

St Mary's Catholic Primary School



Early Reading Policy



EARLY READING POLICY 2022-24



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Mission Statement

To love God above all things, by:

Learning together, loving ourselves, loving each other, loving all people, loving life itself and constantly striving for excellence worthy of our God Given gifts.

1. School contexts

The context of our school

Saint Mary's Catholic Primary School is fully inclusive in its approach to teaching phonics and reading. Children attending the school come from varying backgrounds and homes and we attract children who join the school at different points of the year across the whole school. Baseline Assessment of children joining our school is crucial to target teaching and learning to meet the needs of all children, and our approach to teaching phonics and reading is accessible to all learners, regardless of background.

At Saint Mary's we aim to foster a love of reading in all of the children in our care. So that by the time our children leave Saint Mary's, they will:

- Be enthusiastic and motivated readers who are confident. They will enjoy reading a wide variety of genres and text types. The children will have mastered a thorough understanding of a wide range of challenging vocabulary. They will be able to use what they have read to generate 'big questions', in order to inspire other children and adults to do the same. These essential skills will help the children grow into the leaders of the future.
- Through reading a wide variety of texts in class and through small group discussions about books across our broad and balanced curriculum, our children will have developed the firm foundations of emotional intelligence and resilience, in order to solve their own personal challenges and succeed in life.
- Children will have the skills to decode words in order to be able to read fluently with a secure understanding of what they have read. We follow the Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised program with fidelity and enthusiasm, to ensure that every child in our school has every possible opportunity to become a confident reader as early as possible.

2. Intent

Phonics

At Saint Mary's Catholic Primary School, we believe that all our children can become fluent readers and writers. This is why we teach reading through Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised, which is a systematic and synthetic phonics programme. We start teaching phonics in Reception and follow the Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised progression

<https://www.littlewandlelettersandsounds.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/Programme-Overview-Reception-and-Year-1-1.pdf>which

This ensures children build on their growing knowledge of the alphabetic code, mastering phonics to read and spell as they move through school. As a result, all our children are able to tackle any unfamiliar words as they read at Saint Mary's Catholic Primary School, 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 because we know that speaking and listening are crucial skills for reading and writing in all subjects.

Comprehension

At Saint Mary's Catholic Primary School, 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 a Phonics and Reading Leader, who drives the early reading programme in our school. This person is highly skilled at teaching phonics and reading, and they monitor and support our reading team, so everyone teaches with fidelity to the Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised programme.

3. Implementation

Daily phonics lessons in Reception and Year 1:-

- We teach phonics for 30 minutes a day. In Reception, we build from 10-minute lessons, with additional daily oral blending games, to the full-length lesson as quickly as possible. Each Friday, we review the week's teaching to help children become fluent readers.
- Children make a strong start in Reception: teaching begins in Week 2 of the Autumn term.
- We follow the Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised expectations of progress:
- Children in Reception are taught to read and spell words using Phase 2 and 3 GPCs, and words with adjacent consonants (Phase 4) with fluency and accuracy.
- Children in Year 1 review Phase 3 and 4 and are taught to read and spell words using Phase 5 GPCs (Grapheme Phoneme Correspondence) with fluency and accuracy.

https://www.littlewandlelettersandsounds.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/Programme-Overview_Reception-and-Year-1-1.pdf

Daily keep-up lessons ensure every child learns to read

- Any child who needs additional practice has daily Keep-up support, taught by a fully trained adult. Keep-up lessons match the structure of class teaching, and use the same procedures, resources and mantras, but in smaller steps with more repetition, so that every child secures their learning.
- 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 *Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised* assessments to identify the gaps in their phonic knowledge and teach to these using the Keep-up resources – at pace.
- 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.
- If a child arrives new to our school they will be assessed using the Letters and Sounds Placement assessment to identify any gaps in their knowledge and this is then addressed through catch up sessions.

