



# St John Fisher Catholic Voluntary Academy

## Early Reading Policy



*For I know the plans I have for you;  
plans to give you hope and a future – Jeremiah 29:11*

<i>Gospel Values</i>	<i>Love, Forgiveness, Compassion, Hope, Gratitude</i>
<i>Catholic Social Teaching</i>	<i>Stewardship, Family and community, Dignity of the human person, Dignity of work, Option for the poor, Solidarity, The common good.</i>
<i>British Values</i>	<i>Respect, Tolerance and Rule of Law, Democracy, Individual Liberty</i>
<i>School Values</i>	<i>Right Judgement, Courage, Knowledge, Understanding, Reverence</i>

Approved by: Patricia Hurd

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# Our Mission and Values

**Guided by Jesus' love and example, we use our gifts to grow, pray and learn as a community; united in faith.**

*For I know the plans I have for you; plans to give you hope and a future. Jeremiah 29:11*

At St John Fisher, we recognise that for children to achieve their full potential, our Mission Statement, the Gospel values, and the teaching of the Catholic Church need to be modelled and defined consistently by all staff, so the children understand how they relate to their own lives at school, home and in the community.

The Gospel Values are: Love, Forgiveness, Compassion, Hope, Gratitude, Service and Justice.

Central to our school is making the Catholic faith the foundation of our culture ensuring that children respect themselves and others, realising that we are all unique and made in the image and likeness of God.

## **Aims of the Policy**

At St. John Fisher, we are committed to high quality teaching and learning to raise standards of achievement for all children. All staff and governors have been consulted in developing this policy, which summarises expectations and common working practices during the teaching and learning of early reading in EYFS and KS1. It reflects what has been agreed in terms of approach and consistency and makes explicit the best practice to which the school aspires. It also reflects the aims and objectives of the teaching and learning of reading.

Reading skills are important to children's successes throughout their learning journey in school. It allows them to access the breadth of our curriculum. At St. John Fisher Academy, we recognise that education involves children, parents, staff, governors, the community, diocese and the local authority, and that for optimum benefit all should work closely together to support the process of learning in reading. Working in partnership, we aim to:

- provide a Christ-centred, supportive, positive, healthy, caring and safe environment, which has high expectations and values all members of the school community;
- recognise the needs and aspirations of all individuals and provide opportunities for all pupils to make the best possible progress and attain the highest personal achievements in reading; to enable them to 'grow in faith and have faith in growing'.
- ensure children can develop as literate individuals, within a broad, balanced, exciting and challenging curriculum;
- provide rich and varied contexts and experiences for pupils to acquire, develop and apply a broad range of knowledge, skills and understanding;
- provide a reading curriculum which promotes the spiritual, moral, social, cultural, physical, mental and emotional development of the pupils;
- develop individuals with lively, enquiring minds, good thinking skills, self-respect, self-discipline and positive attitudes;

- encourage all children to be enthusiastic and committed learners, promoting their self-esteem, self-worth and emotional well-being;
- develop children's confidence and capacity to learn and work independently and collaboratively.

### **Curriculum Intent Statement**

#### Basic Principles:

- Learning is a change to long-term memory.
- Our aims are to ensure that our students experience a wide breadth of study and have, by the end of each key stage, long-term memory of an ambitious body of procedural and semantic knowledge.

#### Curriculum Intent

As a whole school, we are committed to using the Sounds-Write (linguistic phonics) approach to assist the children from reception to year 3 to learn to read, write and spell independently with accuracy, understanding and confidence.

The Sounds-Write approach ensures that:

- A) Children develop key concepts about the way English is written.
- B) Children practise the skills essential for reading and spelling accurately.
- C) Children learn the sounds and the spellings of English.

#### A. Concepts

Through the sounds-Write programme children will understand that;

##### Concept 1

Letters represent sounds NB: Letters do not 'make' sounds they represent them and, as teachers and learning support assistants, we should be careful that, when we are teaching children to read, we use appropriate phrases to reinforce this e.g. 'what sound do you say for this?' (Pointing to letter or letters) not 'what sound does this letter make?'

##### Concept 2

A sound can be spelled with 1,2,3 or 4 letters. The English language contains single letter spellings. For example, in the word 'cat' c-a-t. These are relatively simple to read and spell. However, many sounds are spelled with two or more letters e.g. oa in boat, ou in out and igh in high. These present more of a problem for a nonskilled reader and will need to be pointed out by the teacher and practised by the child. It is important to understand that letters don't make sounds, they represent or spell them.

##### Concept 3

In English the same sound is often written with different spellings (same sound, different spellings). In English every sounds that we say can be represented by at least 2 different spellings. In many cases the number of different spellings of the same sound is much larger; maybe 8 or 9! The sound 's' for example is written in

different ways in these words: Sat, city, voice, mess, house, listen, scent. There are 44 speech sounds and around 175 different ways to spell those sounds, using a combination of the 26 alphabetic letters. New readers must learn that there are more ways than one to represent the same sound so that they learn to look very carefully in order to spell well.

