Early Reading Policy – Read Write Inc

Intent

At Our Lady & St Anne’s Catholic Primary we believe that reading is an essential life skill and we are committed to enabling our children to become lifelong readers. At the heart of our strategy is our drive to foster a love of reading, enriching children’s learning through carefully designed teaching activities that utilise imaginative stories and thought-provoking texts.

Reading is a skill that enables children to develop their learning across the wider curriculum and lays the foundations for success in future lines of study and employment. We recognise the importance of taking a consistent approach to the teaching of reading throughout school, in order to close any gaps and to target the highest possible number of children attaining the expected standard or higher.

Subject Statement

At Our Lady & St Anne’s, we strive to teach children to read effectively and quickly using the Read Write Inc. Phonics programme (RWI). The RWI programme includes teaching synthetic phonics, sight vocabulary, decoding and encoding words as well as spelling and accurate letter formation. Using the RWI Scheme, to teach children to decode and then read, we aim to teach children from Early Years up to Year 2 to:

* apply their phonic knowledge and skills as the route to decode words.
* respond speedily with the correct sound to graphemes (letters or groups of letters) for all common 40+ phonemes.
* read accurately by blending sounds in unfamiliar words that contain the sounds that they have been taught.
* accurately read aloud books, that are consistent with their developing phonic knowledge and that do not require them to use other strategies to work out words.

At Our Lady & St Anne’s, these skills are embedded within daily RWI lessons. By focussing on the teaching of reading in the Early Years and KS1, using a synthetic phonics scheme, children learn to read unfamiliar printed words by blending (decoding) and speedily recognise familiar printed words by sight. We want all children to experience early success in learning to read and we are committed to developing children’s love of reading, whilst ensuring the children acquire new knowledge and build upon what they already know

We understand that learning to read and write, alongside proficient language development, is the key to allowing children access to the academic curriculum. Furthermore, fluency of reading is also a key indicator for future success in further education, higher education and employment.

These principles and features characterise our approach to the teaching of reading using RWI:

* Teachers teach RWI using a detailed, proven step-by-step teaching scheme; where children are first taught set 1 sounds, to accurately blend taught sounds, to decode simple words containing taught graphemes and then to read specifically designed books that are closely matched to their increasing knowledge of phonics and the common exception words.
* RWI teachers have all the RWI resources needed to teach RWI, and they follow detailed lesson plans. This ensures the consistency of the teaching of reading, in every RWI lesson, irrespective of the RWI reading teacher.
* Teachers attend regular in-house CPD sessions, where they have the opportunity to learn about pedagogical changes, new RWI resources and to observe and practice specific parts of the teaching process.
* Teachers make sure that pupils read books that are closely matched to their increasing knowledge of phonics and ability to read ‘tricky words’; so they experience early reading success and gain confidence that they are readers.
* Pupils are taught within groups, across year groups, which reflect their performance in RWI phonics assessments, phonic knowledge and reading level.
* Termly assessment ensures that pupils are taught in groups which match the children’s phonic ability whilst ensuring pupils make speedy progress. Those pupils making steady progress continue at an appropriate pace matched to their reading level. Those pupils making slower progress are usually taught in smaller groups and generally receive additional small group or one-to-one intervention.
* Reread books to build up their fluency, accuracy and expression and hence develop confidence and enjoyment of reading.
* Read most high-frequency regular words quickly and accurately, without overt sounding and blending; only needing to sound out unfamiliar words.
* Spell words containing each of the 40+ phonemes by segmenting the sounds in words.
* Read and spell common exception words correctly noting unusual correspondences between spelling and sound.
* Make phonetically plausible attempts to spell words correctly.
* Form each letter correctly, using RWI letter formation rhymes to encourage correct entry and exit points, orientation and letter size.

We assess all pupils from Reception to Year 2 using RWI Assessment materials. We use this data to assign them to their correct RWI Group and to identify if they need to have any additional support. This provides a good indication of their progress relative to their starting points. We track the phonic progress that pupils make from Reception to Year 2 and, at the end of Year 1; we evaluate pupils’ acquisition of speed sounds and decoding skills using the Phonics Screening Check (PSC). This ensures that we can maintain high standards in the teaching of the early stages reading in EYFS (using the Reading statements in the EYFS Profile), in Year 1 (using the PSC materials) and in Year 2 (using the statutory KS1 Reading assessment materials). Pupils in KS2 that are still acquiring word reading skills, continue to be part of the RWI program. The impact of high-qualify synthetic phonics teaching, coupled with vigorous assessment procedures ensures that Phonic attainment of Our Lady and St Anne’s pupils is well above that of the National Standards.

