



Phonics teaching at St Thomas and St Anne's C of E Primary School

At St Thomas and St Anne's C of E Primary School we believe that the teaching of phonics is vital in order for children to become competent readers and writers. We aim to provide high quality and systematic synthetic phonic teaching using Pearson's Phonics Bug scheme of work. Synthetic phonics introduces phonemes individually in a structured and sequenced way, teaching children the relationship between phonemes (sounds) and graphemes (letters). We teach phonics discretely and daily at a brisk pace.

In Nursery and throughout the school the children focus on speaking and listening skills and then move on to recognising individual sounds in the spoken word and the correct pronunciation of the sounds; which is key for successful phonics progression.

The children move on to corresponding the sound to the letter/s, this is called *GPC*-short for *Grapheme Phoneme Correspondence*. Knowing a *GPC* means being able to match a sound to the correct letters. Then orally blending the sounds to make a word e.g s-u-n.

Once the children are skilled at orally blending sounds the children will develop their oral segmenting skills; this is the process of hearing a whole word and then splitting it up into the sounds (phonemes) that make it. Children need to develop this skill before they will be able to segment words to spell them.

The children will then begin blending, this involves looking at a written word, looking at each letter/s (grapheme) and using knowledge of letters and sounds to work out which sound each letter represents and then merging these sounds together to make a word. This is the basis of reading.

The children will then begin segmenting, this involves hearing a word, splitting it up into the sounds that make it, using knowledge of *GPCs* to work out which graphemes represent those phonemes and then writing those graphemes down in the right order. This is the basis of spelling.

Throughout Phonics sessions at St Thomas and St Anne's the children will revisit and review the skills, sounds and letters that they have encountered using the Phonics Bug program.

Children moving into Reception quickly develop their phonic knowledge and begin to read and write words, by blending the sounds together for reading and then segmenting them for writing. Phase 1-4 focuses on speaking and listening, sounds, and correlation between sounds and letter/s (*GPCs*) blending and segmenting. By the end of the Reception year children are expected to be at least secure in Phase 3 and by the end of Year One to be secure in Phase 5.

In Phase 5 (Year 1) we introduce the idea that some graphemes can be pronounced in more than one way. E.g the 'ch' can be pronounced in each of these ways 'check', 'chef' and 'school'. The latter stages of Phase 5 are about learning that some sounds have more than one spelling.

In Year 2 the children focus on Phase 6; Subject Knowledge. Phase 6 reinforces much of the learning from Phase 5 and begins to explore spelling rules and conventions e.g adding-ing and -ed, prefixes and suffixes etc.

All phases are revisited and consolidated where necessary.

Phonics Bug is used throughout the school alongside the Bug Club resource. The Bug Club has a range of readers which are linked to the Phonic phases and are phonetically based but also includes a small number of context words, to help children read a wider range of stories and fact books. These bug club books are used during Guided Reading sessions and as independent home readers, they are linked to the appropriate phase. Bug Club games and activities are carried out in small groups using the laptops during Phonics lessons for consolidation.

Every child's progress is tracked and monitored to ensure learning is focussed and correctly matched to their needs.

Children in Year One will undertake the Phonics screening check towards the end of the academic year. This assessment is used to confirm whether individual children have learnt phonic decoding to an appropriate standard. It will identify the children who need extra help and if necessary they can retake the check in Year 2.

Parents are encouraged to support reading at home and children are expected to read daily. All children in EYFS and KS1 at St Thomas and St Anne's have their own personal account with a username and password recorded on a bookmark. Children can access the Bug Club e-books which have been allocated by their class teacher ensuring that the book is at the appropriate level for the child.

Once children log on to www.activelearnprimary.co.uk they will see a series of tabs at the top of the page. The tab labelled 'my stuff' with a red circle and a number in it, is where they will find all the books that have been allocated to them. Under each book is a golden coin with a number in it. The coin represents how many points they can earn for reading that particular book. The points can be spent buying things from 'my rewards'. The tab 'my library' will store all completed books so at any point children can go back to books they have already read.

This is a fun, interactive way of consolidating reading skills learnt at school and collecting rewards to play games in 'Pupil world'.

