



PHONICS POLICY

1. **WHAT IS PHONICS?**

- 1.1. Phonics is a method of teaching reading and writing where children are systematically taught the relationships between the sounds in our language and the letters used to represent those sounds. Once children have been taught which sounds are linked to which letters they are able 'crack the code' and can confidently have a go at reading and writing anything.

2. **AIMS**

- 2.1. At Our Lady's we aim to deliver high quality phonic teaching which secures the crucial skills of word recognition that, once mastered, enable children to read fluently and automatically enabling them to concentrate on the meaning of the text.
- 2.2. To establish consistent practice, progression and continuity in the teaching and learning of phonics and spelling throughout the school.
- 2.3. To differentiate phonics and spelling work according to the needs of pupils, so that all pupils are given sufficient challenge at a level at which they can experience success.
- 2.4. To give children word work strategies that will enable them to become fluent readers and confident writers.
- 2.5. To understand that having a secure knowledge of phonics enables reading for pleasure as part of our reading curriculum.

3. **EXPECTATIONS**

Phonics sessions will:

- 3.1. Be taught every day without fail;
- 3.2. Follow the DfE Letters and Sounds programme;
- 3.3. Be no longer than 20 minutes; (However, sessions may be shorter than this in the Foundation Stage in the Autumn Term.)
- 3.4. Be structured using the Revisit/Review – Teach – Practise – Apply approach;
- 3.5. Be active and engaging;
- 3.6. Move through the programme of study at a quick pace;
- 3.7. Provide opportunities for daily oral segmenting and blending practice;
- 3.8. Allow children to recognise, say and write all phonemes within each phase of the Letters and Sounds programme;
- 3.9. Give children opportunities to hear themselves saying new sounds;
- 3.10. Give children opportunities to use their phonic knowledge to blend and segment phonetically decodable words daily;
- 3.11. Give children opportunities to use their phonic knowledge to attempt to read and write more complex words;
- 3.12. Allow children to apply their phonics knowledge to writing to spell most words accurately.

Teachers should:

- 3.13. Use agreed actions for segmenting, blending and remembering sounds where necessary.
- 3.14. Use the following terms where appropriate: phoneme, grapheme, diagraph, split diagraph, blending and segmenting.
- 3.15. Clearly display phonemes and high frequency words that have been taught in the classroom.
- 3.16. Model segmenting and blending before asking children to do the same.

- 3.17. Plan phonics using day to day teacher assessments. Planning and teaching should be flexible to meet the needs of individual cohorts and groups.
- 3.18. Differentiate where necessary using different words or phrases, resources, adult support, etc.
- 3.19. Ensure all children have regular access to a range of fully decodable texts which closely match the sounds they are learning in order to apply their learning in phonics through reading.
- 3.20. Give children frequent opportunities to apply phonic skills in writing.
- 3.21. Be target led – All children should be secure in Phase Five by the end of the Summer Term in Year One. What must happen for this to be the case? (Intervention, different approaches, revision of phonemes.)

4. WHEN SHOULD DIFFERENT PHASES BE TAUGHT?

Phase	Length	When?
Phase One	Throughout Foundation Stage	<p>Phase One will be taught from when children enter the pre-school. Children will be immersed in language-rich, play-based environment. They will engage in a range of adult-led activities which are well matched to children's developing abilities and interests, drawing upon observations and assessments to plan for progression. Activities will promote the skills involved with the seven aspects of Phase One Teaching, including general sound discrimination, rhythm and rhyme, alliteration and oral segmenting and blending skills.</p> <p>Children will continue to work on Phase One skills throughout their time in the Early Years Foundation Stage.</p>
Phase Two	Six weeks	<p>This should be taught during a child's first term in Reception. Most children should be secure at Phase Two by Christmas.</p> <p>Children will learn 19 phonemes, and as soon as children can read a phoneme, they should be expected to write it as well. Children should be able to read and write some VC and CVC. They will also learn to read some high-frequency 'tricky' words.</p>
Phase Three	Twelve weeks	<p>Most children need to be secure at Phase Three by the end of their first year in school. Children will be able to represent each of about 42 phonemes by a grapheme. They will continue to practise CVC blending and segmentation and be able to apply their knowledge of blending and segmenting to reading and spelling simple two-syllable words and captions. They will Read more tricky words and also begin to learn to spell some of these words.</p> <p>The pace of teaching during this phase can be slowed down to ensure children are secure with phonemes before moving on, as they have two terms.</p>