Teaching and learning

Daily Nursery RWI lessons start after October half term. Children have a short phonics input session, where they are taught a new Set 1 sounds per week, and they also review previously taught sounds every day. Pupils practice Fred talk, to develop decoding skills, and they learn to write the corresponding graphemes for the sounds they have be. Children also write simple CVC words, using their GPC knowledge to assist them. Towards the end of the summer term, there is an increase in the phonics focus during daily literacy lessons, where children are encouraged to hear and write the initial and final sounds in words.

Reception RWI lessons start immediately after the Reception children have completed their Baseline Assessment. Children are organised into RWI Groups within the Reception class, based on their phonic knowledge, ability to orally blend taught phonemes and read simple CVC words. This ensures the correct level of support, challenge and progression in the teaching of reading in Reception. Five RWI lessons are taught every week and each lesson lasts for approximately 30 minutes.

Daily KS1 RWI lessons commence at the start of the academic year; children are grouped by their phonic knowledge as well as their reading accuracy, fluency and comprehension. Four RWI lessons are taught every week and each lesson lasts for approximately 45 minutes. KS1 RWI lessons start with a 10-minute phonics input session, where new sounds are taught, or previously taught sounds are reviewed. Pupils learn how to apply their grapheme/phoneme knowledge to read real simple words – initially sounding out these words and then progressing onto speedy reading of real words – and also alien (pseudo) words. They also learn how to read irregular words and multisyllabic words. Following on from this, during the main part of the lesson, pupils are taught to read the regular and irregular words that are found in the RWI storybook that they are reading, and then they apply this knowledge to read RWI storybooks at their phonic level. The final part of the teaching sequence has an assessment focus, where pupils apply their phonic knowledge to read alien /pseudo words

Assessment

Daily formative assessment opportunities are built into every RWI lesson. Choral response group work, partner work, the small class size allows teachers to evaluate pupils’ phonic knowledge and hence modify the pace and focus of their lessons. Formative assessment opportunities provide teachers with knowledge of which children are making slow, steady or speedy progress and hence they can liaise with the Reading Leader to provide additional support (for children making slower progress) or an immediate assessment (for pupils making speedy progress) to allow such pupils to change group.

All pupils are assessed at the beginning of each term, or more frequently for those making speedier progress, using RWI Assessment materials. The assessment is conducted by the Reading Leader and the materials assess a pupils’ sound to grapheme correspondence, ability to apply phonic knowledge to decode regular words and to read common exception words. Pupils reading fluency is also evaluated. Pupils’ progress is tracked, to record their phonic knowledge and decoding skills, and this information is used to reorganise groups, RWI Storybook level and the focus of the phonics input of the lesson. Summative assessment is used to update RWI tracking sheets, which monitors pupils’ progress over time.

Links with home

In Nursery and Reception, whilst children are learning the Set 1 speed sounds at school, children will have the opportunity of practising the speed sounds that they have learned at school with their parents/carers. When children can blend independently, Sound blending books or RWI ditties may be sent home via their home, so that children can read these to their parents. We also send home a list of irregular words (red words) that need to be known by sight and cannot be decoded using common graphemes.

In Reception and KS1, the children will get two books each week to read at home. A RWI Book Bag books which are matched closely to their phonic ability and directly to their daily sessions. They will also get another which will provide some challenge and may contain phonetically irregular words. The children should be given support to read challenge books and are not expected to be able to read them fluently on day 1. We allocate the children two books so the books can be alternated. The children should read their book several times before the book is changed. We encourage parents to focus on specific skills; decoding, reading with expression, accuracy and fluency as well as reading for comprehension by adding support cards to the children’s reading journals.

We invite parents/carers to reading workshops at the start of every academic year, where possible, to show how parents can support their children to read at home. We also hold Phonics Screening Check meetings for Year 1 and Year 2 parents, during the spring term.