



St Mary Magdalene Academy

Primary Phonics Statement

It is the aim of our school that all children begin their phonics journey by securing the primary key skill of decoding, before then progressing on to reading in order to learn and for their own personal pleasure. Through high quality phonics teaching and a rigorous and systematic phonics programme, we will enable children to read fluently and for a range of purposes, thus ultimately leading to a position where they can fully comprehend and appreciate different text types.

Pupils should be taught:

- grapheme-phoneme correspondence in a clearly defined sequence
- to blend (synthesising) phonemes from the start to the end of a word
- to segment words into their phonemes to spell
- that blending and segmenting are reversible processes
- manipulation of phonemes and graphemes

Teaching will be most effective when:

- it is systematic and follows a carefully planned programme. St Mary Magdalene follow the quality first Sounds Write programme throughout both foundation stage and KS1
- it is taught discretely and daily at a brisk pace
- there are opportunities to reinforce and apply acquired phonic knowledge and skills across the curriculum
- it is part of a broad and inquiry based curriculum that engages children and provides them with ample opportunities to develop their speaking and listening skills in tandem with their phonological awareness
- it is time limited, such that the great majority of children should be confident readers by the end of KS1 and thus be ready to further these skills going forward into KS2
- children's progress in developing and applying phonic knowledge is regularly assessed and monitored

In the classroom

Phonics is discretely embedded in the daily timetable throughout both foundation stage and KS1. This takes the form of a lesson led by the class teacher following the Sounds Write lessons. Whole class phonics sessions should be delivered at a brisk pace and should last between 15 – 30 minutes.

The ethos of Sounds Write is all inclusive and therefore that all children are taught together in class. There is also extra support in the form of small groups for children that would benefit from this.

Within the Sounds Write scheme we use:

- dashes to segment each phoneme

c a t

ch a t

- a curved line under the word between a split diagraph

t i m e
 └───┘

Thorough planning is provided by Sounds Write for both the teaching sequence and individual lessons.

Assessment

Formative assessment will be part of the daily lesson and teachers and teaching assistants should look carefully for those who are falling behind and intervene that day. Teaching assistants are vital in communicating whether a child has secure knowledge of a sound/skill and should be involved in assessments.

Tracking grids will be updated half-termly on the Phonics Progress Tracking Sheet. Children's names are placed in to the correct place and copies should be given to the Literacy coordinator.

Every term, the Key Stage One team and members of the SMT will meet to discuss pupil progress on the tracking sheets. This will allow the team to identify children who are not making good progress and consider next steps. Additional assessment of reading should take place through the use of the PM Benchmarking assessment system.

If pupils are not making progress at the expected rate and appropriate action has taken place in class and with support from home, teachers should approach the SENCO for advice and consider what changes can be made to secure knowledge.

Spelling

In KS1, Spellings that are deemed necessary to be sent home should be linked to phonics and the words in the relevant level that the children are on. In addition, teachers may wish to look at topic words and common exception words that children are spelling incorrectly. Spellings should be differentiated.

The Sounds Write Programme

Teaching the Initial Code

The programme is a highly structured, synthetic phonics programme. At the start, simple, one sound/one spelling, one-syllable, CVC words only are introduced. As the programme progresses, the complexity of one-syllable words is increased to four-, five- and six-sound words of the structure CVCC, CCVC, CCVCC/CCCVCC, before introducing the most common consonant digraphs.

The Sounds-Write programme teaches pupils to understand the way the alphabet code works. Very often, in the early stages of learning to read and spell, because of the complexity of the code, pupils will not be able to spell some sounds by using the correct spellings. However, pupils taught using Sounds-Write will be able to write almost anything they want to write by using plausible (phonetic) spellings for sounds. In this way, pupils, teachers and parents can read anything the pupil has written. As they progress through Key Stage 1, pupils learn systematically how words are spelled in English.

The Extended Code and Polysyllabic Words

Thereafter, from Y1 onwards, all the remaining common vowel and consonant sound to spelling correspondences are taught until all the common spellings for the forty-four sounds in English have been covered. In parallel with this, pupils are taught how to read and spell polysyllabic words, progressing from two-syllable to five- and six-syllable words.

A multi-sensory programme

Throughout, Sounds-Write promotes the use of multi-sensory engagement with the materials pupils are working with in a manner that is commensurate with the level and abilities of the children being taught. Visual, auditory and kinaesthetic activities are at all times combined simultaneously to promote learning.

In addition to being multi-sensory, the Sounds-Write programme has pace and utilises an array of stimulating lessons and resources. It also enables practitioners to differentiate the challenges placed before the learner in order to meet their individual needs.