

Phonics and Early Reading Policy

All the activities in St Mary's School are carried out in the Christian spirit and promote the school values of Faith, Family and Future – Building a positive future for all as part of God's loving family. St Mary's is a UNICEF Rights Respecting School and its Whole School Charter is based on the school values and the UN convention of the rights of the child. St Mary's School prides itself in providing equal opportunities for all members of its family regardless of disability, religion, sexual orientation, culture, gender, ethnic origin, colour or age. All pupils have access to the curriculum, and the right to a learning environment which dispels ignorance, prejudice or stereotyping.

Statement of Commitment

At St Mary's, we are committed to ensuring that every child succeeds and has opportunities to learn and live without limits. We are dedicated to raising the achievement and attainment of all pupils, enabling them to do the best they can within a positive, supportive, secure and safe learning environment. Through a quality parent partnership, rigorous assessment and monitoring, the school will identify individual pupil's needs and recognise and build on the skills they bring to school. Through quality first teaching based on experiences and talk, we aim to meet the emotional and pastoral needs of our learners.

This policy should be read in conjunction with the English policy and Phonics Progression document.

Intent

Reading has an important place in education and society and opens the door to learning. A child who reads a lot will become a good reader. At St Mary's Primary School, we believe that fostering a love of reading is the key to all learning and as such children are exposed to books on a daily basis. We want all pupils at St. Mary's Primary School to begin their journey to read with confidence. We want them to develop a love of reading and apply their skills competently to writing. We aim to do this through:

- Ensuring a consistent approach, to the teaching of phonics, across the school.
- Ensuring that children are given opportunities to use and apply their phonics learning.
- Ensuring that all children use phonics, as their first approach, when reading and writing.
- Ensuring that all children, entering KS2, are secure at decoding unfamiliar texts.

Implementation

At St. Mary's Primary School, we teach phonics using the Read, Write Inc. Phonics programme (RWI). During the Nursery year, pupils develop a range of skills to prepare them for reading. They access activities which include, singing songs, reciting nursery rhymes, listening to sounds in the environment and being able to identify sounds in words they hear. From Autumn 2 in the Reception year, children (Reception-Year 2) are taught, in homogenous groups, depending on their age not stage. Phonics lessons are taught daily for 20 minutes. It is intended, that pupils will have completed the RWI phonics programme by the end of Autumn 2 in Year 2. By the time children complete the transition from KS1 to KS2 we intend that they will have completed the RWI phonics programme. Those children who have not reached the expected level by the time they leave KS1 will continue to access the RWI programme and receive additional targeted intervention to ensure they catch up with their peers.

A love of reading is promoted through a range of activities including carefully selected texts for story time and the topics which are being taught, mystery books and the reading scrapbook.

Assessment and Monitoring

Phonics online assessments are carried out half-termly and the Reading Leader rearranges groups accordingly. Regular assessments ensure that children receive targeted teaching quickly according to their needs. Children who are progressing through the programme quicker than their peers are moved into a different group and those who are at risk of falling behind the programme's pace and expectations are given additional support using the RWI one to one tutoring programme.

Parents/Carers

We endeavour to involve and train parents/carers in supporting phonics and reading at home through information sessions, parent workshops and online resources.

Home learning/resources

Reading books/resources are changed weekly. Phonics videos are sent home via class dojo on a weekly basis to pupils in Nursery (Autumn 2), Reception, Year 1 and (if applicable Year 2).

Nursery

In the Autumn Term, the nursery children take home a nursery rhyme pack/reading for pleasure book. In the Spring Term, nursery rhyme packs are replaced with a wordless picture book. There may be occasions where a Nursery pupil is ready to move onto the next stage and in these instances, they continue through the planned resources for Reception.

Reception/KS1 pupils

Pupils initially take home a wordless picture book/reading for pleasure book. As their phonics skills develop, they move onto blending books and ditty sheets. Once children reach Red Ditty books they take home 1 Read, Write Inc. book bag book (linked to sounds they know) and a reading for pleasure/alternative reading book which is sent as an additional resource should they wish to use it. Resources to support the recognition of 'red words' (non-phonetic) are also sent home with pupils.

A Shared Vision

A key element of Read Write Inc. is consistent whole-school practise. This is underpinned by appropriate professional development. All staff have received regular Development Days supported by a consultant from the Ruth Miskin training team and have access to training videos and additional support materials via the Ruth Miskin school portal.

This policy was adopted by: St Mary's C.E. Primary School, Davyhulme	Date: September 2025
Reviewed: September 2026	Signed: