



St James' First School

Phonics Curriculum Overview

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Introduction

At St James', we believe that our most important job is to teach children to read. Our intent is, not only to ensure children are fluent and functional readers by the time they enter Key Stage 2, but also that we nurture a love of reading. Through our extensive reading curriculum, we intend for our children to develop the comprehension and fluency skills to be successful life-long readers, therefore gaining the necessary skills to progress in all other areas of the curriculum.

Intent

At St James' we value reading as a key life skill and we are dedicated to enabling all our children to become lifelong readers and have a love of reading and literature. We recognise that mastery in phonics is fundamental to children being able to access a broad range of fiction and non-fiction texts across the curriculum. Therefore, we use the Read Write Inc synthetic phonics programme to teach our children the core skills of segmenting and blending and to start them on their 'reading journey'. Children will learn to read fluently and at speed, so they can focus on developing their skills in comprehension, vocabulary and spelling.

Implementation

The systematic teaching of phonics has a high priority throughout the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and Key Stage 1. Children are placed in homogenous groups after being assessed every half term, and are given appropriate RWI books to follow. Phonics is taught daily for 40 minutes to all children in EYFS, Year 1 and Year 2. For those children who are not making the expected level of progress in phonics and reading will have 1:1 or small group interventions. With RWI we complete one-to-one tutoring for our slowest progress readers in YR to Y4 that are below age-related expectations, to ensure that no child is left behind. Staff may also use 'Pinny Time' to revisit key sounds/words at incidental points throughout the day in Reception and Key Stage 1.



How will Read Write Inc be taught?

RWI Phonics is presented in a simple but exciting format so that pupils can learn how to read and write sounds effortlessly

Reception

In Reception, all children will learn how to 'read' the sounds in words and how those sounds can be written down. Children are encouraged to transfer the skills they learn in phonics sessions into their independent reading and writing in the continuous provision.

Reading

The children:

- learn 44 sounds and the corresponding letters/letter groups using simple picture prompts
- learn to read words using Fred talk and sound blending
- read 'tricky' (red words) on sight
- read from a range of storybooks and non-fiction books matched to their phonic knowledge
- work well with partners
- develop comprehension skills in stories by answering 'Find It' and 'Prove It' discussion questions

Writing

The children:

- learn to write and form the letters/letter groups which represent the 44 sounds with the help of fun phrases
- learn to write words by using Fred Talk
- learn to build sentences by practising sentences out loud before they write

Talking

The children:

- They work in pairs so that they:
- answer every question
- practise every activity with their partner
- take turns in talking and reading to each other
- develop ambitious vocabulary

Year One & Year Two

Children follow the same format as Reception but will work on complex sounds and read books appropriate to their reading level. Daily sessions of RWI phonics last for 40 minutes and is supported by an additional reading session.

Phonics Screening Check Year One

The Year 1 phonics screening check is a short, light-touch assessment to confirm whether individual pupils have learnt phonic decoding to an appropriate standard. It will identify the children who need extra help so they are given support to improve their reading skills.



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Impact

Through the teaching of systematic phonics, our aim is for children to become fluent readers by the end of Key Stage One. With decoding taught as the prime approach to reading, pupils will become familiar with this strategy and have the confidence to work out unfamiliar words in any new text they encounter even when they have come to the end of the RWI programme. Pupils will have the opportunity to develop their fluency and comprehension as they move through the school, accessing a range of texts independently.

Attainment in reading is measured using statutory assessments such as the end of EYFS, Key Stage 1 and 2 and following the outcomes in the Year 1 Phonics-Screening check. Additionally, we track our own reading attainment using the RWI assessment programme every half-term. Our data is consistently above national the average.