



## Phonics Curriculum Overview

Our curriculum includes many common aspects and themes that are woven through all year groups and across all subjects:

- The curriculum allows the children to relate their learning and skills to our school values of appreciation, compassion, love, perseverance, respect and trust and live their lives by them.
- Children are encouraged to learn from first hand experiences and exploration of letter shapes and sounds, which is built upon to learn about increasingly less familiar and more abstract ideas and concepts.
- Skills are progressively taught and embedded which children can transfer to the next phase of their education, and in time to the wider world of work and the outside world.
- The school grounds and immediate locality are made good use of for learning, where possible, and the children are encouraged to develop a greater understanding of Reading's place in national and international affairs, in addition to its place in the Thames Valley.

At Saint Mary and All Saints, we love reading. We strive to ensure that all children become successful and fluent readers by the end of Key Stage 1. We believe this is achievable through a combination of strong, high quality phonics teaching combined with a literature-rich approach that promotes a 'reading for pleasure' culture. We aim for all the children at SMAS to leave school with a genuine passion for reading and to have obtained all the skills they need to tackle any book of their choosing. It is essential that our approach to teaching phonics and reading is accessible to all learners, regardless of background.

### Intent

Phonics is the process that is used to help children break down words into sounds, as well as building letter and word recognition. This can then enable children to understand and recognise unknown words in the future. Once children accelerate away from the phonics programme they will be secure, fluent, confident readers who are unafraid to tackle texts they are presented with and can read with appropriate intonation.

We have a strong focus on language development for our children because we know that speaking and listening are crucial skills for reading and writing in all subjects.

Our phonics curriculum uses Ruth Miskin's Read Write Inc programme. Our aim in teaching this programme is to directly tackle children's understanding and knowledge of Phonics right from our youngest children in Nursery and grow them at a very rapid, measured pace to develop skills to read with confidence, fluency and understanding, using a range of independent strategies to self-monitor and correct mistakes.

We run specific phonic intervention groups for children further up the school, or children who join SMAS at a later stage to ensure they make good progress and achieve the same outcomes.

Because we believe teaching every child to read is so important, we have an Early Reading Leader, and a Reading Lead who drive both the early reading programme, and the later stages of reading and comprehension in our school. These staff are highly skilled at teaching phonics and reading, and they monitor and support our reading so everyone teaches the Read Write Inc scheme with fidelity and skill.

### **Implementation**

Read Write Inc is a very prescriptive programme which comprises delivering daily structured lessons to small groups of children. Each is an hour in length and in this hour the lesson is broken down into routine elements, which children follow to recap and build on.

There are 3 sets of simple and complex sounds that children learn to recognise, read, blend, segment and write (Using 'Fred' the frog, who 'Fred talks' words). As children progress they work with 'Ditty' books and colour banded texts to increase recognition and fluency. The simpler texts (a mixture of Fiction and Non-fiction) are Red in colour and the most complex are Grey banded texts. Alongside this we encourage children to read a broad and deep range of genres daily for enjoyment and to highlight the importance, purpose and reason for learning in this particular style.

Within phonics sessions children practice letter formation and writing tasks to support and embed sounds. They therefore develop writing skills which are then transferred to the whole school curriculum.

Children are monitored weekly throughout lessons and the Early Reading Lead works alongside staff to ensure progress and learning is consistent and secure across the school.

Every six weeks (or as required) teachers (alongside SLT and the ERL) carry out monitored assessments which allow us to reorganise groupings and ensure children progress at an appropriate level.

Any child who needs additional practice has daily 'Keep-up' support, taught by a fully trained adult. Keep-up lessons match the structure of class teaching, and use the same procedures, resources and mantras, but in smaller steps with more repetition, so that every child secures their learning.

We timetable daily phonics support of 8 minutes sessions, for any child in Year 2 who is not fully fluent at reading or has not passed the Phonics Screening Check. We use the Read Write Inc assessments to identify the gaps in children's phonic knowledge and teach to these using the Keep-up resources – at pace.

Decodable reading books (Book Bag Books) are taken home to ensure success is shared with the family. Reading for pleasure books (Books to share) also go home for parents to share and read to children. We use the Read Write Inc parents' resources to engage our families and share information about phonics, the benefits of sharing books, how children learn to blend and other aspects of our provision, both online and through workshops.

We value reading for pleasure highly and work hard as a school to grow our Reading for Pleasure pedagogy.

We read to children every day. We choose these books carefully as we want children to experience a wide range of books, including books that reflect the children at Grange Infant School and our local community as well as books that open windows into other worlds and cultures.

Every classroom has an inviting book corner that encourages a love for reading. We curate these books and talk about them to entice children to read a wide range of books.

In Reception, children have access to the reading corner every day in their independent learning time and the books are continually refreshed.

Children from Reception onwards have a home reading record. The parent/carer records comments to share with the adults in school and the adults will write in this on a regular basis to ensure communication between home and school.

Each class visits the school library on a weekly basis. The school library is made available for classes to use at protected times. Children across the school have regular opportunities to engage with a wide range of Reading for Pleasure events (book fairs, author visits and workshops, national events etc).

### **Impact**

Regardless of background, ability or needs by the time children leave Saint Mary and All Saints, children will be enthusiastic and motivated readers who are confident and will enjoy reading a wide variety of genres and text types. They develop the skills to decode words and be able to read fluently with a secure understanding of what they have read. They are inspired by a depth of literature, seeking to read for pleasure at every opportunity.