



Learning to read is a key priority in our school. We recognise the enjoyment and freedom that comes with being able to read, as well as the obvious academic benefits. We teach children to read using a combination of systematic phonics and regular reading practice. Our aim is for every child at St Joseph's to develop a love of reading and be able to read to learn. We adapt our approaches to suit the needs of the children and engage them as life-long readers and learners.

Phonics:

INTENT

Our Phonics curriculum has been designed to ensure that children receive their curricular entitlement in a way which is meaningful to their: context, stage of learning, capabilities, interests and prior experiences.

It is crucial for children to develop a life-long love of reading. Reading consists of two dimensions: language comprehension and word reading, which includes phonics and decoding. Language comprehension (necessary for both reading and writing) starts from birth. It only develops when adults talk with children about the world around them and the books (stories and non-fiction) they read with them, and enjoy rhymes, poems and songs together. Skilled word reading involves both the speedy working out of the pronunciation of unfamiliar printed words (decoding) and the speedy recognition of familiar printed words. We know if a child is able to read fluently and reads widely, a wealth of opportunities are provided for them. As well as aiming to teach children to read fluently with understanding, we hope to instil a love for reading in all children.

Phonics is the key skill that supports the development of early reading and writing. We combine high quality phonic teaching with exposure to a range of texts and the

promotion of reading for pleasure to provide our pupils with the skills they need to have a successful start to their lives as readers.

IMPLEMENTATION

We aim to improve literacy levels by ensuring high-quality phonics teaching [using a systematic synthetic phonics (SSP) teaching programme]- At St. Joseph's we use the '**Read, Write, Inc. SSP**

Read, Write, Inc. will:

- give all children a solid base upon which to build as they progress through school
- help children to develop the habit of reading widely and often, for both pleasure and information

Programme progression:

Nursery children will be exposed to early phonics during group times and play activities. Phonics falls largely within the Communication, Language Literacy areas of learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Some phonic activities will be adult led with the intention of teaching young children important basic elements such as listening to sounds, differentiating between sounds, rhyme and rhythm, alliteration, oral blending and segmenting. High quality play activities, which typify good provision, also offer many opportunities to enrich children's language across the seven areas of learning: Communication and Language; Physical Development; Personal, Social and Emotional Development; Literacy ; Mathematics; Understanding the World; Expressive Arts and Design

A language-rich and varied environment supports children's speaking, listening, attention and understanding skills. Practitioners and teachers are alert to the opportunities afforded for language development through children's play.

Practitioners and teachers provide daily speaking and listening activities that are well matched to children's developing abilities and interests, drawing upon observations and assessments to plan for progression and to identify children who need additional support, for example to discriminate and produce the sounds of speech. Early referrals to SALT are made for those children who may need additional support.

In Reception all children:

Read storybooks and non-fiction books closely matched to their developing phonic knowledge

Take home Phonics storybooks to share

Read with fluency and expression

Learn to spell using known sounds

Write confidently by practising what they want to write out loud first

Work well with a partner.

By the end of Year 1 the aim is that all children are accurate and speedy readers and ready to move onto our year group topics and literacy skills work.

Closely following the teaching programme, rigorous assessment, tracking and tutoring ensure that schools can guarantee progress for every child. One-to-one tutoring ensures that no children are left behind. Children have positive early experiences of learning to read – they are successful and progress quickly. Some children will need to continue with this scheme up until until they become fluent readers.

IMPACT

Through the teaching of systematic phonics, our aim is for children to become fluent readers by the end of Key Stage 1. Children can then focus on developing fluency and comprehension throughout the school.

Our pupils will:

- Be confident in their phonic knowledge
- Be able to blend words confidently to read an increasing number of words on sight
- Be able to segment words confidently to write an increasing number of words

- Successfully pass the Phonics Screening Check
- Develop a love of reading through fun but challenging phonic activities
- Be part of a culture where a secure phonic knowledge enables reading for pleasure as part of our reading curriculum

We 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. We promote reading for pleasure as part of our reading curriculum. Children are encouraged to develop their own love of genres and authors.

