



## PHONICS POLICY

*To love, to serve and learn.*

We are a school family journeying together in God's love.

We serve each other to achieve our best.

We learn in fun and creative ways,  
respecting everyone's gifts.

## Intent

At St. Edward's Catholic Primary School, we understand and acknowledge the importance of learning to read and spell from an early age. We want learners to progress from 'learning to read' to 'reading to learn', in order to access the curriculum fully and to succeed later in life. Research has shown that being able to read fluently by the age of six has a strong correlation with future academic success, so we strive to give our learners the best start to their learning journey by teaching early reading, and writing, through high quality, systematic synthetic phonics teaching.

## Implementation

At St. Edward's Catholic Primary School, we teach daily, discreet Phonics sessions to learners in EYFS and KS1, as well as any children in Key Stage 2 who need to continue with their learning further.

### Scheme

We use Read, Write Inc. It ensures that each session gives learners the opportunity to revise previously learned *graphemes*, learn new *graphemes* and corresponding *phonemes*, and practise by applying understanding to reading and writing activities, including words, sentences, phrases, captions and dictations. Learners are grouped, enabling lessons to be taught at an appropriate phonics phase for each child.

### Early Reading

We match our individual reading books to the phonics phase at which the children are working at in school, to enable learners to decode the words confidently when reading at home and at school. The children take home the book that they have practised during the week, with a companion 'book bag' book with similar vocabulary. Children take home an additional school library book of their own choice to share with an adult.

### Spelling

Spelling is taught within the daily phonics session, with a focus on *grapheme-phoneme correspondence* and common exception words/tricky words - words which cannot be *segmented* and *blended* easily.

### Assessment

Monitoring and assessment is done regularly (half-termly) to ensure that learners are grouped correctly and that staff can identify any precise gaps in their learning that need to be revisited, and any further intervention that needs to take place. When it is identified that interventions are needed, they are timetabled and prioritised.

Any learners who have not reached these expectations will be grouped to allow for consolidation of previous phases and given further intervention sessions if necessary.

### Phonics Screening Check

At the end of Year 1, learners take this phonics screening check. Learners are tested on 40 words and non-words to see how well they can decode them. If learners struggle, it shows teachers who might need more support. If they do not meet the expected standard, they retake the check at the end of Year 2.

### Impact

As a result of the implementation of our phonics curriculum, we aim to support our learners to become fluent readers; where basic reading skills are embedded and automatic, enabling them to develop strong language comprehension and a rich vocabulary. We also aim to equip our learners with the necessary skills and knowledge to enable them to make accurate choices when spelling a wide range of words, and to enable them to express their ideas in writing.

## Appendix 1: terms and definitions

### **Digraph**

A type of *grapheme* where two letters represent one *phoneme*. Sometimes, these two letters are not next to one another; this is called a split digraph. For example ea in eat and a-e in cake.

### **Grapheme**

A letter, or combination of letters, that corresponds to a single *phoneme* within a word. The grapheme t in the words ten, bet and ate corresponds to the *phoneme* /t/. The grapheme ph in the word dolphin corresponds to the *phoneme* /f/.

### **GPCs (Grapheme phoneme correspondences)**

The links between letters, or combinations of letters (*graphemes*) and the speech sounds (*phonemes*) that they represent. In the English writing system, *graphemes* may correspond to different *phonemes* in different words. For example, the grapheme c corresponds to the *phoneme* /c/ in the word cat, but the *phoneme* /s/ in the word face.

### **Phoneme**

A phoneme is the smallest unit of sound that signals a distinct, contrasting meaning. For example: /t/ contrasts with /k/ to signal the difference between tap and cap

/t/ contrasts with /l/ to signal the difference between bought and ball.

It is this contrast in meaning that tells us there are two distinct phonemes at work. There are around 44 phonemes in English; the exact number depends on regional accents. A single phoneme may be represented in writing by one, two, three or four letters constituting a single *grapheme*.

### **Syllable**

A syllable sounds like a beat in a word. Syllables consist of at least one vowel, and possibly one or more consonants.

### **Segment**

### **Blend**

### **Trigraph**

A type of *grapheme* where three letters represent one *phoneme*.