



Phonics

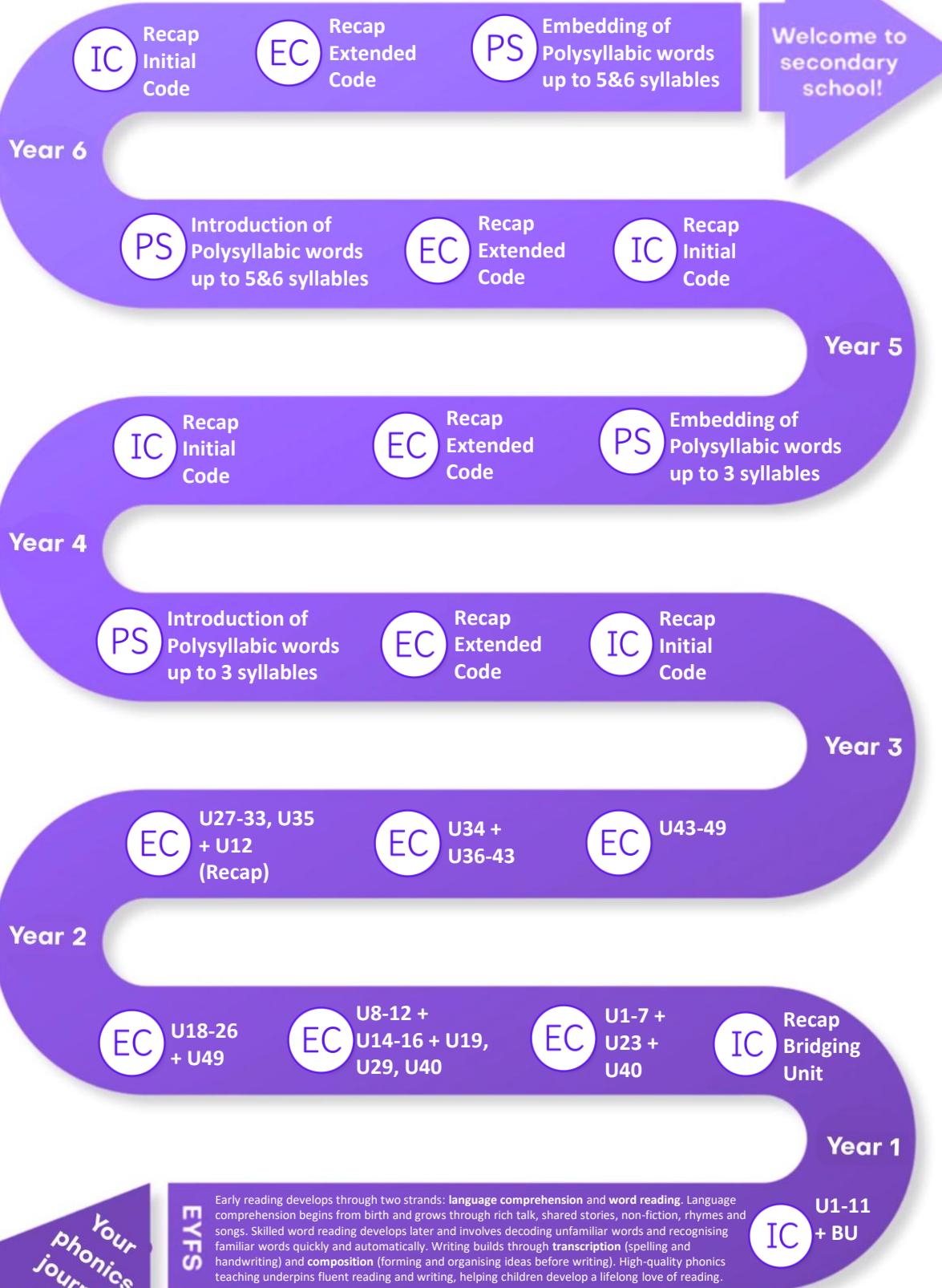
CURRICULUM: Phonics

St. John the Evangelist
Catholic Primary School

Christ at the Centre, Children at the Heart

CURRICULUM NARRATIVE

Sounds-Write



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Curriculum Intent

At St John's, our intent is to ensure that every child becomes a confident, fluent and enthusiastic reader through a rigorous, systematic approach to phonics. We believe that early reading is the foundation for future learning, and that high-quality phonics teaching is essential for enabling all children to access the full curriculum.