#### Concept 4

In English, the same spelling can spell different sounds For example, spells the sound /o/ in dog, /oe/ in go and /oo/ in do. Readers need to be able to swap sounds (phoneme manipulation) to read the word accurately if another possible sound for that spelling has been tried first.

#### B. Skills

##### 1. Blending

Because words are composed of sounds, in order to read we need to be able to blend sounds together and at the end 'hear' a meaningful word. Daily practise in the SoundsWrite lessons will develop good blending.

##### 2. Segmenting

Because the English written language is a sound > spelling code it is important that children are taught to segment the sounds in words so they can read and spell with ease. Through segmenting children have the opportunity to notice the ways in which the individual sounds are spelled.

##### 3. Phoneme Manipulation

Skilled readers are able to add, change or omit sounds in words and understand how this manipulation of sounds makes new words. This skill of phoneme manipulation is essential so that a new reader can swap sounds around to deal with same spelling, different sound.

#### C. Code Knowledge

For skilled fluent reading it is vital that children have a thorough knowledge of the spelling code of the 44 sounds of English. The code is taught through multi-sensory activities and lessons where the children are building whole words sound by sound, reading words and writing words. Initially we work with words where the spellings are 1:1 (sound:letter).

Later we move to 2 letter spellings and we teach the spelling alternatives for the sounds. In each school year, we extend the number of sounds taught and also the number of spellings covered. (The order of teaching the sounds and spellings are included in the appendix.) Children need to be taught explicitly and extensively how the sounds of English are written. This teaching and learning should be repeatedly revised and reinforced during daily reading and spelling activities. The code should not be allowed to remain a mystery to pupils.

The Sounds-Write (linguistic phonics) programme is based on extensive research which has isolated and examined the processes involved in learning to read and spell. Each component of the programme is carefully designed so that the developing reader/writer can be guided by explicit instruction at every critical point. Through whole class instruction, extension activities, small group practice all children in our school will be equipped with the necessary concepts, skills and knowledge to become independent in reading, writing and spelling.

As with all tasks some children will learn quicker and some will need extra practice and teaching. Each child's progress will be commensurate with their level of ability. It is our intention that all pupils, including those who are disadvantaged and those with SEND acquire the concepts, skills and knowledge and plan appropriate scaffolding, support and intervention to ensure at least good progress for all pupils.

## Implementation

1. Sounds Write is a training programme. All teachers attend a four-day course based on the method. The course informs teachers about aspects of delivering the programme. It also allows teachers the opportunity to practise the lessons under the guidance of well-qualified trainers and return to the classrooms ready to begin teaching the method with little further preparation. Each teacher that has completed the training is given a SoundsWrite manual to use when planning.
2. Teachers will follow the Early Reading Road Map, selecting from the SoundsWrite Manual lessons to introduce, practise and embed concepts and skills. Teachers will select lessons to ensure children are retrieving prior knowledge and applying it to read new words.
3. Teachers will plan daily Sounds Write lessons lasting 45 minutes a day. This period of time will be built up in EYFS from day 1 to fulfil 45 minutes by the end of the first half term.
4. Teachers and teaching assistants will provide children with books which match their competence and confidence. In line with Sounds Write training advice, children will be allocated books 2 units prior to current learning.
5. Teachers and teaching assistants will observe and evaluate progress on a daily basis. They will scaffold for those children who are not yet confident and competent to complete tasks independently. If any pupils are not making good progress, they will bring them to the attention of SLT and Early Reading Lead who will work with the teacher to plan and implement appropriate focused interventions.

## Impact

1. Because learning is a change to long-term memory, it is impossible to see impact in the short term.
2. We do, however use probabilistic assessment based on deliberate practise. This means that we look at the practices taking place to determine whether they are appropriate, related to our goals and likely to produce results in the long-run. We use comparative judgment in two ways: we will use teacher judgement based on everyday lessons, according to the reading milestones. We test termly to help formulate and evidence our assessed judgements. This also supports our children with test technique and fluency.
3. The termly tests (Phonics Tracker) also allow us to complete a gap analysis to allow us to identify which domains we need to revisit and further plan for in the coming half term.
4. Achievement teams and pupil progress meetings are carried out every term to enable us to plan and identify ways to support those who are not yet making the expected progress. These are then reviewed to ensure impact is effective.
5. We use lesson observations, and learning walks to see if the pedagogical style matches our depth expectations.
6. We monitor and put into place intervention and support to ensure that all pupils have the reading skills to be fully prepared to access the whole curriculum beyond KS1. We are ambitiously aim that we meet or exceed expectations in regard to the National Phonics Screening Check.