

# Phonics Policy



Through respect we will work together in Christ to  
develop the whole person

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# St. Matthew's Policy for Phonics

## SMSC Statement

At St Matthew's Catholic Primary School, we recognise that the personal development of pupils, spiritually, morally, socially and culturally, plays a significant part in their ability to learn and achieve. We therefore aim to provide an education that provides pupils with opportunities to explore and develop their own values and beliefs, spiritual awareness, high standards of personal behaviour, a positive, caring attitude towards other people, an understanding of their social and cultural traditions and an appreciation of the diversity and richness of the cultures.

## Overview

The study of phonics develops children's abilities to segment, blend, read and write for a wide range of purposes. It helps children hear, identify and use different sounds that distinguish one word from another in the English language. Children learn the relationship between the sounds of the spoken language, and the letters or groups of letters or syllables of the written language. The study of phonics enables children to express themselves creatively and imaginatively, as they become enthusiastic and critical readers of stories, poetry and drama - as well as non-fiction and media texts. Children gain an understanding of how language works by looking at its patterns, structures and origins. Children can then apply their knowledge and understanding in a wide range of contexts.

## Aims

The teaching and learning of synthetic phonics is vital for children to become competent readers and writers. Therefore, at St Matthew's we ensure:

- A consistent approach to teaching phonics in EYFS, KS1 and KS2 (where applicable.)
- Quality planning, assessment for learning and tracking to ensure progression.
- Quality teaching of stimulating and interactive phonics lessons.
- Children will achieve ELG by the end of EYFS and will pass the phonics screening check by the age of six.

## Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural development will be developed through the teaching of phonics:

### Pupils' spiritual development is shown by:

- Phonics will be developed across the whole curriculum, including R.E. and P.S.H.E. which give a wealth of opportunities for reading and writing.
- A sense of enjoyment and fascination in learning about themselves, others and the world around them, including the intangible
- Use of imagination and creativity in their learning.
- Willingness to reflect on their experiences and use this as a stimulus for writing.

### Pupils' moral development is shown by:

- Pupils will have opportunities to investigate and discuss ideas, offering reasoned views about, moral and ethical issues. This area will also be developed through Philosophy (P4C).

### Pupils' social development is shown by their:

- Willingness to participate in a variety of social settings, cooperating well with others and being able to resolve conflicts effectively. Pupils are encouraged to read their work aloud in class and to present their work in a variety of ways - presentations and project work.

### Pupils' cultural development is shown by their:

- Understanding and appreciation of the wide range of cultural influences that have shaped their own heritage. Cross-curricular links are made during History, R.E. and P.S.H.E.

## Teaching and Learning of Phonics at St Matthew's

Children in Reception and Key Stage One will be taught a discrete 20 minutes phonics session daily (this may be longer depending on the cohort and the needs

of the children). Phonic lessons include a variety of learning styles and activities to meet the needs of all pupils. At St Matthew's we follow the Letters and Sounds systematic approach to the teaching and learning of phonics and teachers use a multi-sensory range of resources to cater for the needs of the children in their class.

Teachers and learning support assistants work closely together to deliver the daily sessions, each addressing a particular phase depending on children's abilities. Children in EYFS and Key Stage One are streamed across year groups depending on their ability and are taught the relevant phases. These groups are fluid and teachers review them regularly, children will move across the groups based on their progression.

Areas of provision provide opportunities for children to consolidate and apply skills that have been taught. One to one and small group reading sessions are also used to reinforce these skills.

At St Matthew's, phases 2 and 3 from Letters and Sounds are taught in Reception. As we do not have a Nursery currently on site, and many of our children join our school from a wide variety of nursery settings, we are aware that phase 1 knowledge will vary. Reception teachers will assess children's knowledge and understanding of phase one and revisit and embed it where necessary throughout EYFS.

Children will consolidate phase 3 in Reception Summer term and Phase 4 will begin in Year 1. Year 1 phonics/spellings from the National Curriculum Appendix 1 will also be taught.

Children who are still experiencing difficulties with specific phonemes/graphemes or children who did not pass the phonics screening check will receive additional support in Year 2. The majority of children in year 2 will continue to develop their understanding and application of alternative phonemes/graphemes and cover spelling patterns from the National Curriculum.

<i>Phase One</i> (Nursery/Reception)	Activities are divided into seven aspects, including environmental sounds, instrumental sounds, body sounds, rhythm and rhyme, alliteration, voice sounds and finally oral blending and segmenting. The Aspects are taught through the three Strands of Progression:
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	Tuning into Sounds; Listening and Remembering Sounds; Talking about Sounds
<i>Phase Two (Reception)</i>	Learning 19 letters of the alphabet and one sound for each. Blending sounds together to make words. Segmenting words into their separate sounds. Beginning to read simple captions.
<i>Phase Three (Reception)</i>	The remaining 7 letters of the alphabet, one sound for each. Digraphs and trigraphs such as ch, oo, th, air representing the remaining phonemes not covered by single letters. Reading captions, sentences and questions. On completion of this phase, children will have learnt the "simple phonic code", i.e. one or more graphemes represent each phoneme in the English language.
<i>Phase Four (Year 1) 4 to 6 weeks</i>	No new grapheme-phoneme correspondences are taught in this phase. Children learn to blend and segment longer words with adjacent consonants, e.g. swim, clap, jump and learn to read and spell polysyllabic words.
<i>Year 1 Phonics (Throughout Year 1)</i>	Now we move on to the "complex phonic code". Children learn more graphemes for the phonemes which they already know, plus different ways of pronouncing the graphemes they already know.
<i>Year 2 and beyond</i>	Continue to work on the complex phonic code as well as working on spelling, including prefixes and suffixes, doubling and dropping letters etc.