Using the **Sounds-Write** programme, we aim to:

- Provide a **consistent, cumulative and highly structured** approach to teaching phonics from EYFS to Year 6.
- Ensure all children develop secure **code knowledge**, strong **phonemic awareness**, and the ability to **decode, blend and segment** with increasing fluency.
- Build children's confidence and independence as readers and writers by teaching them the skills to tackle unfamiliar words accurately.
- Identify children who are at risk of falling behind **as early as possible**, using high-quality diagnostic assessment.
- Provide **targeted, bespoke interventions** that address each child's specific gaps, ensuring every pupil keeps up rather than catches up.
- Foster a culture where reading is valued, enjoyed and celebrated, enabling children to develop a **lifelong love of reading**.

Curriculum Implementation

We deliver phonics through the **Sounds-Write linguistic phonics approach**, ensuring fidelity to the programme and consistency across the school.

Core Teaching

Daily phonic lessons are delivered in EYFS and KS1 following the Sounds-Write sequence where pupils receive explicit teaching of the Initial Code, Extended Code and polysyllabic words. Lessons are structured around the key skills of blending, segmenting, phoneme manipulation and sound-spelling correspondences where children are provided with regular opportunities to apply phonics knowledge in reading, writing and across the wider curriculum.

Consistency Across School

All staff delivering phonics have received training in how to deliver Sounds-Write and the pedagogy behind it. Staff use consistent, common language, routines and lesson structures. In addition, decodable reading books are carefully matched to each child's current code knowledge.

Assessment and Intervention

Each year group uses the **Sounds-Write diagnostic assessment tool** to identify gaps in children's code knowledge and reading skills. which informs planning and allows us to deliver targeted support. Children who may need additional support receive **bespoke, precise interventions** based on their individual diagnostic profile. These are delivered by our staff in addition to whole class teaching and are reviewed regularly to ensure rapid progress. Additional support continues into KS2 for any child who requires it, ensuring no pupil is left behind.

Wider Reading Culture

In every class, we read daily to ensure children receive rich exposure to high-quality texts. Finally, our parents are supported through workshops, guidance and shared reading expectations.

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Curriculum Impact

By the end of KS1, and continuing into KS2 where needed, children at St John's will:

- Have secure knowledge of the alphabetic code and apply it confidently in reading and writing.
- Read with increasing accuracy, fluency and independence.
- Use phonics as their primary strategy for decoding unfamiliar words.
- Demonstrate strong phonemic awareness and the ability to manipulate sounds within words.
- Show confidence in tackling polysyllabic words and more complex spellings.
- Make strong progress from their starting points, with gaps identified early and addressed swiftly.
- Develop positive attitudes towards reading and see themselves as capable, successful readers.

The impact of our approach is monitored through:

- Ongoing diagnostic assessment and progress tracking.
- Outcomes in statutory assessments (e.g., Phonics Screening Check).
- Pupil voice, demonstrating enjoyment and confidence in reading.
- Teacher observations showing consistent application of phonics skills across the curriculum.

Ultimately, our Sounds-Write approach ensures that every child leaves St John's equipped with the essential reading skills they need to thrive academically and beyond.

SEND

Our Phonics curriculum has been designed to be delivered to the whole class. However, the tasks are adapted by class teachers to meet the needs of individual children. To ensure pupils with SEND achieve well, they should be exposed to the same learning as their peers in addition to receiving additional support. Through scaffolding, tasks can be adapted to ensure all learners can access and evidence the same threshold concepts and learning objectives as their non-SEND counterparts. Scaffolding strategies can include the use of gesture, giving children lines to place their letters on, modelling correct formation on individual children's whiteboards or providing visual prompts. Reactive or proactive adaptations can make the curriculum accessible and achievable for all.

Other strategies of adaptation are outlined through the EEF's Five-a-Day principles, which include explicit instruction, metacognitive strategies, flexible grouping and the use of technology:

Scaffolding

'Scaffolding' is a metaphor for temporary support that is removed when it is no longer required. Initially, a teacher would provide enough support so that pupils can successfully complete tasks that they could not do independently. This requires effective assessment to gain a precise understanding of the pupil's current capabilities. Examples: Support could be visual, verbal, or written. Writing frames, partially completed examples, knowledge organisers, sentence starters can all be useful. Reminders of what equipment is needed for each lesson and classroom routines can be useful. Scaffolding discussion of texts: promoting prediction, questioning, clarification and summarising.

