

## **Early Reading and Phonics**

At St Teresa's Catholic Primary school reading is at the very heart of our curriculum. It is our intent that all children will be a reader by the time they leave our school. From the start of their journey with us, children are supported to develop and nurture a love of reading. They are continually exposed to high quality texts and through a consistent and daily teaching of phonics, they are provided with the necessary skills they need to decode confidently and read fluently.

To teach reading we follow the Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised systematic and synthetic phonics programme. Throughout the teaching of the scheme children's reading books are closely matched to the taught graphemes. These 'decodable' books are practiced in school reading sessions three times a week and then sent home for children to practice until fluent. The books offer the children a mixture of fiction and non-fiction texts, which challenge them at an appropriate level to ensure accelerated learning.

Parent involvement and partnership with school in their child's educational journey is a key part of our phonics programme. We involve parents from the start of their child's journey in school through phonics workshops to ensure that parents are onboard and supporting their child's learning of phonics. These sessions are designed to help support parents to gain knowledge and understanding of what phonics is, how it is taught and helps parents to develop the skills to support phonics, early reading and writing at home. Further information about the Little Wandle programme for parents can be found at the link below.

<https://www.littlewandle.org.uk/resources/for-parents/>

## **Phonics Teaching: Little Wandle Phonics Programme**

Phonics sessions from Reception onwards reflect the following structure:

Revisit and review – Practise recognition and recall of previously taught letters. Practise oral blending and segmentation.

Teach – Teach a new grapheme. Teach blending or segmenting using known and taught graphemes.  
Teach a new tricky word.

Practise – Practise reading or spelling words using the taught graphemes.

Apply – Read or write a caption or sentence using high frequency and decodable words.

These skills taught in the phonics sessions are then used to read decodable books in the Reading Sessions three times a week. Children are taught to use phonics as the approach to decoding an unfamiliar word.

Children in EYFS are taught how to apply their phonic knowledge independently and are provided with opportunities to practice and consolidate their skills in both reading and writing through continuous provision in the classroom. Children are also taught 'Tricky Words' in line with the Little Wandle phonics progression, these are then further practised through the continuous provision in the classroom to enable children to sequentially build their store of words to become fluent and confident readers across a wide variety of situations.

### **Guided Reading Sessions**

All children in Reception and Key Stage 1 have a guided reading session two or three times a week. These sessions last for approximately 15-20minutes and follow a similar format to the daily phonics sessions to help prevent cognitive overload. The sessions follow a format of 'Revisit and Review' followed by 'Practise and Apply'. The sessions focus on a different aspect of reading, fluency, prosody and early comprehension skills

Some children will have further time built in during the week to read with an adult, if required.

### **Accelerated reader**

Once the children have completed the Little Wandle phonics books they move onto our Accelerated reader programme. Accelerated Reader is a programme used widely across the country to help teachers to monitor independent reading and track progress.

### **How it works**

Children complete a diagnostic 'Star Reader Test', this determines their 'ZPD' which stands for Zone of Proximal Development. The ZPD is a guide to the range of books that are pitched at exactly the right level for each child – including an appropriate amount of stretch at the higher end of their ZPD. The ZPD is allocated by the programme and is based not only on a child's word recognition but also their comprehension of a text. The 'Star Reader Test' is repeated regularly throughout the year so that teachers can monitor progress.

Once children have their ZPD, they can choose a book within their level to read.

Every book, that has an AR Reading Practice Quiz, is given a points value. AR points are based on the length of the book (number of words). When a child has read a book, they are able to complete a quiz, and this allows them to earn points. This 'points target' is personalised to each child and is linked to their reading ability. Once a child has completed a book they should take the quiz, children are given time to take quizzes during the school day however, they are also able to do this at home

### **How can I find further information?**

Visit the AR Bookfinder at [www.arbookfind.co.uk](http://www.arbookfind.co.uk) to conduct a search of all available books with quizzes. You can also search for appropriate books according to topics of interest, book level, and it is also possible to find out which books that your child reads from home have a quiz along with their book level.