

St Mary's Catholic Primary School

Living and Learning Together – Shining in our Faith



Phonics Intent Document

Intent

At St Mary's Catholic Primary School, Essential Letters and Sounds (ELS) is our chosen Phonics programme. The aim of ELS is to get all children to read well, quickly. It teaches children to read by identifying the phonemes (the smallest unit of sound) and graphemes (the written version of the sound) within words and using these to read words. Essential Letters and Sounds is a systematic synthetic phonics programme and was validated by the Department for Education in June 2021.

Implementation

At St Mary's, to ensure all children learn to read well, quickly:

- Children learn phonics from the very start of Early Years: teaching begins in Week 1 of the Autumn term. Phonics is explicitly taught every day during a dedicated slot in the timetable. Children are given the knowledge and the skills to then apply their growing phonic knowledge to support them in other areas of the curriculum.
- Children continue daily Phonics lessons in Year 1 to ensure all children become confident, fluent readers.
- We follow the ELS progression and sequence. ELS is a whole class teaching model. This means that every single pupil has the same opportunities when learning to read. Learning to read well, quickly is a priority for every child.
- The structure of ELS lessons allows children to know what is coming next, what they need to do, and how to achieve success. This makes it easier for children to learn the GPC (grapheme, phoneme correspondence) we are teaching and how to apply this when reading.
- ELS teaches relevant, useful and ambitious vocabulary to support each child's journey to becoming fluent and independent readers.
- The children are taught phonics on a daily basis, this will develop their phonological knowledge and the skills of blending and segmenting.
- Children learning phonics read their book three times during the week focusing on decoding, fluency, and comprehension. The children are then encouraged to read the same book at home. The book will be selected based on the children's phonic and sight word knowledge.

Impact

Our Phonics curriculum offers high-quality and well-planned lessons, which encourage progression. Key vocabulary is embedded in each lesson.

In order to ensure our aims have been met, we scrutinise learning through the following methods:

- Assessment for learning is used daily within class to identify children needing keep-up support, but also weekly within Review lessons to address gaps immediately.
- Children are assessed in week 5 of each half term, those children who are not at age-related expectations will be provided with regular intervention in the form of either small group work or 1:1.

- Those children in KS2 who have not reached aged-related expectations in phonics complete regular targeted interventions.

The above enables the teacher to make an informed judgement on the children's understanding and record their Phonics and reading ability on the school tracking tool, Lancashire Tracker hub, on a termly basis.

For any additional information regarding Phonics please contact Miss Wade (Subject Lead) or Mrs Smallwood (Subject Governor).