



Phonics



At St. Cuthbert's and St. Sebastian's we recognise the importance of embedding early reading to ensure our children have every opportunity to access the whole curriculum as they grow. The National Curriculum for English aims to ensure that all pupils can 'read easily, fluently and with good understanding.'

Implementation

At St. Cuthbert's and St. Sebastian's, early reading is taught using a systematic synthetic approach using Letters and Sounds, which then moves to Year 1 and Year 2 Phonics published by School Improvement Liverpool.

Our children begin their reading journey as soon as they enter our Nursery. We recognise the importance of developing children's speaking and listening skills at the very beginning in Phase 1. Teachers in our Foundation Unit ensure they plan ample opportunities for our children to become attuned to the sounds around them in both our indoor and outdoor learning spaces. This is where we lay the foundations for the blending and segmenting phonic work to come.

We ensure sufficient time is allocated to the teaching of phonics in our school. Children are grouped according to the phase they are working within, enabling the teaching to target the needs of children specifically. Lessons are coherently planned and sequenced with children revisiting previous learning, acquiring new learning about spelling rules and finally practising and applying their learning. In Early Years and KS1, we have a fully established system which ensures the effective teaching of High Frequency Words and Common Exception Words, further supporting our teaching of phonics. The children learn to read and spell five words at a time, progressing through the levels as they achieve in reading and writing the words independently.

At the early stages of reading, decodable reading materials are closely matched to the learner's phonics knowledge as they build phoneme/grapheme correspondence. Children develop the skill of blending the sounds into words for reading and establish the habit of applying this skill whenever they encounter new words. Teachers give pupils sufficient practice to embed these skills in reading and re-reading books they know, both at school and at home. Our children are encouraged to make use of phonic strategies when taking part in all reading and writing activities throughout the curriculum.

Half-termly phonics assessments inform teachers of progress and give opportunities to reorganise groups being taught. The Year 1 Phonics Screening Check allows us to identify each individual child's progress, making sure they are on track to become fluent readers who can enjoy reading for pleasure and for learning. Children in lower Key Stage 2 who did not pass the Phonics Screening Check in Key Stage 1 will be given access to alternative ways to learn to read. Interventions such as Precision Teaching will be available and teaching staff will monitor these carefully to ensure each child is accessing the most suitable and effective intervention for them.

Opportunities for CPD throughout the year ensure our staff are equipped with the most relevant curriculum updates and feel confident in their planning and delivery of phonics throughout the school. Throughout the year we deliver parent workshops in EYFS and KS1 to ensure there is consistency in our approach to the teaching and learning of phonics and that our parents understand the expectations in every year group as their child learns to read.

Impact

We believe our children will:

- Demonstrate a clear understanding of phoneme/grapheme correspondence
- Use their knowledge of sounds to de-code new words that they hear or see
- Use and apply all of their phonic knowledge to achieve a pass mark in the Phonics Screening Check
- Develop their skills in order to read any kind of text fluently and accurately
- Confidently apply their phonic knowledge when reading and writing in all areas of the curriculum