 minutes and take place at least three times a week.

### **Teaching reading: Reading practice sessions**

- We teach children to read through regular read practice sessions. The children work individually or in small groups and read books matched to the children's secure phonic knowledge.
- The children are taught by a fully trained adult where formative assessment is constantly taking place.
- The children are monitored by the class teacher who rotates and works with each group on a regular basis.
- Children have opportunities to read with a partner, independently and aloud as a group. We also all discuss the text together.
- The reading practice sessions have been designed to focus on three key reading skills
  - decode
  - prosody: teaching children to read with understanding and expression
  - comprehension: teaching children to understand the text.
 In Foundation Year those children who are not able to access the reading texts begin on blending books to build up their fluency and confidence of individual words.
- In Y2 and KS2, we continue to teach reading in this way for any children who still need to practise reading with decodable books.

### **Home reading**

- The decodable reading practice book is taken home to ensure success is shared with the family.
  - Reading for pleasure books from our school library also go home for parents to share and read to children.
  - We use the RWI books to engage our families and share information about phonics, the benefits of sharing books, how children learn to blend and other aspects of our provision, both online and through workshops.

### **Additional reading support for vulnerable children**

- Children in FY and Year 1 who need extra phonics consolidation and blending practise read their reading book to an adult daily.

### **Ensuring consistency and pace of progress**

- Every teacher in our school has been trained to teach reading, so we have the same expectations of progress. We all use the same language, routines and resources to teach children to read so that we lower children's cognitive load.
- Weekly content grids map each element of new learning to each day, week and term for the duration of the programme.

- The English Leader and SLT regularly monitor and observe teaching; they use the summative data to identify children who need additional support and gaps in learning.

### **Ensuring reading for pleasure**

*'Reading for pleasure is the single most important indicator of a child's success.'* (OECD 2002)

*'The will influences the skill and vice versa.'* (OECD 2010)

We value reading for pleasure highly and work hard as a school to grow our Reading for Pleasure pedagogy.

- We read to children every day. We choose these books carefully as we want children to experience a wide range of books, including books that reflect the children at St Joseph's and our local community as well as books that open windows into other worlds and cultures.
- Every classroom has an inviting book area that encourages a love for reading. We promote these books and talk about them to entice children to read a wide range of books.
- In FY, children have access to the reading area every day during continuous provision where books are included to relate to our current theme / topic.
- Children from FY onwards have a home reading record. The parent/carer record comments to share with the adults in school and the adults will write in this on a regular basis to ensure effective communication between home and school.
- As the children progress through the school, they are encouraged to write their own comments and keep a list of the books/authors that they have read.
- Children across the school have regular opportunities to engage with a wide range of Reading for Pleasure events (book fairs, author visits and workshops, national events etc.).

### **Impact**

#### **Assessment**

Assessment is used to monitor progress and to identify any child needing additional support as soon as they need it.

- **Assessment for learning** is used:
  - daily within class to identify children needing additional phonics support
  - daily within writing opportunities which are both teacher led and child initiated.
- **Summative assessment** is used:
  - every half term to assess progress, to identify gaps in learning that need to be addressed, to identify any children needing additional support.
  - by SLT and scrutinised through the *RWI* assessment tracker, to narrow attainment gaps between different groups of children and so that any additional support for teachers can be put into place.

#### **Statutory assessment**

- Children in Year 1 sit the Phonics Screening Check. Any child not passing the check re-sits it in Year 2.

#### **Ongoing assessment for catch-up**

- Children in Year 2 to 6 are assessed through their teacher's ongoing formative assessment as well as through the half-termly *RWI* summative assessments.

**Please follow the link below for further information about our approach to phonics and early reading:**

<https://home.oxfordowl.co.uk/reading/reading-schemes-oxford-levels/read-write-inc-phonics-guide/>