

## RWI Phonics Policy - April 2022

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## Our Vision:

### Belong, Believe and Blossom.

#### Subject Statement

Aspects of the 2014 National Curriculum for English that are applicable to the early stages of the teaching of reading, aim to ensure that all pupils:

- read easily, fluently and with good understanding
- develop the habit of reading widely and often, for both pleasure and information
- write clearly, accurately and coherently, adapting their language and style in and for a range of contexts, purposes and audiences

At St Charles, we strive to teach children to read effectively and quickly using the Read Write Inc. Phonics programme (RWI) which includes teaching synthetic phonics, sight vocabulary, decoding and encoding words as well as spelling and accurate letter formation.

Using the RWI Scheme, to teach children to decode and then read, we aim to teach children from Early Years up to Year 2 to:

- apply their phonic knowledge and skills as the route to decode words
- respond speedily with the correct sound to graphemes (letters or groups of letters) for all common 40+ phonemes
- read accurately by blending sounds in unfamiliar words that contain the Grapheme Phoneme Correspondences (GPCs) that they have been taught
- read common exception words, noting unusual correspondences between spelling and sound
- read words containing taught GPCs and -s, -es, -ing, -ed, -er and -est endings
- read words of more than one syllable that contain taught GPCs
- read words with contractions and understand that the apostrophe represents the omitted letter(s)
- accurately read aloud books, that are consistent with their developing phonic knowledge and that do not require them to use other strategies to work out words
- reread books to build up their fluency, accuracy and expression and hence develop confidence and enjoyment of reading
- read most high-frequency regular words quickly and accurately, without overt sounding and blending; only needing to sound out unfamiliar words
- spell words containing each of the 40+ phonemes by segmenting the sounds in words
- spell common exception words correctly
- add prefixes and suffixes to previously taught words
- spell effortlessly, and with confidence, so that all their focus when writing can be directed towards composition
- make phonetically plausible attempts to spell words correctly

- select the correct GPC for words that contain sounds that have more than one GPC – e.g. ay, ai, a-e etc.
- form each letter correctly, using RWI letter formation rhymes to encourage correct entry and exit points, orientation and letter size.

At St Charles, these skills are embedded within daily RWI lessons. By focussing on the teaching of reading in the Early Years and KS1, using a synthetic phonics scheme, children learn to read unfamiliar printed words by blending (decoding) and speedily recognise familiar printed words by sight. We want all children to enjoy and experience early success in learning to read. We are *committed to developing children's love of reading and to help them to acquire knowledge and to build on what they already know.*

These principles and features characterise our approach to the teaching of reading using RWI:

- Teachers teach RWI using a detailed, proven step-by-step teaching scheme; where children are first taught simple GPCs, to accurately blend taught sounds, to decode simple words containing taught graphemes and then to read specifically designed books that are closely matched to their increasing knowledge of phonics and the common exception words.
- Pupils are taught within small homogenous groups, across year groups, which reflect their performance in RWI phonics assessments. We make sure that pupils read books that are closely *matched to their increasing knowledge of phonics and ability to read 'tricky words'*; so they experience early reading success and gain confidence that they are readers.
- RWI teachers have all the RWI resources needed to teach RWI and they follow detailed lesson plans. This ensures the consistency of the teaching of reading, in every RWI lesson, irrespective of the RWI reading teacher.
- Teachers attend regular in-house CPD sessions, where they have the opportunity to learn about pedagogical changes, new RWI resources and to observe and practice specific parts of the teaching process.
- Regular assessment ensures that pupils are taught in homogeneous groups which match their phonic knowledge and reading level. Pupils making speedy progress move groups quickly. Those pupils making steady progress continue at an appropriate pace matched to their reading level. Those pupils making slower progress are usually taught in smaller groups and generally receive additional small group or one-to-one intervention.

We assess all pupils from Reception to Year 2 using RWI Assessment materials. We use this data to assign them to their correct RWI Group and to identify if they need to have any additional support. This provides a good indication of their progress relative to their starting points. We track the phonic progress that pupils make from Reception to Year 2 and, at the end of Year 1; we evaluate pupils' *acquisition of GPCs and decoding skills using the Phonics Screening Check (PSC)*. This ensures that we are able to maintain high standards in the teaching of the early stages reading in EYFS (using the Reading statements in the EYFS Profile), in Year 1 (using the PSC materials) and in Year 2 (using the statutory KS1 Reading assessment materials). Pupils in KS2 that are still acquiring word reading skills, continue to be part of the RWI program through

targeted intervention and support. The impact of high-quality synthetic phonics teaching, coupled with vigorous assessment procedures ensures that attainment of St Charles is in line (or slightly above National Averages).

