



# St. Cuthbert's Catholic Primary School

## Phonics Rationale



### **Phonics**

#### **Intent**

At St Cuthbert's, we recognise that learning to read is one of the most important skills children will acquire. We believe that every child can become a confident, fluent reader through high-quality teaching and early intervention. Reading is the gateway to the wider curriculum, and we are committed to ensuring that every child develops the knowledge and skills needed to read accurately, fluently and with understanding.

Our phonics curriculum is built upon a systematic synthetic phonics approach and provides children with the essential foundations for reading and writing. We aim to develop confident readers who can apply their phonic knowledge automatically, enabling them to access the full curriculum and develop a lifelong love of reading. Through consistent teaching, high expectations and timely support, we ensure that all children, regardless of their starting point, are given the best possible opportunity to succeed.

#### **Implementation**

At St Cuthbert's, early reading is taught through the Read Write Inc. (RWI) systematic synthetic phonics programme, delivered with fidelity from Nursery onwards.

Children begin their reading journey in Nursery, where strong foundations are established through the development of speaking and listening skills, phonological awareness and rich language experiences. Carefully planned opportunities both indoors and outdoors encourage children to listen carefully, distinguish sounds, develop vocabulary and prepare for the blending and segmenting skills that underpin successful reading.

Daily phonics lessons are delivered by trained staff following the Read Write Inc. programme with consistency and pace. Children are grouped according to their current phonic knowledge rather than age, ensuring teaching is closely matched to individual need. Lessons follow a consistent structure that revisits previous learning, introduces new sounds, provides opportunities for practice and enables children to apply their learning immediately in reading and writing.

Decodable reading books are carefully matched to each child's phonic knowledge, allowing children to practise and consolidate newly taught sounds until reading becomes accurate, automatic and fluent. Children regularly re-read familiar texts to build fluency, confidence and expression, while applying their phonic knowledge across the wider curriculum.

Assessment is integral to our phonics provision. Regular half-termly assessments inform teaching, allowing children to move groups swiftly as their knowledge develops. The Year 1 Phonics Screening Check provides a further opportunity to monitor progress and identify any pupils requiring additional support. Children who need further practice continue to access the Read Write Inc. programme beyond Key Stage 1, alongside targeted interventions including Fast Track Tutoring and Fresh Start to ensure they catch up quickly.

High-quality professional development ensures all staff have the expertise to deliver phonics consistently and effectively. Coaching, monitoring and regular training maintain fidelity to the

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programme and ensure the highest standards of teaching. Strong partnerships with parents are fostered through workshops, information sharing and home reading, enabling families to support children's phonics and early reading confidently at home.

### Impact

Through our systematic approach to phonics, children develop the knowledge, confidence and fluency needed to become successful readers.

Our children:

- demonstrate secure knowledge of phoneme-grapheme correspondence and apply this confidently when reading and writing;
- decode unfamiliar words accurately and increasingly automatically, enabling them to read with fluency and understanding;
- make strong progress through the Read Write Inc. programme and achieve well in the Year 1 Phonics Screening Check;
- apply their phonic knowledge confidently across the curriculum to support both reading and writing;
- develop into fluent, enthusiastic readers who are fully prepared to access the wider curriculum and enjoy reading for both pleasure and learning.

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