Phase Four	Four weeks – six weeks	<p>Phase Four should be taught to all children at the beginning of Year One, but can be taught in Reception if children are secure in Phase Three.</p> <p>Children will consolidate their knowledge of graphemes in reading and spelling words containing adjacent consonants and polysyllabic words.</p>
Phase Five	Throughout Year One	<p>As soon as children have covered Phase Four, they need to move on to Phase Five.</p> <p>Children will broaden their knowledge of graphemes and phonemes for use in reading and spelling. They will learn new graphemes and alternative pronunciations for these and graphemes they already know. When spelling words they will learn to choose the appropriate graphemes to represent phonemes and begin to build word-specific knowledge of the spellings of words.</p>
Phase Six	Throughout Year Two and Year Three	<p>When children know almost all grapheme-phoneme correspondences and their spelling is usually phonemically accurate, they are ready to move onto Phase Six.</p>

5. **ASSESSMENT**

- 5.1. In Reception and Key Stage One, all children will be informally assessed throughout daily lessons, and future phonics work to be planned accordingly.
- 5.2. All children will be formally assessed at the end of each term in the following areas:
 - grapheme phoneme correspondence knowledge;
 - segmenting and blending of decodable words;
 - reading of tricky words;
 - reading of non-words.
- 5.3. At the end of Year One, it is statutory for all children to complete the Year One Phonics Screening Check. This takes place in June. Children who do not achieve the required standard in Year One to pass the check will need to retake the check the following year to ensure they have made good progress.

6. **SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS**

- 6.1. When a teacher identifies a child who is making limited progress in phonics, they will immediately discuss with parents, SENCO and Phonics Leader. Relevant, agreed actions will be made to address the concerns and any intervention work undertaken will be closely monitored and reviewed.

7. INVOLVING PARENTS

7.1. The teaching and learning of phonics can only truly succeed with the support, involvement and understanding of parents. We endeavour to support parents as their child learns to read and write by:

- Holding phonics information sessions for parents to explain specialist vocabulary and how the teaching of phonics works;
- Offering parents the opportunity to see phonics taught in school;
- Sending home reading books which closely match the sounds children are learning in school at least once a week. Parents are encouraged to read at home for 10 minutes daily (Reception), or a minimum of three times a week (KS1).
- Letting parents know what their child has been working on in class and what they can do at home; providing weekly home learning activities to consolidate sounds taught in class.
- Giving parents resources and strategies for supporting phonics at home during parent consultations and via learning platforms such as Tapestry and the school's website.

8. EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

8.1. At Our Lady's we believe that all children regardless of their gender, age ethnicity, academic or physical ability are given equal opportunities to reach their full potential successfully and confidently.

8.2. We ensure equal access in a variety of ways:

- Displays and resources reflect the above as positive role models;
- The content of what is planned reflects our diverse society;
- Where appropriate group children flexibly to promote confidence and social skills;
- Ensure that appropriate structures/resources are in place so that children can access the curriculum.

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

This policy has been written and reviewed with due regard to the legal duties set out in the Equality Act 2010, to ensure that no member of our school community suffers discrimination or disadvantage regardless of age, race, gender reassignment, disability, civil partnership, religion and belief (or lack of belief), pregnancy and maternity, gender or sexual orientation.

APPENDIX 1

Definitions

Phoneme – sound made by a letter or group of letters; the smallest unit of sound in a word.

Grapheme – the written spelling of a sound.

Diagraph – two letters which work together to make one sound.

Trigraph – three letters which work together to make one sound.

Split diagraph – two letters which work together to make a sound with another letter between them.

Blending – saying the sounds in a word one after another to read it.

Segmenting – breaking words down into their phonemes in order to spell them.