## Teaching and Learning

Teaching and Learning Daily Reception RWI lessons start during the Advent Term. Children have a short phonics input session, where they are taught two new Set 1 sounds per week and they also review previously taught sounds every day. Pupils practice Fred talk, to develop decoding skills, and they learn to write the corresponding graphemes for the sounds they have been taught. Children also write simple CVC words, using their GPC knowledge to assist them. Towards the end of the Advent Term, there is an increase in phonics focus during daily English lessons where children are encouraged to write using their phonetic knowledge and known sounds. At the end of each term there is a RWI assessment carried out which informs teachers of which sounds need addressing and the level in which the children are currently reading. Daily KS1 RWI lessons commence at the start of the academic year; children are grouped by their phonic knowledge as well as their reading accuracy, fluency and comprehension. Five RWI lessons are taught every week and each lesson lasts for approximately 20 minutes. Pupils learn how to apply their grapheme/phoneme knowledge to read real simple words – initially sounding out these words and then progressing onto speedy reading of words – and also alien (pseudo) words. They also learn how to read irregular words and multisyllabic words.

## Assessment:

### Assessment for Learning

AFL (assessment for learning) takes place during every phonics lesson that is delivered at St Charles. The teachers who deliver the phonic sessions are well equipped on how to progress and *'move children on' during the sessions. White boards are used as a primary source of AFL and allow teachers to address misconceptions immediately.*

Assessment is a critical element of our programme. The teachers assess:

- *pupils' phonic knowledge*
- the speed at which pupils are able to read the text    their understanding of the stories they read

## Formative Assessment

Daily formative assessment opportunities are built into every RWI lesson. Choral response group work, partner work, the small class *size allows teachers to evaluate pupils' phonic knowledge and hence modify the pace and focus of their lessons.* Formative assessment opportunities provide

teachers with knowledge of which children are making slow, steady or speedy progress and hence they can liaise with the Reading Leader to provide additional support (for children making slower progress) or an immediate assessment (for pupils making speedy progress) to allow such pupils to change group.

### Summative Assessment

All pupils are assessed every 6-8 weeks, or more frequently for those making speedier progress, using RWI Assessment materials. The assessment is conducted by the Phonics Leader and the *materials assess a pupils' sound to grapheme correspondence, ability to apply phonic knowledge to decode regular words and to read common exception words. Pupils reading fluency is also evaluated. Pupils' progress is tracked, to record their phonic knowledge and decoding skills, and this information is used to reorganise groups, phonics book level and the focus of the phonics input of the lesson. Summative assessment is used to update RWI tracking sheets, which monitors pupils' progress over time, and also to update AWL assessment grids. Assessment information, from both the formative and summative assessment progresses, is used to provide updates to parents via Parents' Evening updates or more specific meetings with parents.*

### Planning and Resourcing

Planning is minimised as we follow the RWI planning scheme, which is based on the RWI Handbooks and plans. This ensures consistency across Early Years and Key Stage 1, as well as freeing up time for teachers to source additional resources etc. to make the lesson come alive to the class. Each phonics group used Red and Green cards to help children read decodable and 'tricky words'. *All resources are stored centrally, staff who deliver RWI sessions have access to this and the RWI leader encourages teachers to meet weekly to share good practise and ideas. Each group leader has a designated box with all resources for the weeks' worth of phonetic teaching.*

### Organisation

Teachers follow RWI lesson plans and ensure that the lessons are taught at a good pace to ensure that all children are engaged and involved in the lesson. Children are praised for their contribution to lessons, reading and effort so that a very positive and respectful teaching environment is maintained. Every part of the lesson is explicitly referred to so that the teachers, and the children, know the purpose of the task. Use of effective partner work, turn-taking and children taking on the 'teacher role', *means that children have an active role in all parts of the lesson. 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. Teachers demonstrate their*

enthusiasm and passion in the program and this has a very positive impact on the teaching and learning environment.

