



St. Alban's Catholic Primary School

Phonics Statement

At St. Alban's, we consider that it is vitally important for children to have a secure understanding of the letter sounds and spelling system of English. Phonic skills need to be developed in a systematic, staged approach in order to help all children to 'achieve their potential'. Teachers at St. Albans implement exciting and interactive phonic sessions which engage all children in this area of learning.

Letters and Sounds

Here, the 'Letters and Sounds' programme is followed from Early Years Foundation Stage, through KS1 and into KS2, if required. The programme focuses on securing word recognition skills - essential for children to decode (read) and encode (spell) words accurately - and reading comprehension. The programme is in six phases: phase one promotes speaking/listening skills, rhyme, alliteration and phonological awareness. During Phases two and three, Teachers use 'Jolly Phonics' songs and actions to support children's sound recognition. Phases two to five focus on high quality phonic work to help children blend and segment words. High Frequency words are also taught during Phonic sessions to develop fluent word reading and spelling skills. We also use an online resource called 'Phonics Play'.

It is recommended that children in phases two to five of 'Letters and Sounds' should be taught a discrete 20 minute daily session of phonics and that teachers should follow the teaching sequence of 'revisit, review, teach, practise and apply'. In addition, phonic skills can be applied in reading and writing opportunities as well as in other areas of the curriculum. Teachers will check pupil progress, i.e. in their understanding of grapheme-phoneme (letter sound) correspondence.

Y1 Phonics Screening Check

In the summer term, Y1 children will take a Phonics Screening Check in which children will be expected to read 40 decodable 'words'. This progress check identifies those children not at the expected level in reading – and these children will be re-checked in Y2.

Phase Six

Children who are secure at phase 5 can go onto phase 6, focusing on spelling. Sessions include direct teaching of spelling strategies, proofreading, high-frequency words.

SEN

If there is a need, pupils will be given extra support to help them improve reading skills and make progress. Support will also be provided for older pupils who may be experiencing difficulty in reading/writing because they have missed or misunderstood a crucial phase of systematic phonics teaching. The support programme, THREP (The Havering Reading Enrichment Programme) may also be offered to pupils.

Homework

Homework is used to support phonics taught in class through such activities as practising phonic skills in spelling words and reading/writing activities. High frequency words are also sent home and regularly re-visited within class.