

'With Jesus we can achieve what we dream and believe'

Our Vision and Core Principles

At St Michael's Catholic Primary School, we believe that **every child matters** and deserves the opportunity to first '**learn to read**' and then '**read to learn.**' Our mission is to ensure all children become confident, motivated, and enthusiastic readers by the end of Year 6, fully prepared to manage the curriculum demands of Year 7 across all subjects.

Programme Implementation

- We follow the **Ruth Miskin Read Write Inc. (RWI)** Phonics programme as the systematic synthetic phonics scheme across the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) and Key Stage 1 (KS1).
- Once children can read with accuracy and speed, they progress to the Read Write Inc. Comprehension programme.
- We achieve success through a combination of strong, high-quality, discrete phonics teaching (RWI) combined with a whole-language approach that promotes a vibrant 'Reading for Pleasure' culture.

Aims and Objectives

Our phonics curriculum aims to develop and enhance children's confidence in their reading, viewing phonics as the foundation for both reading and writing fluency. We teach children to:

- Acquire the skill of **blending phonemes** to read words.
- **Segment words** into their phonemes to spell words.
- Understand that blending and segmenting are **reversible processes**.
- Read **high-frequency words** (tricky words also known as red words in RWI) that do not conform to regular phonic patterns.
- Read texts within their phonic capabilities as early as possible.
- **Decode texts effortlessly** so that their cognitive resources can be fully directed towards comprehension.
- **Spell effortlessly** so that their focus can be directed towards composing and structuring their writing.
- Read aloud with **fluency and expression**.

Teaching and Learning

RWI provides detailed, prescriptive lesson plans, but our teachers work hard to build upon these to match the lessons carefully to children's needs. Every activity is thoroughly prepared, has a clear purpose, and is explained to the children to ensure they understand what they are learning and why.

The teaching style is dynamic and based on the **5 Ps**:

- **Praise:** We maintain a positive climate where children learn quickly and confidently.
- **Pace:** Lessons are delivered at a consistently good pace to maximise engagement and learning time.
- **Purpose:** Every part of the lesson has a specific, clearly defined purpose.

- **Passion:** Teachers' energy, enthusiasm, and passion bring the prescriptive programme to life for the children.
- **Participation:** A strong emphasis is placed on **partner work**, where children 'teach' each other, reinforcing learning and increasing retention.

Phonics Programme Delivery

Effective RWI delivery adheres to the following consistent practices:

- **Specific Order:** Initial sounds are taught in a specific, systematic order.
- **Pure Sounds:** Sounds must be taught as '**pure sounds**' (e.g., /m/, not 'muh') as this is essential for accurate blending.
- **Declustering Blends:** Letter blends (e.g., 'bl') are taught as two specific, separate sounds (/b/ and /l/).
- **Phoneme-Grapheme Correspondence:** Children are taught that the number of **graphemes** (letters/groups of letters) in a word always corresponds to the number of **phonemes** (sounds), which is key for spelling.
- **Progression:** **Set 2 sounds** are taught after Set 1 (initial sounds), and **letter names** are introduced with Set 3.

Delivery across year groups

Year Group Programme/Intervention	Daily Session Structure
Reception (EYFS) RWI Phonics	Daily 30-minute sessions (9:15–9:45 am). Includes a 10-minute Speed Sounds session followed by handwriting practice and blending sounds into words. Groups are set only after initial sounds are taught and assessed.
Year 1 (KS1) RWI Phonics	Daily 45-minute sessions. Includes a 10-minute Speed Sounds session followed by reading and spelling. Once completed, pupils move to RWI Comprehension.
Year 2 (KS1) RWI Comprehension	Once RWI Phonics is completed (end of Year 1/start of Year 2), pupils transition to RWI Comprehension. This daily 40-minute structure integrates reading, thinking, and spoken language.
Year 3 & 4 (KS2) RWI Intervention	For children still needing phonics support, we run targeted groups supplemented by additional one-to-one tutoring.
Year 5 & 6 (KS2) RWI Fresh Start	Targeted phonics intervention is provided for older pupils still requiring support, consisting of small-group sessions and one-to-one tutoring. This is delivered through the Read Write Inc. Fresh Start programme, which uses age-appropriate texts to boost confidence and reading fluency.

Assessment, Tracking and Intervention

- All children are assessed using Read Write Inc. Phonics Assessments at least every half term.
- Data is used to assign children to ability-appropriate groups (RWI Phonics, or RWI Fresh Start for Years 5–6).
- Groups are fluid: children progressing faster are moved quickly to the next group; children who struggle are immediately identified for intervention.

Phonics Screening and Keep up:

- The Year 1 Phonics Screening Check is a statutory assessment.
- Pupils who do not meet the pass mark receive immediate, focused support and intervention programmes in Year 2 to prepare them to re-take the Check.
- Any child who does not obtain the required level after the Year 2 re-take will continue to receive phonics teaching and/or spelling intervention throughout Key Stage 2

Additional Support

We are committed to catering for every child's needs. For children in the lowest-attaining group (who often have the widest variety of needs), daily one-to-one tutoring (10–15 minutes) is provided in addition to their group session. This ensures individual needs are met and supports our goal to effectively close attainment gaps, particularly for Pupil Premium pupils.

Monitoring and Review

The RWI Leader plays a critical role in ensuring the quality and consistency of the programme across the school. The RWI Leader is responsible for:

- Training the assessment team and accurately designating pupils and leaders to the correct groups.
- Informally monitoring RWI groups ('dropping in') to offer advice and ensure correct pupil placement.
- Modelling lessons where necessary.
- Attending update meetings and reporting back to the RWI group leaders.
- Liaising with the Head Teacher regarding groupings, teaching spaces, and resources.
- Reporting to the Governors on the quality of RWI implementation and its impact on reading standards.

Homework

Homework is set to support and consolidate phonics and literacy skills taught in class, ensuring a strong home-school link. This includes:

- Phonics Practice: Weekly links and/or QR codes are sent home. These provide parents with direct access to videos or resources demonstrating the 'pure sounds' and blending methods for the specific sounds the children have learned that week.
- Practising phonic skills through spelling words.
- Reading and reading-linked activities

Approved by Governors:
