



St John with St Augustine C of E Primary School Phonics and Early Reading Policy

“With God’s help, together, we aspire, achieve and believe.”

Intent

At St John with St Augustine C of E Primary School we believe that reading and writing are the key to success. Through a coherently planned and sequenced phonics curriculum, children are taught to segment and blend words, to read and write easily, fluently and with good understanding. We strive to equip our children with the skills they need to access the curriculum, as a whole, regardless of their backgrounds, ethnicity or educational needs. Through a rigorous and systematic approach to teaching phonics, our school aims to nurture our children to become enthusiastic, ambitious and confident readers and writers.

Vision for Phonics

At St John with St Augustine Primary School, our children will all have a sound phonetic knowledge, giving them the confidence to attempt unfamiliar and more complex words; ensuring that they have a wide breath of vocabulary. Their learning will promote the purpose of phonics and how it applies to real life. All children will recognise phonics as a tool for reading and writing by embedding and applying it within every aspect of the curriculum. Reading, including guided reading and home reading books will always match a child’s current phonetic ability and phase of learning.

Staff are experts in teaching systematic, synthetic phonics and put phonics at the heart of all curriculum areas – not just as a discrete subject. Phonics is taught using a consistent approach to ensure fidelity and to secure optimum progress in our children’s acquisition of phonics knowledge and skills.

At St John with St Augustine Primary, we know that phonics is the prime approach to reading and writing, whilst remembering other key strategies and ensuring that our children are exposed to quality texts, promoting a safe and enjoyable reading environment.

Aims

Using the Red Rose Letters and Sounds programme, our children are entitled to a phonics curriculum which enables them to:

- gain a deeper understanding of the phonetic structure of words.
- decode unfamiliar words fluently and accurately through the application of their phonic knowledge and skills.
- read rapidly to apply what they have learned across the whole curriculum.
- become fluent readers, confident speakers and willing writers.

- develop a life-long enjoyment of reading.

Objectives

- To learn to read and write all 44 graphemes in the English language.
- To teach children specific strategies to help them remember tricky words.
- To ensure that the teaching of phonics is lively, interactive and investigative.
- To encourage children to apply their phonic skills in all curriculum areas.
- To provide children with opportunities to read for meaning, understanding and enjoyment.

Implementation

EYFS and Year 1 teach phonics as a discrete lesson daily. EYFS have up to 1 hour of phonics teaching that is split into 3 sessions (*20 minutes following the Red Rose Letters and Sounds progression, 20 minutes aspect 7 lesson and afternoon intervention session*). Year 1 have up to 30 minutes of phonics teaching following the Red Rose Letters and Sounds progression. Those children, in Year 2, whom have not passed their Phonics screening receive Phonics teaching three times a week (Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday). We follow the Red Rose Letters and Sounds teaching sequence to address the gaps in their phonics knowledge. A range of strategies are used, developing an active enjoyment of learning through practical activity, exploration and discussion. The structure of each lesson at St John with St Augustine's and the journey of phonics across the week enables all aspects of the blending and segmenting of phonemes/graphemes; lessons are uniquely planned and tailored to meet the needs of all our learners. Small and focused group teaching targets children's specific needs.

We follow a programme of work (Red Rose Letters and Sounds), using appropriate terminology, where pupils learn the 44 common sounds in the English language and are taught how to blend these sounds to decode (read) words. It is ensured that staff are equipped with the necessary professional development to deliver our curriculum through regular and up to date training sessions with both professionals in school and out. There are many opportunities for whole school and class enrichment and there are planned opportunities for home learning tasks to consolidate and extend knowledge and skills. We have adopted a rigorous twice half termly assessment system that informs teaching, using Phonics Tracker.

Phase 6 is taught, in Year 2, following the Spelling Shed teaching sequence.

- What phonics looks like at our school

Through the Red Rose Letters and Sounds programme, we use a cohesive and consistent approach to teaching phonics, where daily sessions follow the same structure:

- Revisit/Recap
- Teach

- Practise
- Apply
- Assess

As a school, we recognise the importance of following the sequence of the phonic content in the programme consistently from start to finish. However, we also understand that this does not prevent us from supplementing our chosen programme by using additional resources and approaches.

An overview of the Red Rose Letters and Sounds programme

Phase 2	Children entering Phase 2 will continue to build on the foundations from Phase 1. They should have experienced a wealth of speaking and listening activities, including songs, stories and rhymes, alongside oral blending and segmenting. The purpose of Phase 2 is to teach 23 GPCs (Grapheme Phoneme Correspondence) with single letter graphemes and some digraphs, with application into reading and writing. Explicit teaching focuses on the recognition of GPCs alongside oral blending and segmenting, and application into reading and writing words and sentences. Children will also be taught how to read and spell 6 tricky words with automaticity of reading tricky words being essential.
Phase 3	Children entering Phase 3 will build on the learning from Phase 2. They should have secured recognition of 23 GPCs and 6 tricky words with application into reading of words and sentences, and decodable texts with VC and CVC words. They should also be applying known GPCs and tricky words from Phase 2 when writing on whiteboards, with pencil and paper, or using magnetic letters. The purpose of Phase 3 is to teach 28 GPCs including single letter graphemes, digraphs and trigraphs, with application into reading and writing. Explicit teaching focuses on the recognition of GPCs alongside oral blending and segmenting, and application into reading and writing of VC and CVC words. Letter names are used during this phase when teaching digraphs and trigraphs. Carefully considered sessions have been planned which have a focus on blending or segmenting, or both. For writing application, it is recommended that phonics journals are introduced for children who are ready to write with pencil and paper in order to practise GPCs, words and sentences. The adult can scaffold the writing process if this is required. Children will also be taught how to read and spell 11 Phase 3 tricky words, and be introduced to 15 Phase 4 tricky words with automaticity of reading tricky words being essential. They will apply this learning when reading decodable texts containing these tricky words.

Phase 4	Children entering Phase 4 will build on the learning from Phases 2 and 3. They should have secured recognition of Phase 2 and 3 GPCs and tricky words with application into reading of words and sentences, and decodable texts. They should also be applying known GPCs, tricky words from Phase 2 and 3, and some tricky words from Phase 4 when writing on whiteboards and/or with pencil and paper. The purpose of Phase 4 is to explicitly teach oral blending and segmenting, blending for reading and segmenting for spelling using adjacent consonants within CVCC, CCV, CCVC, CCVCC, CCCVC, CCCVCC word combinations, and polysyllabic words containing Phase 2 and 3 graphemes. Children will apply this learning when reading decodable texts alongside writing words and sentences. For writing application, it is recommended that phonics journals are introduced for children who are ready to write with pencil and paper in order to practise GPCs, words and sentences. The adult can scaffold the writing process if this is required. Throughout Phase 4 in Red Rose Letters and Sounds, children are exposed to pseudo (alien) words
Phase 5	Children entering Phase 5 will build on the learning from Phases 2, 3 and 4. They should have secured recognition of all GPCs, tricky words and high frequency words from these phases with application into reading of words and sentences, and decodable texts. They should also be applying known GPCs, tricky words and high frequency words when writing on whiteboards and with pencil and paper. The purpose of Phase 5 is to teach 21 further graphemes for reading, 19 alternative pronunciations for graphemes and 95 alternative spellings for phonemes with application into reading and writing. Explicit teaching focuses on the recognition of GPCs alongside oral blending and segmenting, and application into reading and writing. Letter names are used during this phase when teaching digraphs, trigraphs and four letter graphemes. Carefully considered sessions have been planned which have a focus on blending or segmenting, or both. For writing application, we use phonics journals so children can write with pencil and paper in order to practise GPCs, words and sentences. The adult can scaffold the writing process if this is required. Children will also be taught how to read and spell 12 Phase 5 tricky words and 25 high frequency words with automaticity of reading being essential. They will apply this learning when reading decodable texts containing these words. Within Phase 5, there are many opportunities to revisit and embed reading and spelling of tricky words and high frequency words. Throughout Red Rose Letters and Sounds Phase 5, children are exposed to pseudo words.

Phonics is taught to ensure that children are consolidating phonic knowledge and skills over time and that they are able to apply their learning in context. Links between phonics knowledge and understanding are made, wherever possible, to learning in both reading and writing. These lessons proceed at pace and incorporate a wide range of practical and interactive learning opportunities to engage the children. All staff use an agreed planning format, which clearly promotes the 4-part phonic teaching sequence, whilst taking groupings and formative assessment opportunities into consideration.

On average, children who start our school at EYFS, begin without a sound understanding of Phase One phonics (primarily focused on developing speaking and listening skills). Our EYFS practitioners therefore often need to spend much longer on this phase before moving on to Phase Two to ensure the children can confidently blend and segment as they progress through the phases on their phonics journey. If the cohort have a good knowledge of the Phase One skills, they will move onto Phase Two at a faster pace.

- What spelling looks like at our school

Our pupils follow the Spelling Shed programme of study.

Spelling Shed's approach to spelling involves the relationship between sounds and written symbols and using morphology to help spell through meaning. The carefully selected word lists and engaging activities allow opportunities to incorporate phonics and meaning to strengthen spelling skills and build vocabulary acquisition.

The focus of the programme is on the teaching of spelling, which embraces knowledge of spelling conventions (patterns and rules); but integral to the teaching is the opportunity to promote the learning of spellings, including statutory words, common exceptions and personal spellings.

With vocabulary being a key focus for our school, the spelling of vocabulary needed in other curriculum areas i.e. science, history, geography is taught, linking closely to our connector topics. Children are continuously given the chance to revisit spellings from previous year groups to ensure that they are confident, competent spellers. The planning of spelling is based on a 'little and often' approach; spelling is taught for 20 minutes, four times a week. In Key Stage 1, phonics sessions include a focus upon phonics for spelling at phase level and how we teach the spelling of tricky words. Spellings, SpAG (spelling, punctuation and grammar) and handwriting are taught within our English lessons.

Age related expectations for phonics and reading

By the end of EYFS, children should:

- read and understand words and simple sentences using Phase 2 and Phase 3 graphemes;
- write words and simple sentences using Phase 2 and Phase 3 graphemes;
- use phonic knowledge to decode common words and read them aloud accurately;
- confidently read by sight the Phase 2 and 3 common exception words;
- use phonic knowledge to write words in a way which matches how the sounds are said;
- write some irregular common words.

By the end of Year 1, children should:

- consolidate their knowledge of graphemes in reading and spelling words containing adjacent consonants and polysyllabic words;
- apply phonic knowledge and skill as the prime approach to reading unfamiliar words that are not completely decodable;

- read many frequently-encountered words automatically;
- read phonically decodable three-syllable words;
- read a range of age-appropriate texts fluently;
- demonstrate understanding of age-appropriate texts;
- read decodable words that end –s, –es, -ing, -ed, -er, -est;
- say the correct sound to grapheme for all the 44 phonemes up to Phase 5.

By the end of Year 2, children should:

- read accurately most words of two or more syllables;
- read most words containing common suffixes;
- read and spell most common exception words for year 2;
- read words accurately and fluently without overt sounding and blending;
- sound out most unfamiliar words accurately, without hesitation;
- segment spoken words into phonemes and represent these by graphemes.

Year One phonics screening check

The Year One phonics screening check is a compulsory assessment to confirm whether individual children have learnt phonic decoding to an appropriate standard. It is administered during the summer term by the child's class teacher. The check involves children reading 40 words – 20 real words and 20 pseudo words, sometimes referred to as 'alien' words. Staff are mindful in EYFS of the teaching of pseudo words, taking care not to overuse them. Further details about the phonics screening check are sent to parents during the summer term.

An example of a Year One phonics screening check:

Practice sheet: Real words	Practice sheet: Pseudo words
in	ot 
at	vap 
beg	osk 
sum	ect 

Early Reading

At St John with St Augustine C of E Primary School, we believe that reading is fundamental to a child's broad and balance education and that phonics and early reading lay the foundations for this. We aim to teach our children to read fluently by ensuring that every child masters their phonics learning as quickly as possible, so they can decode and read words, showing an understanding of what they have read.

We assess our children regularly and provide immediate intervention to close specific gaps so that our children can become proficient readers. Our phonics and early reading curriculum is carefully planned to ensure that all pupils, including those whom find it difficult, are able to read successfully and for enjoyment. Our teachers are ambitious readers and instil their love of reading onto our pupils. Each teacher, starting from EYFS through to Year 6, reads daily within their class offering a rich diet of literature through high-quality texts that includes a variety of stories, non-fiction books, poems and rhymes.

Our EYFS environment is designed to support our pupils to acquire a bank of rich vocabulary, experiment with talk, read high-quality texts and develop their fluency for reading. The EYFS team create opportunities for children to read and re-read books that match their phonics learning as well as fostering a love of reading through sharing stories, poems, songs and rhymes to expand their vocabulary and comprehension.

Guided Reading

Within EYFS and Year 1, Guided Reading is taught for half an hour, each day, moving through a variety of activities. In small groups, children work with different teachers focusing on one activity: pre-teach phonics focus, comprehension and respond task. These activities are carefully planned using the EYFS early learning goals and the Year 1 reading domains.

Reading books are closely matched to the current phonics teaching and are sequenced to follow the Red Rose Letters and Sounds teaching sequence. Reading for pleasure is encouraged within the classroom and all children have an opportunity to explore pleasure texts through a range of activities i.e. reading river, library visits and classroom libraries.

Home Reading

We share the importance of reading not only with our children but parents/carers too. At St John with St Augustine C of E Primary School, we expect that our parents/carers read with their child, daily, for a minimum of 5 minutes and sign their reading record.

Home reading books are closely matched to the Red Rose Letters and Sound teaching sequence so our pupils can practice and master the newly taught GPC's and make good progress in their phonics learning. Our highly trained teachers, use current assessment data to match the children's knowledge and gaps to their home reading books. If a child is on track, they receive one home reading book that matches their previous week learning. If a child has gaps in their learning, they receive two home reading books. The first reading book will address the child's earliest gaps in phonics and their second will closely match their previous weeks learning in phonics.

Equal Opportunities

All children are provided with equal access to the phonics curriculum. We aim to provide suitable learning opportunities regardless of gender, ethnicity or home background.

We strive to provide an engaging curriculum for all children so that they achieve as highly as they can in phonics, spelling, reading and writing according to their individual abilities. We will identify which pupils or groups of pupils are underachieving and take steps to improve their attainment. By targeting intervention programmes and support appropriately, we aim to narrow the gap between an under-achieving child's English attainment and national expectations. Children take home reading books, which they are encouraged to share with their parent/carers. This practice begins in EYFS and continues through KS1 and KS2. The teacher monitors this practice through our RAG readers system wherein we listen to some readers more often than others based on need, and uses the information to help inform them of the skills children need to develop in order to progress through the levels and when to do so. Books are changed as needed.

Intervention programmes

At St John with St Augustine CofE Primary School, we have a rigorous approach to intervention. All children in EYFS and Year 1 are assessed using Phonics Tracker at the beginning and end of each half term. Children who did not pass their phonics screening check in Year 2 and KS2 are also assessed. Using the data, we support children to close the gaps in their learning through targeted intervention, using Red Rose Letters and Sounds.

