

## Intent

*At St James CE Primary, we believe that it is essential that **all** children become confident, successful, fluent readers. To do so, we aim for all children to develop competence in word reading; promote and develop language comprehension; and ensure that throughout their time at St James CE Primary they experience a range of high-quality texts leading to a strong reading culture. We believe in the importance of teaching children systematic synthetic phonics as a firm foundation for reading. Being able to read most words 'at a glance', supports children in being free to focus on the meaning of what has been read.*

We intend for all pupils to achieve to their full potential and will ensure this happens by:

- Following a systematic synthetic programme with fidelity (Rocket Phonics)
- Ensuring that all children participate in high-quality phonics sessions
- Tracking children from the start to ensure that no child falls behind
- Providing additional support for children at risk of reading failure
- Ensuring all staff are experts in the teaching of reading
- Appointing a designated phonics lead
- Developing strong relationships between home and school
- Providing fully decodable readers that are carefully matched to the child's developing phonics knowledge and do not require children to use other strategies to work out words
- Promoting a love of reading
- Ensuring children apply their phonic knowledge in reading and writing across the full curriculum

## Implementation

### Our approach

We use the Rocket Phonics scheme to teach phonics, which has a rich variety of reading texts and visual resources to support the children in their journey to becoming fluent readers and writers.

### Organisation:

- *Phonics is taught daily for 30 minutes (Reception) and 40 minutes (Year 1) in whole class groups. This is usually the first lesson of the day.*
- *Teachers are responsible for the core phonics lesson, with teaching assistants also trained in Rocket Phonics to support any children needing additional learning time*
- *When staff are absent, the Rocket Phonics plans are easily accessible online and are accessible, so supply teachers can still follow the scheme*
- *Should there be any periods of remote learning, each family has a log in to access reading books and resources on the Rocket Phonics website*

### Expectations:

- *The Rocket Phonics programme is begun in the first two weeks of the Reception Year*
- *Nursery focus on distinguishing sounds and blending and segmenting skills*
- *Our expectations throughout reception and Y1 are as follows:*

82% will achieve yr1 phonics screening

72% Reception will attain overall GLD (this includes Reading and Writing)

Attainment gap between PP children and peers will decrease

- *Provision in Y2: children follow the expectations for phonics and spelling in the national curriculum*

### Progression:

- *There is a clear sequence of progression through the Rocket Phonics scheme: see the overview of the scheme for more detail.*

### Teaching sequence:

- *The first day of introducing a new sound focuses on blending, followed the next day by a session on segmenting. Giving equal time to these skills is important. There is then a revision session at the end of the week. Common Exception words are included through the programme.*
- *There is a daily task in their phonics books which allows the children to develop writing skills with a paper and pencil and encourages independence.*
- *At the end of each term, the children will be assessed against the sounds they have learnt using the Rocket Phonics scheme. At the end of Year 1, phonics knowledge is put into an online system which is then passed on to Year 2.*

### Pseudo words:

- *Rocket Phonics does not actively teach pseudo words, as the point of phonics is to build fluency in real words. However, this will be timetabled as a separate activity for Year 1 to practise to get them used to the pseudo words included in the Year 1 phonics check.*

### Vocabulary

- *Rocket Phonics provides 'Big Books' to be used in phonics alongside the learning of the letters, which allows children to hear their sounds in a rich story setting. This is an opportunity for developing and discussing new vocabulary as part of the daily phonics learning.*

### Terminology

- *Terminology used with children across the school: phonemes, graphemes, sounds, letters, sounding out, blending, pseudo words, common exception words (tricky words)*

### Environment and resources

- *Matching the programme is important: we use resources and books which are aligned to and produced by the Rocket Phonics scheme. This ensures consistency across the school and the availability of the scheme's resources online means they are accessible to all staff.*

### Blending and segmenting

- *How it's taught: we use a consistent approach from all practitioners: starting on the thumb on the left hand, using the fingers stretched out to sound out a word. We then push them together to blend and use all opportunities in any lessons to orally blend and segment. This means we are modelling the skills all the time and supporting the children in moving towards independence.*

### Decodable readers

- *They are organised by new sounds taught so they align with the content of the lessons. They are used in guided reading groups in school and shared at home online. As we switch over to the scheme, we are buying more Rocket Phonics books so we can send these home too. Currently we have had to use some books from other schemes to send home but have ensured they only contain taught sounds.*
- *It is a top priority that children read books matched with phonics knowledge e.g. not encounter words containing GPCs or exception words they have not been taught*
- *Readers who may not have opportunities to practise at home or are at risk of falling behind are given extra 1:1 reading sessions in the week wherever possible*

### Children at risk of reading failure

- *The children at risk of falling behind are identified during the half termly assessments. These children are given extra exposure to the sounds and have extra reading and 1:1 writing sessions to support them. They are always part of the main provision of phonics and all additional learning time is put in around the structured phonics sessions.*

### Older children in KS2

- Any children in KS2 which have been identified by their class teacher as needing some more support in phonics are able to access the scheme via the online log in and use the phonics resources provided by Rocket Phonics at the point where they have gaps in their learning.
- Staff in KS2 have understanding of phonics and how to access support and resources.

### Home school links

- Open communication with home is important and this is achieved by sending home a sticker with a new sound so the children will discuss it with their grown ups.
- We have a phonics meeting powerpoint explaining the phonics programme and how it works – this is also available on our website and is brought to attention with newsletters through the year.
- Children practice a page from the workbook at home each week so they can share with their grown ups what and how they are learning.
- Parents are kept in touch with how their child is doing with regular meetings and opportunities to discuss their learning, including termly Parent-Teacher Interviews.

### CPD

To ensure that all practitioners are experts in the teaching of phonics, we ensure that regular training *takes place*. This may be in the form of weekly EYFS briefings, network meetings with VAT schools, or if there are a number of staff new to teaching phonics, training on Rocket Phonics by InnovatEducation.

Where staff need more support, we encourage a culture of sharing good practice and invite teachers in to watch their peers teach and access support from the phonics lead when needed.

### Monitoring, evaluation and development

We monitor through a range of methods, the core being the results from the half termly assessments. To add to this and build a more complete picture of the practice taking place in the school, we also have learning walks, featuring pupil voice, and opportunities to plan together. This supports our Key Priority 1 in our school development plan to 'Ensure pupil outcomes in years 1-6 at least match or are better than previous years' (Key SIAMS Strand 2), achieved through quality first teaching, effective planning for next steps, additional support as appropriate and appropriate interventions.