



# St Joseph's Catholic Primary School

## Reading EYFS

Children learn to read in different ways and at different ages. The first part of a child's journey towards being a successful reader starts when the child is a baby and is listening to stories and rhymes. This encourages a love of language and stories and develops the child's vocabulary and understanding of language as they start to become familiar with what words mean and what they look like.

A vital first stage of a child's development as a reader is to be able to 'read' pictures and to determine what is happening or to predict what might happen from the pictures in a book. As this skill develops, children become able to use their grammatical skills to listen to words within a sentence and to make sense of what they can hear. This is an important tool for the young reader as it enables them to make sensible guesses at unknown words within a sentence and to continue to read for meaning without being stopped in their tracks.

Most pre-school children are already reading before they start school; they will be able to read the supermarket sign above the shops they visit frequently, McDonalds, Lego and Disney will be easily identifiable to them too! Whilst your young child won't necessarily be able to identify the letters and sounds within those words, they read them because they remember the overall shape of the word. At St Joseph's we ensure that children have a good range of high frequency words that they identify without having to ask or sound them out so that they can maintain fluency within their reading, which in turn supports a good understanding of what they have read.

The reading process in our school begins with sharing stories and modelling good reading behaviours. Children in Reception have regular story time which is their opportunity to listen to and become lost in a good book. It is also a good time to explore new words and meanings; developing early comprehension skills.

### Phonics

In Reception, children begin to learn to read using phonics – learning to crack the alphabetic code. This involves learning letter sounds and shapes, hearing and saying the sounds in words in the correct order as well as being well on the way to being able to read and write the 44 phonemes or sounds in the English language. They also need to recognise and remember those tricky words that cannot be sounded out letter by letter e.g. *the* or *said*.

**Letters and Sounds** We are following government guidance, which refers to 6 phases of Phonics teaching (The Letters and Sounds programme). The six phase teaching programme focuses on high quality phonics work. The intention is to 'equip children who are 5 with the phonic knowledge and skills they need to become fluent readers by the age of 7.' By the end of Year 2, children should have completed Phase 6. The teacher assesses which phase the children should be working on, and appropriate teaching is planned for.

## The Phases

### **Phase One**

The aim of Phase 1 is to develop children's listening and speaking skills as preparation for learning to read and spell with phonics. Children explore and experiment with sounds and become familiar with rhyme, rhythm and alliteration. Parents can play a vital role in helping their children develop these skills by encouraging them to listen carefully and talk extensively about what they hear, see and do.

### **Phase Two**

Phase 2 introduces grapheme/phoneme (letter/sound) correspondence. Children learn that words are constructed from phonemes and that phonemes are represented by graphemes. They begin with a small selection of common consonants and vowels (s, a, t, p, i, n) and begin to put them together to read and spell CVC words (consonant vowel consonant).

E.g. c-a-t s-i-t p-a-n

#### **The phonemes/graphemes**

This is the order in which they are taught: **s a t p i n m d g o c k c k e u r h b f ff l ll ss**

### **Phase Three**

Phase 3 teaches children one grapheme for each of the 44 phonemes in order to read and spell simple regular words. Children link sounds to letters, naming and sounding the letters of the alphabet. They hear and say sounds in order they occur in the word and read simple words by blending the phonemes from left to right. They recognise common digraphs (1 sound 2 letters e.g. th) and read some high frequency words. E.g. sh-e-ll b-oa-t t-r-ai-n.

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This is the order in which they are taught: **j v w x y z zz qu ch sh th ng ai ee igh oa oo/oo ar or ur ow oi ear air ure er**

### **Phase Four**

Phase Four teaches children to read and spell words containing adjacent consonants. Children will be able to blend and segment these words and apply this skill when reading and spelling. They move from CVC words (pot, sheep) to CVCC words (pots) and CCVC words (spot) and then CCVCC words (spots). They will also explore polysyllabic words (shampoo, helper).

## **Blending for Reading**

To learn to read and spell children must be able to smoothly blend sounds together. Blending sounds fluidly helps to improve fluency when reading. Blending is more difficult to do with longer words so learning how to blend accurately at an early age is imperative. Showing your child how to blend is important. Model how to 'sound talk' sounds and blend them smoothly together without stopping at each individual sound. We use our fingers to support this. Remember some sounds (digraphs) are represented by two letters, such as ee or oi. Children should sound out the digraph not the individual letters (e.g. oi not o-i). Some words may also have trigraphs, three letters to represent one sound, (.e.g. h-ear or p-air.). Try these words: Plant p-l-a-n-t Sheep sh- ee-p

## **Tricky words**

Tricky words are words that cannot be 'sounded-out' but need to be learnt by heart. They don't fit into usual spelling patterns. When learning these words it is important for children to start with the familiar sounds and then notice the 'tricky' bits.

**Phase 2** tricky words: I, no, go, to, the, into

**Phase 3** tricky words: he, me, we, be, she, was, are, all, you, they

**Phase 4** tricky words: said, like, so, do, some, come, little, were, one, out, what, when, there

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## **Guided reading**

This is a weekly session of group reading that focuses on a variety of reading skills depending on the needs of the children. The formative assessment strategies we use help us to analyse the children's progress on a weekly basis and really personalise their targets. Initially children begin their reading journey with a conversation text where the main focus is on description of characters, objects, events and much more to ensure that children build upon their comprehension. Once children have developed this skill, our focus becomes broader. We then widen our focus to predicting, decoding, re-enacting and justifying. Children are provided with many opportunities to develop as a reader under the careful supervision of the class teacher.

## **Independent reading**

We promote reading for pleasure at every opportunity and time is set aside for children to read independently throughout the day. The children have access to books in our reading area and library.

## **Additional reading activities**

Children have constant access to high quality books in their classrooms and have the opportunity to respond to these books in a variety of ways. Reading takes place across all subjects of the school curriculum and we strive to improve and apply children's skills at every opportunity.

## **Reading with an adult**

Children are heard to read at least once a week by the teacher and also by another adult – either a Teaching Assistant or a parent helper.

## **Home reading**

The books the children bring home initially are wordless or have very few words but this is very important the child's early reading development. Wordless books allow children to learn how stories work, including the order and direction in which they read, without the pressure of too many words on the page. Children enjoy talking about the stories and discussing what is happening in the pictures. The first step in reading is to use visual prompts to help read the words. The pictures provide lots of opportunities for playing with environmental sounds, an important first step in the teaching of phonics. In school, we utilise a range of different reading schemes as we believe that breadth of reading is important to nurture a love of reading. The schemes include fiction, non-fiction and poetry using Collins Big Cat Phonics, Oxford Reading Tree – Songbirds phonics and Pearson Bug Club phonics books.

## **How can parents help their child to love reading**

Parents can support this 'reading journey' through regular reading at home. Reading to and with your child every evening for at least ten minutes can make a dramatic difference to a child's achievement within school. A report from the Oxford University Press highlighted the importance of parents reading with their children. 'Children who read outside of class are 13 times more likely to read above the expected level for their age'.

The report also offers six tips for reading with your child at home, including:

1. Make time to read- even ten minutes a day
2. Choose different types of books
3. Take turns to read
4. Talk about the book- asking your child questions
5. Pay attention to the language
6. Enjoy reading

**Reading together every day – little and often is the key!**