Resources

All of our phonics reading books are fully decodable and match the teaching sequence for Red Rose Letters and Sounds, ensuring fidelity to the programme of learning. Until children are secure at Phase 5 phonics they will be given phonetically decodable books to take home as 'home reading' books, which best match their current phonics learning. When children are secure at phase 5, they move onto the 'colour banded' books, which comprise of reading scheme books and 'real' books. At St John with St Augustine Primary School, we have further split our phased reading books into 'sub-phases', eg. Phase 5A, Phase 5B, Phase 5C. We have done this in line with the sounds learned in each phase, recognising the earlier taught sounds in the phase through to the later sounds. This will ensure that the reading book sent home with each child will be perfectly suited to what they have been learning in their phonics lessons.

Professional Development

St John with St Augustine Primary School firmly believes that continuing professional development for all staff features highly in the school improvement plans to aid the development of the children. As a staff body, we have received plentiful training sessions, delivered by experts in the teaching and assessment of phonics. All aspects of Red Rose Letters and Sounds teaching will be monitored by the Phonics Subject leader and SLT and tracking grids will be monitored on a half termly basis using Phonics Tracker.

The Governing Body

Regular reports, by Early Reading and Phonics leader, are made to the governors on the progress of English and phonics provision. This policy will be reviewed in the light of changes to legal requirements.

The Role of the Subject Leader

The Subject Leader should be responsible for improving the standards of teaching and learning in phonics through:

- Monitoring and evaluating:
 - pupil progress
 - provision and impact of phonics teaching (including intervention and support programmes)
 - the quality of the learning environment;
 - the deployment and provision of support staff
- Taking the lead in policy development
- Auditing and supporting colleagues in their CPD
- Purchasing and organising resources
- Keeping up to date with recent developments in phonics and spelling

Parental Involvement

Parents can support children with phonics by:

- regularly hearing their children read their phase-levelled home reading book
- sharing books with their children
- promoting enjoyment of phonics in the home and wider environment
- supporting their children with homework
- providing wide and varied opportunities to speak and listen in the home and wider environment

Conclusion

This policy also needs to be in line with other school policies and therefore should be read in conjunction with the following school policies:

Teaching and Learning Policy

Assessment and Record Keeping

Responding to pupils' work / Feedback / Marking policy

Special Educational Needs Policy

Handwriting Policy

English Policy

Subject Leader: Miss Middleton
Updated:

Phonics Vocabulary Glossary

Blending - This involves looking at a written word, looking at each grapheme and using knowledge of GPCs to work out which phoneme each grapheme represents and then merging these phonemes together to make a word.

Consonant - The letters of the alphabet (apart from the vowels a, e, i, o, u)

CVC words - A consonant-vowel-consonant word, such as cat, pin or top

CCVC words - A consonant-consonant-vowel-consonant word, such as chip and from.

CVCC words - A consonant-vowel-consonant-consonant word, such as mash and belt

Digraph - A grapheme containing two letters that makes just one sound (phoneme).

Grapheme - A way of writing down a phoneme. Graphemes can be made up from 1 letter e.g. p, 2 letters e.g. sh, 3 letters e.g. tch or 4 letters e.g. ough.

GPC - This is short for Grapheme Phoneme Correspondence. Knowing a GPC means being able to match a phoneme to a grapheme and vice versa.

Phoneme - The smallest unit of sound. There are approximately 44 phonemes in English (it depends on different accents). Phonemes can be put together to make words.

Polysyllabic – More than one syllable.

Segmenting - This involves hearing a word, splitting it up into the phonemes (sound talk/sounding out) that make it, using knowledge of GPCs to work out which graphemes represent those phonemes and then writing those graphemes down in the right order.

Split digraph - A digraph that is split between a consonant (a-e in make).

Syllable – The small group of sounds that you hear in each word e.g. syl//la/ble

Trigraph - A grapheme containing three letters that makes just one sound (phoneme).

Vowel – The letters a, e, i, o and u