



St Mary's CE Primary School



Phonics Policy

2025-2026

'... there is something extraordinary and wondrous in everybody as unique creations of God. We value all our children as children of God and celebrate difference and diversity within a safe, encouraging Christian school environment in which all flourish.

Therefore, all will aspire with God's strength to reach for the stars.

"I can do all things through him who strengthens me."

Philippians 4:13

Intent

Through the teaching of systematic phonics, our aim is for children to become fluent readers by the end of Key Stage 1. Children can then focus on developing fluency and comprehension throughout the school.

Attainment in phonics is measured by the Phonics Screening Test at the end of Year 1 and regular Supersonic Phonic Friends assessment.

Rationale

At St. Mary's, we recognise the importance of phonological decoding as one of several strategies to develop early reading skills. When combined with reading dialogue and the promotion of reading for pleasure, children can apply these skills to tackle unfamiliar texts and to express themselves in written form, thus becoming more independent readers and writers.

Aims

- To provide pupils with a clear understanding of how the alphabet works for reading and spelling;
- To enable our pupils to become fluent and confident readers with a strong phonological awareness;
- To develop pupils' sight vocabulary to aid fluent reading;
- To provide opportunities for repetition and consolidation so that spelling and reading become automatic.

Teaching and Learning

Pupils will have a variety of teaching and learning experiences following the Systematic Synthetic Phonics (SSP) programme, Supersonic Phonics Friends. The clear planning and progression map advises staff what to teach and when. Pupils will be taught each phase in set year groups (listed below). All classes in Early Years and Key Stage One will receive a daily phonics input.

Each phonics session will follow the same structure.

1. Revisit/Recap
2. Teach
3. Practise
4. Apply

Each phonics session is well planned providing the children with a variety of multi-sensory, visual, auditory, kinaesthetic learning experiences. Through the 'apply' element of each session, pupils will use their phonic knowledge for reading and spelling.

Progression

Nursery:

Pupils will be taught:

- Firm foundation in Basic 1 - General sound discrimination and phonological awareness.
- Basic 2 - when Basic 1 is secure

Firm Foundations in Basic 1 gives children playful, daily repeated experiences, exposures, and enjoyment of General Sound Discrimination (Environmental Sounds, Instrumental Sounds, and Body Percussion) and Phonological Awareness (Rhythm and Rhyme, Alliteration, and Oral Blending and Segmenting).

In order for a child to move to Basic 2, they would need to demonstrate that they were able to tune in to, listen to and remember and talk about sounds. They would need to be skilled in Rhythm and Rhyme, Alliteration and Oral Blending and Segmenting before they start to look at the shapes of the letters on flashcards and begin their SSP journey.

Reception:

Pupils will be taught:

- Basic 2 (Listen, Recognise, Build, Read and Write)

Basic 2 teaches children at least one phoneme for 18 of the 44 sounds of the English language. Children will use their auditory processing and memory skills for Firm Foundations in Basic 1 to start to recognise the grapheme for the phoneme with Sam, segment and build with Seb and Bill, read and blend with Rex and Ben, and write with Ron. They will learn the early concepts of Choose to Use with Suze for a handful of multiple phoneme sounds. Within Basic 2, the children will also learn tricky words (words that are not phonetically decodable) with Tess.

At the end of Basic 2, children will be able to hear up to 3 phonemes in words, recognise graphemes, and read and write simple CVC words with 18 phonemes, including taught tricky words. They will be able to read decodable texts with Basic 2 phonemes and make phonetically plausible attempts in their emerging stages of their writing journey.

- Basic 3 (Recognise, Build, Read, and Write)

The Basics 3 teaches children the phonemes for a further 26 of the 44 sounds of the English language. Children will use their auditory processing and memory skills from Firm Foundations in Basic 1 and Basic 2 skills to continue to recognise the grapheme for the phoneme with Sam, segment and build with Seb and Bill, read and blend with Rex and Ben, and write with Ron. They will continue to learn the early concepts of Choose to Use with Suze for some further multiple phonemes and an introduction to Switch it with Mitch for alternative pronunciations of

phonemes. Children will learn more tricky words with Tess and read nonsense words with Nan.

