



Phonics at St. Josephs Catholic Primary School

At St Joseph's we strive to give every child the best start to establish secure foundations in reading. We aim to instill a love of reading in the children where they are able to read for pleasure and purpose in addition to enjoying sharing a story together with a group. Phonics and fluency are our emphasis in our teaching of early reading and the children in our EYFS and KS1 are exposed to lots of shared reading texts which are above their age related expectation.

What is phonics at St Josephs?

Phonics is how we teach children to be able to decode words, blend words and therefore read fluently. We follow Read Write Inc Systematic Synthetic Phonics Scheme. This ensure all our lessons are sequenced and there is clear progression linked to both the EYFS Curriculum and the National Curriculum. All children in Reception and Year One (and Year Two where necessary) are taught how to:

- Recognise the sound (phoneme) that each individual letter (grapheme) makes.
- Identify sounds which are made by a combination of letters i.e. a diagraph or trigraph.
- Blend these sounds together to make a word. The children can then decode the words and blend them together. Providing them with the first foundations in their reading skills.

Why RWI?

Read Write Inc is a Systematic Synthetic Phonics program which meets the expectations of the EYFS and the National Curriculum. It makes use of effective assessment which aims to accelerate every child's progress. RWI helps all children to learn to read fluently and at speed whilst still being able to develop their comprehension, vocabulary and spelling skills. At St. Josephs we make use of the fast track tutoring to support our lowest 20% of readers.

How are children grouped?

At St Josephs all children are group based upon their reading ability. RWI provides regular assessments which are undertaken each half term. These allow the children to be taught in groups matched to their reading ability.



How is phonics taught?

Phonics is taught daily throughout EYFS and Year one (including some children in Year Two who are still on the program). In EYFS the children have a daily phonics lesson of 35 minutes which looks like below;

- Three sessions a week in which the children learn a new sound
- The children read words including this sound and review previous sounds taught
- The children read alien words including this sound
- The children write words using this sound
- The children read a ditty / book appropriate to their reading age.

In EYFS the children also take part in an additional guided reading session to read the ditty / book again with their class teacher. In EYFS we currently have four ability groups for phonics to provide challenge and targeted teaching for all children.

In Year 1 phonics sessions are daily 20 minute sessions where the children follow the above sequence but do not read the ditty / book in their group. This is read within a different session throughout the day alternating daily between the teacher and teaching assistant.

What do we do for our lowest 20% of readers at St Josephs?

All children reading below ARE are identified and take part in fast track tutoring sessions four times a week. This is completed by a member of staff who feels confident and has used to portal as a CPD tool to develop their knowledge. All children below ARE are heard to read daily by the teacher or teaching assistant. Children in Foundation Year who are on a ditty or sound blending book take their book home three times a week to embed their learning from their phonics session and ultimately build fluency. All children are exposed to regular speed sound flashcards throughout the day to support their sounds acquisition and retrieval.

How are staff support at St Josephs to deliver RWI?

All staff attended the initial training day in 2022 to begin our formal adaption of RWI phonics and reading. Staff receive regular update emails to inform them of changes, teaching sequences and data analysis. From Spring Term staff are coached by Mrs Chambers (Vice Principal and English Lead), there is a weekly focus for the coaching to support staff with CPD. Staff all have access to the RWI portal for CPD videos and documentation.