



**ST CHARLES' CATHOLIC**  
**PRIMARY SCHOOL**

**PHONICS POLICY**

<b><u>PHONICS POLICY</u></b>		
<b><u>AGREED:</u></b> <b><u>SEPTEMBER 2021</u></b>	<b><u>REVIEWED</u></b> <b><u>MARCH 2024</u></b>	<b><u>NEXT REVIEW:</u></b> <b><u>MARCH 2026</u></b>

Our Mission at St Charles' Catholic Primary School is to...  
LOVE, LEARN, GROW TOGETHER

St Charles' Catholic Primary School  
Handwriting and Presentation Policy

Our pupils learn to read and write effectively and quickly using the *Read Write Inc.* Phonics programme. They progress onto *Read Write Inc.* Spelling once they can read with accuracy and speed.

***Read Write Inc. Phonics***

The programme is for:

Pupils in Year R to Year 2 who are learning to read and write

Any pupils in Years 2, 3 and 4 who need to catch up rapidly

Struggling readers in Years 5 and 6 follow *Read Write Inc. Fresh Start*.

In *Read Write Inc.* Phonics pupils:

- Decode letter-sound correspondences quickly and effortlessly, using their phonic Knowledge and skills
- Read common exception words on sight
- Understand what they read
- Read aloud with fluency and expression
- Write confidently, with a strong focus on vocabulary and grammar
- Spell quickly and easily by segmenting the sounds in words
- Acquire good handwriting.

In addition, we teach pupils to work effectively with a partner to explain and consolidate what they are learning. This provides the teacher with opportunities to assess learning and to pick up on difficulties, such as pupils' poor articulation, or problems with blending or alphabetic code knowledge.

We group pupils homogeneously, according to their progress in reading rather than their writing. This is because it is known that pupils' progress in writing will lag behind progress in reading, especially for those whose motor skills are less well developed.

In Year R we emphasise the alphabetic code. The pupils rapidly learn sounds and the letter or groups of letters they need to represent them. Simple mnemonics help them to grasp this quickly. This is especially useful for pupils at risk of making slower progress. This learning is consolidated daily. Pupils have frequent practice in reading high frequency words with irregular spellings – common exception words.

We make sure that pupils read books that are closely matched to their increasing knowledge of phonics and the common exception words. This is so that, early on, they experience success and gain confidence that they are readers. Re-reading and discussing these books with the teacher supports their increasingly fluent decoding.

Alongside this, the teachers read a wide range of stories, poetry and non-fiction to pupils; they are soon able to read these texts for themselves. Embedding the alphabetic code early on means that pupils quickly learn to write simple words and sentences. We encourage them to compose each sentence aloud until they are confident to write independently. We make sure they write every day. Pupils write at the level of their spelling knowledge. The quality of the vocabulary they use in their writing reflects the language they have heard in the books the teacher has read to them; they have also discussed what the words mean. Our aim is for pupils to complete the phonics programme as quickly as possible. The sooner they complete it, the sooner they will be able to choose books to read at their own interest

### Outcomes for Children

#### Assessing and tracking progress

We assess all pupils following Read Write Inc. *Phonics* using the Entry Assessment. We use this data to assign them to either *Read Write Inc. Phonics*. This gives us a very good indication of how well they are making progress relative to their starting points. We do this for all pupils, whenever they join us, so we can track all of them effectively, including those eligible for the pupil premium.

For those on the *Read Write Inc. Phonics* programme, we record their starting date and entry point on the tracker to monitor the rate at which they are making progress. We can also easily identify those who joined the programme later.

We have high expectations for all our pupils and aim for them to be off the programme as soon as possible.

Pupils who are making slower progress usually complete the programme by the end of Year 2. We support pupils who have identified special educational needs for however long it takes until they can read. For example, we identify those who are at risk of falling behind their peers immediately – whatever their age. Highly trained staff tutor them for 15 minutes every day, using the *Read Write Inc. One-to-one* tutoring programme. If a child arrives in Key Stage 2 reading below their chronological age or with English as an additional language they are taught *Read Write Inc. Phonics* until they too catch up with their peers.

By the end of Key Stage 1, our pupils are able to read aloud age-appropriate texts accurately and with sufficient speed for comprehension. This means that we can focus on developing their comprehension, preparing them well for transition to Key Stage 2. Their good decoding skills mean that they have a sound strategy for decoding unfamiliar words when they come across them at whatever stage or in any subject, even into secondary school.

### Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

The programmes' 'cycle of instruction' means that, after direct instruction and guided practice, the pupils teach another pupil. In this way they all rehearse and consolidate what they have been learning. This helps the pupils to make their understanding clear to themselves and helps the teacher deal with any misconceptions. 'Partner teaching' is a key assessment tool. We also use this approach very effectively in other subjects.

In *Read Write Inc. Phonics*, because the pupils are grouped across the school in terms of their reading ability, they are reading at an appropriate decoding level every day. The homogeneous groups in the Phonic lessons help us to focus the teaching and ensure pupils learn to read quickly.

The Reading Lead will assess pupil progress every half term using the online assessment tool. Pupils will be grouped accordingly although the Reading Leader will complete informal assessments throughout the term on identified pupils. This data allows us to

intervene in different ways. For instance, we quickly move pupils to another group if they are progressing faster than their peers. Those who continue to struggle have one-to-one tutoring so that they keep up.

In Read Write Inc lessons, All the pupils are engaged, with a positive impact on their behaviour. They learn to participate fully: we agree with them the rules for working in a group or discussing with a partner. We discourage 'hands up' for answering questions because we believe that all pupils should answer every question. The teacher selects pupils to answer.

The *Read Write Inc.* programmes have detailed lesson plans. These give the teachers practical day-to-day guidance, but we work hard to build on these plans so that the lessons are matched carefully to the needs of their particular group. Every activity is prepared thoroughly and has a clear purpose. The teacher explains this at the beginning so that the pupils understand, during the activity, what they are learning and why.

### **Additional support for lower-attaining pupils learning to read**

Pupils in the 'lowest' attaining group have the widest variety of needs. This is therefore the least homogeneous group. Staff teaching these groups will receive the most support from the Reading Leader. In order to give the lowest attaining 20% of pupils the best opportunity to achieve the expected standard, they will have daily one-to-one tutoring for 10minutes, in addition to their group session in the morning. This tutoring is delivered by a trained tutor and helps us to meet their individual needs.

### **Feedback and marking**

We emphasise constructive feedback. For example, we use silent signals to praise pupils for how hard they work together to ensure that their learning is successful.

We have clear systems for marking pupils' work. Pupils know their teacher's expectations for each activity. We mark short activities with the pupils in the lesson. We discuss the outcomes with the group and individuals so that the marking is genuinely used to take forward pupils' learning.

### **Home Reading**

All EYFS and KS1 pupils take home books which are fully decodable and based on their current learning. Pupils will take home a paper/electronic copy of the storybook they have read in school as well as a linked book bag book. Pupils also take home familiar picture books that can be shared with their parents. They are encouraged to read picture books more than once so they are able to re-tell the story out loud and recall details and vocabulary.

### **Quality of teaching and pupils' progress**

The headteacher and reading leader monitor pupils' progress together until every child can read. No child is left behind to struggle. Staff will participate in coaching and practise sessions and receive formal training frequently either face to face or online using the Ruth Miskin School Portal.

### **Effectiveness of leadership and management**

#### **Shared vision**

The school's shared vision is that every pupil learns to read quickly and continues to read – widely and often. The headteacher works with all the staff to ensure that this happens. In particular, she works closely with the reading leader to monitor the quality of teaching and to provide coaching for staff (teachers and teaching assistants).

The role of the reading leader is critical. Alongside the headteacher, the reading leader drives the teaching of *Read Write Inc. Phonics*.

The reading leader's roles include:

- ensuring that our teaching of reading is of the highest quality and that all our pupils make progress.
- ensuring pupils in the 'lower progress' group are making good progress and organising one-to-one tutoring for the pupils who need extra support.
- keeping the groups homogeneous, i.e. at the same reading level
- providing further training (through masterclasses, coaching/ observation and face-to-face feedback)

The reading team is made up of a team of good teachers and teaching assistants (TAs) who each teach a group of pupils at the same reading level.

### **Professional development**

A key element of *Read Write Inc.* is consistent whole-school practice, underpinned by appropriate professional development. The headteacher, all the teachers and teaching assistants are trained to teach reading. All staff have attended two-day Phonics training and the trainer has returned to support us on subsequent development days. We hold at least two development days every year to ensure we are aware of up-to-date practice. The Reading Leader, will organise and deliver frequent practise sessions and follow up with side-by-side coaching sessions to ensure all Reading Teachers are constantly developing and improving their teaching.

### **Parents and carers**

We invite parents/carers to an initial meeting and we hold workshops regularly to show how they can help their children read at home. We would like them to help their children, but we also recognise that some are not well-placed to do this. If they don't, their children won't suffer; it is our job to teach their children to read.

We have a *Read Write Inc Phonics* page on our School Website that includes useful information for parents.