



Phonics Policy

At St John Vianney we are committed to ensuring all children can read accurately and fluently. Their reading journey begins in Early Years with daily phonics lessons.

We use a scheme called **Unlocking Letters and Sounds** which was validated by the DfE in December 2021.

We begin teaching phonics in the first few weeks of term 1 in Reception and children make rapid progress in their reading journey. Children begin to learn the main sounds heard in the English Language and how they can be represented, as well as learning 'Common Exception Words' for Phases 2, 3 and 4. They use these sounds to read and write simple words, captions and sentences. Children leave Reception being able to apply the phonemes taught within Phase 2, 3 and 4.

In Year 1, through Phase 5, children learn any alternative spellings and pronunciations for the graphemes and additional Common Exception Words. By the end of Year 1 children will have mastered using phonics to decode and blend when reading and segment when spelling. In Year 1 all children are screened using the national Phonics Screening Check.

In Year 2, phonics continues to be revisited to ensure mastery of the phonetic code and any child who does not meet age related expectations will continue to receive support to close identified gaps.

Assessment

Assessment is regarded as an integral part of teaching and learning and is a continuous process. We strive to make our assessment purposeful, allowing us to match the correct level of work to the needs of the pupils, thus benefiting the pupils and ensuring progress. Phonics Tracker, an online tracking tool, is used and updated half-termly and continues to be updated as the child moves through school. In addition to Phonics Tracker, we also complete a phonics benchmarking assessment every term. PM Benchmark is then used when children move from the decodable phonics books and onto the school reading scheme.

For further details please see the Unlocking Letters and Sounds progression which is available on our school website.



Intervention

To ensure no child is left behind at any point in the progression, children are regularly assessed and supported to keep up through bespoke 1:1 interventions.

These include GPC recognition and blending and segmenting interventions. The lowest attaining 20% of pupils are closely monitored to ensure these interventions have an impact.

Reading Scheme

At St John Vianney Catholic Primary we promote a 'phonics first' approach and in both our guided reading sessions and in the books children take home, texts are very closely matched to a child's current phonics knowledge so that every child can experience real success in their reading.

In these crucial early stages of reading we primarily use books from Ransom Reading Stars Phonics or decodable books from Oxford University Press, to ensure complete fidelity to the Unlocking Letters and Sounds progression we follow.

Once children progress beyond decodable texts, they move onto our book scheme so that they can continue to progress in their decoding, fluency and comprehension skills to become avid, expert readers.

Date 8.3.2023

Signed: S Langford (Phonics Lead)

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