



Phonics and Early Reading Policy



Inspired by Gospel Values to grow and learn through faith, love and laughter.

Phonics and Early Reading

Intent

At St. George's, our pupils learn to read and write effectively and quickly using the Read Write Inc. Phonics program. They progress onto 'Guided Reading' sessions once they can read with accuracy and speed.

The RWI program is for:

- Pupils in Reception Class to Year 2 who are learning to read and write
- Any pupils in Years 2 and 3 who need to catch up rapidly
- Nursery begin the program at their level from Summer Term
- Struggling readers in Years 4, 5 and 6 receive targeted intervention to support 'catch-up'

Children who have completed the RWI Phonics program move to a structured Guided Reading program

At St. George's we consider ourselves a 'Reading' school and class reading as a key priority. We aim to provide high quality teaching and learning experiences which result in children becoming confident, skilled and fluent readers, whilst at the same time fostering a love of books, so that all children are able to become life-long readers. Reading skills are taught during daily English lessons as well as in additional Phonics sessions.

We work closely with Parents/Carers to teach reading and phonics. The partnership involves:

- Meetings/workshops to explain and showcase the teaching of reading/phonics in school and to model ways in which children can be supported at home
- Parental 'reading volunteers' are invited into school to work with all classes, hearing children read
- Celebrating successes and achievements in Phonics and Reading
- Reporting progress in reading/phonics during Parent Consultations
- End of year reports

In addition, reading volunteers from the local community are welcomed into school weekly. KS1 classes also have a 'class library ticket' allowing them to visit the local community library to choose and loan a book to bring back to school

Implementation

Read Write Inc. Phonics pupils:

- Decode letter-sound correspondences quickly and effortlessly, using their phonic knowledge and skills
- Read common exception words on sight
- Understand what they read
- Read aloud with fluency and expression
- Write confidently, with a strong focus on vocabulary and grammar
- Spell quickly and easily by segmenting the sounds in words
- Acquire good handwriting

The Read Write Inc. program has detailed and structured lesson plans. These give the teachers practical day-to-day guidance. All groups are taught using the same behaviour signals and structure. This ensures that the children clearly know what is expected and what comes next regardless of the group that they are in.

In addition, we teach pupils to work effectively with a partner to explain and consolidate what they are learning. This provides the teacher with opportunities to assess learning and to pick up on difficulties, such as pupils' poor articulation, or problems with blending or alphabetic code knowledge.

We group pupils homogenously, according to their progress in reading rather than their writing. This is because it is known that pupils' progress in writing will lag behind progress in reading, especially for those whose motor skills are less well developed.

In Reception class, we begin the school year by emphasising the alphabetic code (Set 1). The pupils rapidly learn sounds and the letter or groups of letters they need to represent them. Simple mnemonics help them to grasp this quickly.

Every 6-8 weeks, we assess all pupils following Read Write Inc. Phonics using Assessment 1, 2 or 3. We use this data to assign them to either Read Write Inc. Phonics groups or Read Write Inc. Literacy and Language. This gives us a very good indication of how well they are making progress relative to their starting points. We also do this for all pupils, whenever they join us, so we can track all of them effectively, including those eligible for the pupil premium. This data also allows us to intervene in different ways. For instance, we quickly move pupils to another group if they are progressing faster than their peers. Those who continue to struggle have one-to-one tutoring so that they keep up.

We make sure that pupils read books that are closely matched to their increasing knowledge of phonics and the common exception words. This is so that, early on, they experience success and gain confidence that they are readers. Re-reading and discussing these books with the teacher supports their increasingly fluent decoding.

We support all pupils that are at risk of falling behind. We do this through one to one tutoring program that provides additional sessions for 15 minutes per day with a highly trained member of staff.

Guided Reading

Guided reading sessions are structured to ensure the systematic teaching of key skills, and to allow children the time to revisit these skills regularly, ensuring learners become confident and articulate in their reading knowledge.

We use the 'VIPERS' approach to the teaching of Guided Reading. These reading prompts are matched to the National Curriculum content domains found in the NC Framework documents.

By taking a structured approach to the skills involved in Vocabulary, Inference, Prediction, Explanation, Retrieval and Summarising, and revisiting these skills within a range of high quality texts and genres, we are able to ensure that all children are making progress and working towards attaining at least age related expectations. Where children have fallen behind, or in the case of children with SEND, targeted intervention is planned and delivered.

Impact

By the end of Key Stage 1, our pupils are able to read aloud age-appropriate texts accurately and with sufficient speed for comprehension. This means that we can focus on developing their comprehension, preparing them well for transition to Key Stage 2. Their good decoding skills mean that they have a sound strategy for decoding unfamiliar words when they come across them at whatever stage or in any subject, even into secondary school.

By the end of Key Stage 2, we aspire that children are fluent, confident and able readers, who can access a range of texts for pleasure and enjoyment, as well as use their reading skills to unlock learning and all areas of the curriculum.

We firmly believe that reading is the key to all learning and so the impact of our reading curriculum goes beyond the results of the statutory assessments.