Explicit Instruction

Explicit instruction refers to a range of teacher-led approaches, focused on teacher demonstration followed by guided practice and independent practice. Explicit instruction is not just "teaching by telling" or "transmission teaching". One popular approach to explicit instruction is Rosenshine's 'Principles of Instruction'. Examples: Worked examples with the teacher modelling self-regulation and thought processes is helpful. A teacher might teach a pupil a strategy for summarising a paragraph by initially 'thinking aloud' while identifying the topic of the paragraph to model this process to the pupil. They would then give the pupil the opportunity to practise this skill. Using visual aids and concrete examples promotes discussion and links in learning.

Cognitive and Metacognitive Strategies

Cognitive strategies are skills like memorisation techniques or subject specific strategies like methods to solve problems in maths. Metacognitive strategies help pupils plan, monitor and evaluate their learning. Examples: Chunking the task will support pupils with SEND – this may be through provision of checklists, instructions on a whiteboard or providing one question at a time. This helps reduce distractions to avoid overloading working memory.

Prompt sheets that help pupils to evaluate their progress, with ideas for further support.

Flexible Grouping

Flexible grouping describes when pupils are allocated to smaller groups based on the individual needs that they currently share with other pupils. Such groups can be formed for an explicit purpose and disbanded when that purpose is met.

Examples: Allocating temporary groups can allow teachers to set up opportunities for collaborative learning, for example to read and analyse source texts, complete graphic organisers, independently carry out a skill, remember a fact, or understand a concept. Pre-teaching key vocabulary, is a useful technique.

Use of Technology

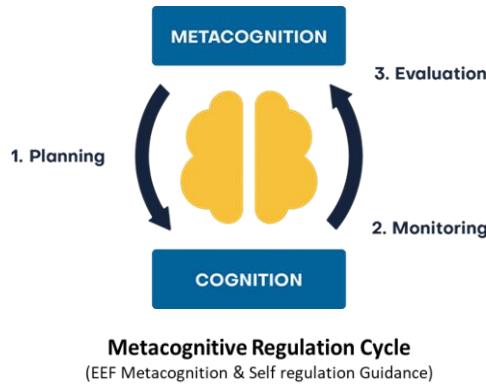
Technology can assist teacher modelling. Technology, as a method to provide feedback to pupils and/ or parents can be effective, especially when the pupil can act on this feedback.

Examples: Use a visualizer to model worked examples. Technology applications, such as online quizzes can prove effective. Speech generating apps to enable note-taking and extended writing can be helpful.

Assessment

Assessment comprises two linked processes:

Formative Assessment: provides Assessment for Learning. Is a continuous process and an integral part of teaching and learning; informal observations, dialogue/effective use of questioning, consolidation activities, low stakes quizzing, routine marking; and pupil/peer assessment all contribute to the developing profile of progress. When pupils make changes and consider actions to their work, based on the activity, they are 'self-regulating' their work. Self-regulating activities can be termed Assessment as Learning. Self-regulated learners are aware of their strengths and weaknesses, and can motivate themselves to engage in, and improve, their learning. Pupils start by **planning** how to undertake a task, working on it while **monitoring** the strategy to check progress, then **evaluating** the overall success.



Summative Assessment: provides Assessment of Learning and is a judgement of attainment at key points throughout the year- using past knowledge to measure attainment and progress:

- EYFS Reading %
- Year 1 Phonics Screening Results
- KS1 Reading Attainment - Teacher Assessment
- NFER Assessments Y1-5
- VIPERS Reading Record Sheets
- KS2 Reading Attainment - SATs

Assessment is a continuous process which is integral to teaching and learning and:

- Enables an informed judgement to be made about a pupil's understanding, skills, attitude to learning and successful acquisition of knowledge as they move through the curriculum.
- Incorporates a wide range of assessment techniques to be used in different contexts/purposes.
- Is accompanied by **clear assessment criteria** that enables effective marking and feedback, a reliable progress evaluation to be given and demonstrates clearly what a pupil must do to improve.
- Provides feedback recognising achievement, increasing pupil confidence/motivation.
- Supports learning by making clear to pupils: what they are trying to achieve; what they have achieved; what the learning gaps and misconceptions are and what the next steps in learning are.
- Allows regular subject specific extended writing and access to high quality text/ reading.
- Should be moderated and standardised to ensure **purposeful, meaningful, and timely feedback**.
- Includes feedback to pupils to help them understand what they need to improve, challenging them to achieve their target rather than a grade.
- Allows leaders and staff to make timely adaptations to the curriculum.