At the end of Basic 3, children will be able to hear up to 3 phonemes in words, recognising graphemes, and read and write simple and complex CVC words with the 44 phonemes. They will be able to read decodable texts with Basic 2 and 3 phonemes and make phonetically plausible attempts in their early stages in their writing journey.

Handwriting and letter formation will be taught daily, and pupils will be provided with writing opportunities during free-flow sessions.

Year 1

Pupils will be taught:

- Basic 4 (Recognise, Build, Read and Write - Moving from 3 sounds to 4 plus)

The Basics 4 teaches children to be able to hear more than 3 phonemes in words. They will continue to embed their mastery of the Basics 2 and 3 graphemes for the phonemes in words and progress to 4, 5, and 6 phonemes in a word. They will be supported by Magic Mack and Jazzy Jack, who will help them hear the tricky adjacent consonants that are challenging to hear in words of more than 3 phonemes. Children will learn their tricky words with Tess and read nonsense words with Nan.

At the end of Basic 4, children will be able to hear more than 3 phonemes in words, recognise and read and write CVC, CVCC, CCVC, CCVCC, CCCVC words with 44 phonemes of the English language. They will be able to

read decodable texts with Basic 2 and 3 phonemes with adjacent consonants and make phonetically plausible attempts in their evolving stages of spelling in their writing journey.

- The Higher Levels of Phonics 5c and 6 (Recognise, Build, Read and Write & Choose to Use and Switch it)

The Higher Level of Phonics teaches children the concept that there is more than one phoneme that they can hear in a word. With the help of Choose to Use Suze, they will find out all about 'sounds the same, but looks different' and cool and not so cool, choose to use spelling rules for the 44 sounds of the English language.

With the help of Switch it Mitch, they will also find out all about 'looks the same, sounds different' and switch it spelling sounds, where one spelling can make up to 2 different sounds in words.

Children will continue to learn their tricky words with Tess and read nonsense words with Nan.

At the end of this phase, children will be able to choose to use the spelling of the 44 sounds in the English language. They will also be able to switch spellings and sounds for alternative pronunciations. They will be able to read decodable texts with Basics to The Higher Levels spellings, including adjacent consonants, and make more accurate attempts in their further stages of spelling in their writing journey.

Year 2

Pupils will be taught:

- Spelling rules and Appendices Read and Write - Suze's Spelling Rules and Patterns

Suze's Spelling Rules and Patterns will teach children very specific spelling rules, adding prefixes and suffixes, adding endings to words such as plurals and ing, ed, er, est, and compound words. They will also learn some further rarer choose to use spellings for the 44 sounds of the English Language.

Children will continue to learn tricky words with Tess.

At the end of this phase, children will be able to choose to use the spelling of the 44 phonemes in the English language. They will also be able to switch spelling and sounds for alternative pronunciations. They will be able to read texts with the Basics to The Higher Levels Spellings, spelling patterns, and rules, including adjacent constants, and make more accurate attempts in their further stages of spelling in their writing journey.

Year 3

Pupils will be provided with daily opportunities to consolidate and deepen their knowledge and understanding, in line with expectations for spelling from the English Curriculum.

Assessment and Reporting

The phonic knowledge of all pupils in Nursery, Reception, Year 1, and Year 2 will be assessed termly and recorded. These assessments will be used to inform the teacher of individual pupils' progress as well as highlighting any gaps which have emerged to shape the teaching of phonics for the coming term for the class, groups, and individuals, including any additional teaching intervention which may be required.

In addition to the termly assessments, the bottom 20% of children will be given extra phonics sessions and/or reading sessions. Other children may be identified through ongoing day-to-day assessments and may require immediate and additional support so they do not become at risk of falling behind, and this will be provided.

In line with statutory requirements, all pupils in Year 1 will undertake a phonics screening. Before this, pupils will gain experience in accessing similar test materials as those used in the screening, and a gap analysis will be conducted and used to address learning needs.

In line with statutory requirements, any pupils who do not meet the expected standard in the Year 1 phonics screen will be rescreened in Year 2. From September, they will be monitored and supported through close teacher assessment and regular phonic interventions.

Any individual pupils who are still receiving phonics support after Year 2 will be assessed and monitored.

Signed.....

Date

Next Review Date: September 2026