Teaching reading: Reading practice sessions three times a week

- We teach children to read through reading practice sessions three times a week. These are taught by a fully trained adult to small groups of approximately six children.
- We use books matched to the children's secure phonic knowledge using the *Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised* assessments and the book matching grids on pages 11–20 of [‘Application of phonics to reading’](#)
- Reading is monitored by the class teacher, who rotates and works with each group on a regular basis.
- Each reading practice session has a clear focus, so that the demands of the session do not overload the children's working memory. The reading practice sessions have been designed to focus on three key reading skills:
 - decoding
 - prosody: teaching children to read with understanding and expression
 - comprehension: teaching children to understand the text.
- In Reception these sessions start in Week 4. Children who are not yet decoding have daily additional blending practice in small groups, so that they quickly learn to blend and can begin to read books.
- In Year 2 and 3, we continue to teach reading in this way for any children who still need to practise reading with decodable books.

Home Reading: Working in Partnership with Parents

At Saint Mary's we recognise the crucial role parents play in supporting their child at home with reading and encouraging their child to develop a love of stories and books.

- Workshops are held with the parents of every infant year group and additional 1:1 workshops are held with the parents of the children who are working in the lowest 20% of the class regularly. During these 1:1 workshops parents observe teachers teaching reading and supporting their child in decoding and reading practise.
- Every child is allocated a fully decodable Little Wandle Harper Collins book, via an eBook login. The children also receive paper copies of resources from that book to use when they read the book at home. Each book the child is allocated stays in the child's online 'library' they are encouraged to practise reading them repeatedly and 'show off' their reading skills to various members of the family and friends at home.
- The children are continuously encouraged to read for pleasure. They are given 2 additional reading books to read for pleasure each week, which they choose and also choose a book from the school library every other week. Parents have been supported and shown how to share these books with the children during workshops.
- We use resources from the Little Wandle Letters and Sounds revised website to help support parents
<https://www.littlewandlelettersandsounds.org.uk/resources/my-letters-and-sounds/engaging-parents/>

Additional reading support for vulnerable children

- Children in Reception and Year 1 who are receiving additional phonics Keep-up sessions read their reading practice 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.
- Lesson templates, Prompt cards and How to videos ensure teachers all have a consistent approach and structure for each lesson.
- The Reading Leader and SLT use the Audit and Prompt cards to 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 Saint Mary's and our local community as well as books that open windows into other worlds and cultures. We also choose books that help children to discuss issues relating to their 'Deep Questions' from 'Building the Kingdom'.
- Every classroom has an inviting book area that encourages a love for reading. We curate these books and talk about them to entice children to read a wide range of books. Every teacher has a basket of 'Recommended Reads' for children to look through.
- Parents are encouraged to engage with a wide range of Reading for Pleasure events (book fairs, author visits and workshops, national events etc).
- Children from Reception onwards have a home reading record. The parent/carer records comments to share with the adults in school and the adults will write in this on a daily basis to ensure 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.

4. Impact

The impact of our approach to Early Reading is that: -

- Our Statutory assessments of phonics each year are above National figures.
- Our children leave each year group meeting Age Related Expectations.
- Any child not meeting Expectations receives targeted support.
- Our children have a love for reading and read for pleasure.
- Our Key Stage Statutory Assessment tests show that our children achieve well at the expected and exceeding levels (well above National figures).

5. Monitoring and Review

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 Keep-up support
 - weekly in the Review lesson to assess gaps, address these immediately and secure fluency of GPCs, words and spellings.
- **Summative assessment** is used:
 - every six weeks to assess progress, to identify gaps in learning that need to be addressed, to identify any children needing additional support and to plan the Keep-up support that they need.
 - by SLT and scrutinised through the *Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised* 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 *Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised* summative assessments

Placement Assessment

Any children new to Saint Mary's are immediately assessed using the placement assessment. This helps to identify specific gaps in their learning and enable a rigorous program to be put in place to address them.

Signed:

Date: February 2022

*January 2022
To be reviewed January 2024*