Year 1 Phonics Screening Process

The Year 1 phonics screening check is a way for teachers to ensure that children are making sufficient progress in the phonics skills to read words and are on track to become fluent readers who can enjoy reading for pleasure and for learning.

What is the Year 1 phonics screening check?

The phonics screening check is a quick and easy check of your child's phonics knowledge. It helps to confirm whether your child has made the expected progress.

The phonics screening check will be taken individually by all children in Year 1 in England. It is designed to give teachers and parents information on how your child is progressing in phonics. It will help to identify whether your child needs additional support at this stage so that they do not fall behind in this vital early reading skill.

What is in the phonics screening check?

There will be two sections in this 40-word check and it will assess phonics skills and knowledge learned through Reception and Year 1. Your child may have read some of the words before, while others will be completely new.

Your child will read up to four words per page for their teacher and they will probably do the check in one sitting of about 5-10 minutes.

What sort of check is it and is it compulsory?

It is a school-based check to make sure that your child receives any additional support promptly, should they need it. It is not a stressful situation as Miss McGill will be preparing your children and understand your child's level of skills.

There will be a few practice words first to make sure your child understands the activity.

What will it check?

It will check that your child can:

- Sound out and blend graphemes in order to read simple words. (graphemes – a written letter or group of letters that represent a sound e.g. the sound s can be represented by the graphemes s in sun, ce in dance, ss in dress, st in whistle, cy in cycle and so on.)
- Read phonically decodable one-syllable and two-syllable words, e.g. cat, sand, windmill. (decodable – to read a word by saying the sounds then joining, or blending, those sounds together to form the word.)
- Read a selection of nonsense words which are referred to as pseudo words.

What are nonsense or pseudo words and why are they included?

These are words that are phonically decodable but are not actual words with an associated meaning e.g. brip, snorb. Pseudo words are included in the check specifically to assess whether your child can decode a word using phonics skills and not their memory.

Is there a pass mark?

The check is not about passing or failing but checking appropriate progress is being made. If children do not reach the required standard, then Key Stage 1 staff will be in touch to discuss plans and offer additional, tailored support to ensure that your child can catch up. Children progress at different speeds so not reaching the threshold score does not necessarily mean there is a serious problem. Your child will re-sit the check the following summer term.

What happens to the results?

You will be informed of your child's progress in phonics and how he or she has done in the screening check in the last half-term of Year 1. If your child has found the check difficult, Year 1 staff will also tell you what support they have put in place to help him or her improve. You might like to ask how you can support your child to take the next step in reading.

All children are individuals and develop at different rates. The screening check ensures that teachers understand which children need extra help with phonic decoding.

Do all schools and children have to participate?

All schools and academies in England must take part in the phonics screening check unless they are an independent school. There is a process in place for reviewing children with special educational needs, so if your child's teacher thinks there are very special reasons related to your child and their needs that make them think the phonics screening check may not be appropriate, they will decide on appropriate action and discuss this with you.

What can I do to help my child?

If there are any particular areas that you should focus on at home Year 1 staff will discuss this with you so that you are working together to support your child. Phonics works best when children are given plenty of encouragement and learn to enjoy reading and books. You play a very important part in helping with this.

Some simple steps to help your child learn to read through phonics:

- With all books, encourage your child to 'sound out' unfamiliar words and then blend the sounds together from left to right rather than looking at the pictures to guess. Once your child has read an unfamiliar word you can talk about what it means and help him or her to follow the story.
- Try to make time to read with your child every day. Grandparents and older brothers or sisters can help, too. Encourage your child to blend the sounds all the way through a word.
- Word games like 'I-spy' can also be an enjoyable way of teaching children about sounds and letters. You can also encourage your child to read words from your shopping list or road signs to practise phonics.

What should I do if my child is struggling to decode a word?

- Say each sound in the word from left to right.
- Blend the sounds by pointing to each letter then run your finger under the whole word as you say it.
- Talk about the meaning if your child does not understand the word they have read.
- Work at your child's pace.
- Always be positive and give lots of praise and encouragement.

You may also find the following link useful. It contains video materials showing children undertaking the check.

- [Year 1 Phonics Screening check Materials](#)