



# St Paul's Catholic Primary School Phonics Policy

This policy contains the aims and working practice for Phonics at **St Paul's Catholic Primary School**.

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Policy agreed by staff:

Policy agreed by Headteacher

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## **Intent**

At St Pauls Catholic Primary School we are committed to the delivery of excellence in the teaching of Phonics. We aim to develop each child so that they are able to read with fluency as well as develop a love of reading that will stay with our children all their lives. Being able to read is the most important skill children will learn during their early schooling and has far-reaching implications for lifelong confidence and well-being. The independent review of early reading conducted by Jim Rose confirmed that 'high quality phonic work' should be the prime means for teaching children how to read and spell words. The review also highlighted the importance of developing from the earliest stages children's speaking and listening skills, ensuring that beginner readers are ready to get off to a good start in phonic work by the age of five. Such work should be set within a broad and rich language curriculum. The use of phonics is one of the many skills needed to be able to be a reader and writer. We aim to teach high quality phonics to ensure the children have the best start possible in reading and writing. The learning of phonics is the beginning of children's body of knowledge, skills and understanding that are an essential part of learning to read. To read and understand texts children must learn to recognise/decode the words on the page. Good quality phonics teaching allows the child to be secure in the skills of word recognition and decoding which allows children to read fluently. This will result in children being able to read for pleasure and will allow them to move onto developing higher order reading for meaning skills. This policy is aimed at reinforcing a consistent, high quality approach to the teaching of phonics across the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS), Key Stage One and on into Key Stage two for children who require further support.

## **Aims**

- To teach children aural discrimination, phonemic awareness, alliteration and rhyme to aid reading, writing and spelling development.
- To encourage the use of segmenting and blending so that decoding skills provide a sound foundation for reading, writing and spelling.
- To ensure that the teaching of phonics is lively, interactive and inclusive.
- To enable children to use their phonological awareness across the curriculum.
- To ensure that children know the 44 phonemes within the English language.
- To teach children to recognise the graphemes within words and associate them with the appropriate phoneme when reading.
- To provide children with strategies to identify and decode Common Exception and High Frequency words.

## **Objectives**

- To provide consistent, high quality phonics teaching that ensures all children have a strong foundation upon which to tackle the complexity of reading and writing.
- To ensure that teaching of synthetic phonics is systematic and progressive throughout the Foundation stage, Key Stage One and Key Stage Two for those children needing interventions to support phonemic knowledge and understanding.
- To ensure that children have a sound phonetic knowledge, understanding and skills so that they can decode words with confidence and engage with higher order reading and writing skills.

## **Teaching and Learning**

- All teachers teaching phonics will follow the Twinkl scheme of work.
- All phonic sessions follow the same structure: Revisit/Review (recap of previously taught sounds, using flashcards and interactive whiteboard), Teach (teach new phoneme), Practice and Apply (games/ writing a sentence/dictation).
- Non-cursive font will be used when sounds are introduced e.g. flash cards and interactive games, and cursive or pre cursive font will be used in all writing.

## **Twinkl Phonics Scheme**

- This is a systematic, synthetic phonics programme designed to be used with children from nursery to Year 2. Twinkl Phonics is delivered through the stories and adventures of Kit, Sam and the Twinkl Phonics family. The scheme builds and develops children's skills and understanding in reading and writing. Twinkl Phonics provides a variety of support scaffolds, including stories, mnemonics (pictures that create a visual link to the GPC), actions, letter formation rhymes and songs. To help children to access and secure their learning Twinkl Phonics makes links through visual, auditory and kinaesthetic stimuli with all resources created and approved by teachers.
- Phonic flashcards for each Level
- Phoneme frames
- Whiteboards
- Smart Kids word flashcards
- Phoneme Wall charts (Smart Kids)
- Dots and dashes
- Phonic displays in all EYFS and KS1 classrooms
- Sound mats/tricky word mats will be available on tables in Early Years and KS1
- Resources are consistent across the school
- Sound buttons and talking postcards used in Early Years.

### **Early Years**

- Nursery – phonics is taught 5 times a week through adult led activities and small group time.
- Reception – phonics is taught daily focussing on one sound a day alongside High Frequency Words and Tricky words, with consolidation on a Friday.
- Twinkl songs, mnemonics and actions will be used in Nursery and Reception to support children in engaging with phonics lessons.

### **KS1**

- In Year 1, phonics is taught daily, alongside spellings.
- In Year 2, phonics is taught daily, alongside spellings.
- 'Tricky Words' and Common Exception Words are taught in class and revised as part of spelling homework.
- At the end of Year 1, all children are assessed against national standards through the Phonics Screening test (Summer Term).
- Any child who does not meet this standard receives additional targeted support in Year 2, then repeats the assessment in the Summer of Year 2.

### **KS2**

- Phonics will be recapped where necessary as part of the weekly spelling sessions.
- Intervention groups will take place for any child entering KS2 without a secure phonic knowledge.
- When spelling out words, children will use the letter names – not the sounds.

### **Phonic Phases Timeline**

- In Nursery, children will focus on Level 1 Twinkl Phonics with a key focus on the seven strands to develop and engage listening skills. Level 2 songs, mnemonics and actions will be taught in the Summer Term to prepare children for Reception.
- In Reception, children will focus on Level 2 during the Autumn Term, Level 3 during the Spring Term and in the Summer Term, children will be introduced to Level 4 alongside revision and consolidation of Levels 2 and 3.
- In Year 1, children will focus on revision and consolidation of Level 4 during the first half term. The remainder of the year will be spent teaching Level 5 and preparing children for the phonics screening in the Summer Term.
- In Year 2, children will recap all phonic levels taught to ensure all children are phonetically secure in their learning. The National Curriculum spelling rules will be taught during the remainder of the year.

## **Reading schemes**

- In Early Years, Rhino Readers reading schemes are used to ensure a variety of genre which are phonetically matched to the teaching and/or child's stage of development.
- In KS1 children receive a home reading book that is phonetically matched to their level. The Rhino Readers series of books has been chosen due to its wide range of quality fiction and non-fiction texts. Each book also provides a parental guide to ensure the children are getting the most out of each and every reading experience.
- Most of the words in the book will be decodable, however parents are encouraged to read any words that the children are unfamiliar with and discuss the content of the book to ensure understanding.

## **Assessment**

- Formative assessment is ongoing throughout all teaching, both whole class and interventions and is used to inform future lessons/groups.
- Summative Assessment - Phonics Tracker is used from EY2 to assess all children at the end of each phase.
- Children achieving less than 80% on Phonics Tracker in Early Years/KS1 will receive additional support through intervention groups.
- In KS2, any child achieving less than 90% secure across any phases will receive additional support through intervention groups and will be assessed using Phonics Tracker until they meet the 90% secure target.
- Children in KS2 continuing to struggle with reading and spelling will be discussed with the School SENCO.

## **Impact**

- Children love reading and can confidently read and access the Key Stage 2 curriculum.
- Greater than national pass rate for Phonics Screening across Year 1.
- Teachers and TAs having a good understanding and subject knowledge of phonics across the school.
- Regular intervention programmes for children who require additional support.
- Strong relationships between school and home with implementing the importance of phonics.
- Parents having confidence when reading with their children.