## EYFS

During the first few weeks of Reception, a Baseline RWI assessment is completed to enable the Reading Leader to determine the phonic knowledge of each child. Because of this assessment, classes are split into small homogenous groups. Children that know no or very few sounds, learn the Set 1 sounds from the beginning, in very small groups, with a focus on repetition and Fred talk. Children that know some sounds, are taught unknown sounds then also progress onto assisted blending. Children that know many sounds, *but can't orally blend, focus on learning the technique* of assisted blending and then to quickly progress to independent blending. Those children that can orally blend and read CVC words, focus on using known sounds to independently blend words containing 3 or more sounds and reading RWI Storybooks. Reception pupils learn sounds and the corresponding grapheme, or groups of letters which represent each phoneme. Simple mnemonics help children to quickly grasp this phoneme-grapheme relationship. This is especially useful for pupils at risk of making slower progress. This learning is consolidated daily. Reception RWI lessons occur from 9:10 – 9:40 until a point when it becomes appropriate to move these lessons to the Key Stage 1 RWI time from 9:10 until 9:40. Hence during the summer term, Reception and Key Stage 1 children are integrated for their RWI lessons; this allows children in Reception that are making exceptionally speedy progress to be taught in homogenous groups alongside Key Stage 1 children.

## KS1 and KS2

. In Key Stage 1 pupils work within homogenous groups, which reflect their performance in RWI phonic assessments. We make sure that pupils read books that are closely matched to their *increasing knowledge of phonics and 'tricky words', ensuring* they experience success, gain confidence and see themselves as readers. Pupils are re-assessed every six to eight weeks and the RWI groups are reorganised accordingly. Key stage 1 RWI lessons occur from 9:10 until 9:40.

## Equal Opportunities

At St Charles Catholic Voluntary Academy, we are committed to providing a teaching environment which ensures all children are provided with the same learning opportunities regardless of social class, gender, culture, race and disability or learning difficulties. The school works to ensure the active participation and progress of all children in their learning. All children will be given equal opportunities to achieve their best possible standard, whatever their current attainment and

irrespective of gender, ethnic, social or cultural background, home language or any other aspect that could affect their participation or the progress of which they are capable.

## Inclusion

All pupils are entitled to access RWI resources and teachings at a level appropriate to their needs arising from race, gender, ability or disability. A range of inclusion strategies, as listed on the *school's inclusion planning key*, are embedded in practice and teachers are aware of the special educational needs of the children in their RWI group, as well as those who have English as an *additional language*. The 2014 National Curriculum states that: *'Pupils who grasp concepts rapidly should be challenged through being offered rich and sophisticated problems before any acceleration through new content. Those who are not sufficiently fluent with earlier material should consolidate their understanding, including through additional practice, before moving on.'* Pupils making accelerated progress will move groups to ensure that an appropriate level of challenge is provided. Pupils that need additional support to consolidate their phonic knowledge and its application will generally be taught in smaller groups where they have the opportunity to consolidate their knowledge prior to moving onto the next stage. If appropriate, further intervention will be provided to support their phonic development. Specific arrangements for the provision of children with SEND will be communicated to parents and carers during SEND reviews.

## Role of the Subject Lead

The RWI Phonics Leader:

- Oversees the assessment of all Reception & Key Stage 1 pupils, reviews assessment data to organise pupils to the correct RWI groups
- Provides RWI teachers with a list of graphemes that their group requires consolidation of
- Assigns RWI teachers to RWI groups
- *'Drops in' on RWI groups to give advice and to informally check that pupils are in the correct groups through learning walks and scrutiny of work*
- Where necessary, models lessons, team-teaches and coaches existing and new staff. 8
- Ensures that all staff are trained in RWI Phonics and book regular Development Days with RWI consultant trainers.
- Liaises with the Head Teacher regarding groupings, teaching spaces, staffing, training, progress, additional support and other relevant matters
- Is responsible for reporting to the governors about the quality of the implementation of RWI and the impact on standards
- Meets with the reading team, every third week for at least 30 minutes, focussing on the coaching, modelling and the development teaching of one aspect of the teaching of RWI, to ensure that RWI is taught to a consistently high level across the school.
- Organises regular workshops with parents
- Liaises with class teachers to discuss the progress of children in RWI *about a child's reading ability*

## Parents

The school website has various links and videos which enable parents to look at RWI in further *detail. At the start of the children's journey through school, the Reception* staff hold open mornings where RWI is discussed and parents are told how they can support at home. As the children progress through school, Y1 staff hold meetings to discuss the Phonics Screening Check and the Y2 staff discuss and share how to support children at home with word reading and how to increase a stamina for reading.

More information on RWI Phonics can be found on <https://www.ruthmiskin.com/en/find-out-more/parents/>

Date: April 2022

Subject Leader: Oliver Wakefield

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