



## The Value of Phonics

Synthetic phonics is a method of teaching reading that ensures all children can learn to read. Through our phonics programme children also use their phonetic knowledge to spell.

## Phonics Screening

The phonics screening check is accessed by children at the end of Year 1. The screen includes 'alien words' (made up words) to ensure your child is blending and not reading words from memory. Most children will be expected to pass the test but they will be given another opportunity at the end of Year 2 if they need more time.



## Phonics at St Mary's Catholic Academy

We are very proud of our phonics teaching and from September 2021 we will transition on to 'Little Wandle-revised Letters and Sounds' - a validated programme.

### We aim to:

- Ensure every child achieves the highest standards of reading through the consistent teaching of a synthetic approach to phonics for as long as the child needs.
- Provide purposeful opportunities for repeated practice to apply their phonic knowledge.
- Achieve a successful partnership between home and school.
- For all children to be ready for the next stage in their phonic journey with clear end points. At the end of F1 - Phase 1. At the end of F2 - Phase 4. At the end of Year 1-Phase 5.
- For every child to be a successful reader of a phonically matched book to develop fluency and confidence.
- Develop a secure, systematic progression in phonic learning.



## Reading Buddies

Our Reading Buddies do a great job in supporting our younger children to develop their phonics skills and use this within their reading.

*Before this peer work takes part, the buddies are given training on how to support the children with blending phonemes together to read unfamiliar words and develop early reading skills.*

“I am a reading buddy and I enjoy teaching younger children how to read and help them get better at reading new words by blending sounds and reading with expression.”

Francesca Y4



## What does phonics look like at St Marys?

- Daily direct teaching in Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 in short bursts of between 10-30 minutes.
- A consistent approach throughout school, following a highly structured phonics programme.
- Half termly phonic assessments to help us plan the next steps for each child.
- 'Keep up' sessions, so nobody is left behind. This may be in a small group or individually.
- Highly trained staff in the teaching of phonics.
- Regular phonics homework.
- Opportunities for phonic application in other areas of the curriculum.
- Reading practice sessions in small groups following the 'three read' model in Reception and Year 1 to ensure fluent reading and to develop prosody and comprehension.
- Phonic workshops for parents in Nursery, Reception and Year 1.

### Reading books that help us read:

Children are given reading books that are closely matched to their developing phonic ability. The same book that is read during reading practice sessions is sent home to practise fluent reading. We use 'Little Wandle' books to support our phonics within.



We follow the progression and pace of 'Little Wandle-revised Letters and Sounds. Click on the link for ways to support your children in developing their phonic skills.

<https://www.littlewandlelettersandsounds.org.uk/resources/for-parents/>