In June, Year 1 and some Year 2 children will sit the phonics screening check. Year 1 staff will be supported to complete the screening check and will receive training on how to administer the test. Results will be analysed and used to inform future planning and practise. CPD is sourced annually and where relevant, to ensure staff are up to date with their phonics training.

### Planning of Phonics

Phonics is planned weekly at St Matthew's by the class teacher. Every phonics lesson will include the following sections:

Revisit and Review- The class revisit previous graphemes and words taught.

Teach-Introduce a new grapheme/word.

Practise-Time to develop the grapheme phoneme correspondences/read and spell new words.

Apply-Children given the opportunity to use their new learning in words/games and activities to embed knowledge.

Assess-Teacher will monitor progress within each lesson/phases to inform planning.

### Assessment of Phonics

Assessment of phonics will include:

- Daily assessment for learning in lessons is used to inform teachers planning, ensuring that lessons are tailored to the needs of the group.
- Personalised phonics booklets for every child. These booklets remain with the child as they move throughout the school and track progress throughout the phases.
- Half termly class trackers are used to identify children's progression through the phases. (Class teachers also rank children within these trackers.)
- Class teachers also complete half termly progress trackers to identify groupings within the class. (Above, on track, at risk of delay, significantly at risk of delay.)
- RWM trackers also include a phonics column which identifies the phase a child left the previous year group on and the phase they are working on each term.

- EYFS teachers keep records of phoneme recognition in reading files when reading with children on a 1:1 basis.
- EYFS and Year 1 complete 'home phonics packs' teachers review and comment on these weekly. These act as another form of assessment.
- Phonics Screening Check completed in Year 1.
- Children who do not pass the check will take the check again in Year 2. Year 2 will use past phonics screening checks at various points throughout the year to assess the progress of children who have previously not passed the check and any gaps in their learning.

### Monitoring, Evaluation and Interventions

Staff evaluate lessons daily on planning sheets and will identify children who need additional support or challenge. Planning will be adapted accordingly to meet the needs of the children. The revisit/review section of the lesson will reflect the ongoing monitoring.

English subject leaders will complete learning walks and informal observations to share school strengths and work together with staff to improve areas of development. Strengths and areas for development will be discussed with SLT.

EYFS and Key Stage One plot the progress of their children on half termly trackers. These are used to identify any children not making the expected rate of progress. Once these children are identified various interventions will be put into place to further support their learning.

Children who fail to pass the phonics screening check in year 1 will retake the test in year 2. Targeted support will be put into place to help these children achieve the check in year 2. We will follow the schools intervention policy where necessary and progress will be measured at regular intervals.

Children who do not pass the test again in Year 2 will enter the 'Toe to Toe' intervention programme in Year 3 with a trained member of staff.

### Home Learning

Parental involvement is key in the acquisition of phonics. Each child in EYFS and Year One is provided with a home phonic pack. The pack includes a set of phase cards. These cards encourage parents to practise phoneme, digraph and trigraph recognition with children as well as blending and segmenting skills.

When the packs are returned to school weekly, class teachers comment on the children's progression. They act as a form of assessment and communication between teacher/carer and parent.

Children will also take home reading books that contains decodable sounds linked to the phase they are learning. They will read these books with an adult at home and also read with a member of staff in school who will record their progress in our home reading files. Children are additionally given the opportunity to take home a non-decodable book to read with a family member at home for reading for pleasure purposes. As part of their homework children also receive weekly spellings from the Liverpool School Improvement Spelling Toolkit. These spellings are set by the teacher according to the child's ability and are assessed weekly. All children have access to the 'Spelling Shed' at home. Teachers can customise weekly spelling lists for children and using this resource, can track individual and class progress. Pupils at St Matthew's also have access to over 550 eBooks through our Oxford Owl subscription online library and a further 220 Letters and Sounds eBooks.

### Parental Involvement

We aim to ensure that our parents are aware of the importance of phonics in their children's development and understand how their child is learning to read in school and how they can best support them at home. We hold parent meetings to provide them with the confidence and tools to reinforce their child's learning at home. These meetings also allow time for parents to ask teachers any questions they may have about phonics and their child's learning. We also hold a phonics 'messy morning' in Reception where parents are invited to join their children in school to play phonics games. All of the games taught to parents are easy and accessible in the home environment too. Additionally, in Year 1 before children sit the phonics screening check, if they have been identified as 'at risk' of not passing parents are invited into school for a meeting with class teachers. In this meeting, strategies and games will be discussed that can be used at home to further help with the child's progression.

### Linked Policies to supplement this English Policy:

English Policy -Miss Rush

*Handwriting Policy - Miss Rush*

### Amendments due to Covid:



Whilst Covid 19 restrictions remain in place in primary schools please see the following considerations:

- Interventions are being held in class with learning support assistants.
- Currently (2021) there is no streaming as class bubbles need to remain intact. Streaming will resume when Covid restrictions are lifted.
- Any phonics games played in class will be adapted to meet Covid safety measures.
- All children sat at desks, not carpet spaces for lessons.
- Classes remain as one for lessons- no bubble/class mixing.
- Reading books remain in quarantine for 48 hours when returned to school.
- If a child needs to isolate phonics support is provided with: Spelling shed spellings, Oxford Owl Letters and Sounds eBook Library, online learning through Class Dojo, home learning packs, guided support on class webpages.