



Phonics Policy St Mary's and Our Lady of Grace Catholic Academies

Our Vision

*"Through the strength of God's love and the power
of prayer*

*We are guided to do whatever He tells us. Many
hearts,
one accord, growing and learning together for life to
build the kingdom of God."*
(School Mission Statement)



At St Mary's and Our Lady of Grace we value that reading is a key life skill which unlocks the wider curriculum, and therefore we are committed to help our pupils develop a lifelong enjoyment of reading. We prioritise early reading and are determined that every pupil will learn to read, regardless of their background, needs, or abilities. All pupils, including the weakest readers, make sufficient progress to meet or exceed age related expectations.

We use 'The Bug Club Phonics' teaching programme which is DfE approved. The programme aims to develop confident and motivated readers and captures children's imagination to nurture lifelong readers.

The programme is fast paced and backed up by daily revision of past teaching. Each lesson consists of effective, high quality lessons.

Through the teaching of systematic phonics we aim:

- To teach children aural discrimination, phonemic awareness and rhyme awareness to support application into reading and writing.
- To encourage repetition and consolidation, so that decoding and the skills of segmenting and blending are automatic.
- For children to use their knowledge of phonics to read accurately and with increasing speed and fluency by the end of Reception, which provides them with the foundations for future learning.
- To ensure that children have opportunities to read words and texts that match their phonics capabilities.

The teaching of synthetic phonics using a systematic and progressive approach begins in nursery and develops throughout Foundation Stage and Key Stage One. Daily phonics is taught as a discrete session of 20 minutes session and follows the phonics bug scheme of work. Teachers identify children who need additional daily practise to ensure that they can recognise sounds and blend with confidence and accuracy; this helps all children keep up with the pace of the phonics programme.

The school has clear expectations of pupils' phonics term- by - term, from Nursery to Year 2. (Please see Phonics Long term)

Every phonics lesson follows the same teaching sequence as follows:

1. Review and Revisit- pupils will revisit the previous taught learning via interactive activities.
2. Teach new learning- Pupils will be taught a new phoneme/ grapheme or spelling rule.
3. Practise- Pupils practise using the new phoneme/ grapheme or rule in context.
4. Apply- Pupils will be encouraged to apply new learning independently in their writing.

Beginner readers are taught and use:

Blending is the skill of building words by merging phonemes together - this is used when reading words.

Segmentation is breaking down a word into its component phonemes -this is used when spelling words

Phoneme is the smallest unit of sound in a word.

Grapheme is the written symbol of a phoneme.

High frequency words (Quick words) are words which children are unable to read using their phonic knowledge. These are taught as a whole word.

Developing reading skills

Children are given the opportunity to read a Phonics Bug which are fully decodable books for both guided and home reading. These are carefully selected to match the children's developing phonic knowledge, so that every child can experience success in their reading by using the skills they have so far been taught. We support the children's application of phonics by matching their school and home reading books to the sounds that they have previously learnt in class to increase reading fluency. Children can also choose a book of their choice which can be shared with an adult to promote reading for pleasure.

The enjoyment and comprehension of quality literature go hand in hand to develop a lifelong love of reading and St Mary's and Our Lady of Grace aim to nurture and develop these attributes alongside the phonics programme.

Comprehension and meaning are addressed separately within literacy and wider curriculum planning and policy. Teachers and practitioners are clear about which activities are designed to teach children to acquire word recognition skills, and which will help children develop high-level comprehension skills.

Assessment

Teachers are responsible for assessing the progress of all pupils in their class. Ongoing assessment of pupils' phonics progress is sufficiently frequent and detailed to identify any pupil who is falling behind the programme's pace.

Teachers identify children and targeted support is given immediately. Children are given additional practise daily to ensure that they can recognise sounds and blend with confidence and accuracy; this helps all children keep up with the pace of the phonics programme.

At the end of Year 1, children will take the phonics screening check. This assessment will confirm whether individual pupils have learnt phonic decoding to an appropriate standard. If a child does not reach the appropriate standard, then additional support will be put in place in order for the child to make accelerated progress with their reading and writing. These children will then retake the screening check at the end of year 2.

This policy was agreed by staff on: Sept 2021

This policy was approved by School Committee on: June 2021

This policy will be reviewed by the School committee on: June 2024

Signed..... Chair of School Committee