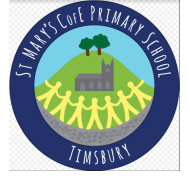




St Mary's Phonics Intent, Implementation and Impact



Intent

At St Mary's, we recognise the fundamental importance of reading for a child's academic achievement, access to the curriculum, wellbeing and success later in life. We prioritise reading, the importance of language and vocabulary and the love of stories and books in our school.

It is our mission to ensure that every child at St Mary's becomes a fluent and successful reader. Phonics is introduced to children during the Early Years Foundation Stage using our programme Unlocking Letters and Sounds. We recognise reading as being the key to all learning so, it is our mission to ensure that all children succeed in this area.

Implementation

At St Mary's we teach phonics using a systematic programme called Unlocking Letters and sounds. EYFS and Year 1 have daily phonics lessons all year and year 2 have daily phonics until Christmas term.

What does Phonics look like in class?

Phonics begins in our Nursery where children take part in Phase 1. During this phase children develop their ability to listen to, make, explore and talk about sounds. Activities concentrate on developing children's speaking and listening skills, phonological awareness and oral blending and segmenting.

Phase One activities are arranged under the following seven aspects.

- Aspect 1: General sound discrimination – environmental sounds
- Aspect 2: General sound discrimination – instrumental sounds
- Aspect 3: General sound discrimination – body percussion
- Aspect 4: Rhythm and rhyme
- Aspect 5: Alliteration
 - Aspect 6: Voice sounds
- Aspect 7: Oral blending and segmenting

Formal phonics teaching begins 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 5a, b and c, the 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.

Our teachers always follow the lesson plans from Unlocking Letters and Sounds, which follows the same repetitive structure of ; revisit, teach, practice, apply, revise (address misconceptions). This alongside a carefully planned progression ensures consistency.

Reading Scheme

At St Mary's we promote a 'phonics first' approach and in both our guided reading sessions at school 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, to ensure complete fidelity to the Unlocking Letters and Sounds progression we follow. These are supplemented by other books to provide breadth; all books are closely matched to the individual child's phonics knowledge.

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

Impact

Assessment is on-going through every lesson and teachers are constantly using what they have seen in the lessons to recap sounds already taught. Teachers adapt lessons where necessary and alter the teaching sequence where to address gaps and misconceptions. Phonics lessons provide children with the opportunity to apply their phonics through reading and writing and support language development and prosody.

We assess children's reading by carefully tracking their reading skills. We use previous phonics screening checks in Year 1 every term to check the children's progress.

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.

The Ransom Reading Stars books are engaging and challenging and children are motivated to read a wide range of text types. Our whole school reading challenge also encourages reading at home which the children talk positively and enthusiastically about.