Phonics & Early Reading

Intent

Reading is at the heart of the curriculum at St Blaise. It is in every aspect of daily life and we recognise the importance of nurturing a culture where children are competent and confident readers who can take pleasure in reading. We believe the importance of teaching children systematic synthetic phonics as a firm foundation for reading as children move from learning to read to reading to learn.

We will…

- Promote a love of reading.
- Ensure pupils read easily, fluently and with good understanding.
- Develop the habit of reading widely and often, for both pleasure and information.
- Follow a systematic synthetic programme with fidelity. Our chosen scheme is Rising Stars, Rocket phonics.
- Teach high-quality phonic sessions beginning in Early Years through to Year 2.
- Ensure children apply their phonic knowledge in reading and writing across the school.
- Provide a literacy-rich curriculum, immersing children in vocabulary-rich environments.
- Provide a well-stocked book corner in each classroom and a selection of books related to the children's learning.
- Ensure access to the school library for children to encounter a wide range of fiction and non-fiction texts.
- Offer high-quality texts to share with parents to enrich language, book discussion and supported reading outside of the decodable reading programme.

Implementation

In Reception and KS1 we follow the Rising Stars Rocket Phonics Programme. This is a fully resourced systematic, synthetic phonics programme validated by the DfE. Rocket Phonics combines the alphabetic code, knowledge and skills that are needed to learn to read and write, with language-rich children's literature with a clear progression from EYFS to Year 2. This approach will embed phonics in context and support a love of reading and writing from the outset. We will also use a wide variety of experiences, quality texts and resources to motivate and inspire our children.

We will ensure…

- Teachers create a positive reading and writing culture, where both are promoted, enjoyed, and considered 'a pleasure' for all pupils.
- Promotion of reading through teachers reading out loud regularly to their class.
- Pupils in EYFS and KS1 have daily phonics sessions, following Rocket Phonics and Rocket Phonics: Next Steps
- Guided Reading sessions in all KS1 classes
- Pupils are being open and adventurous with vocabulary choices.
- Pupils acquire strategies to enable them to become independent learners in English (spelling rules and patterns and how to tackle unfamiliar words when reading).
- Vocabulary is promoted through displays in class, all curriculum areas, enhancing and encouraging a wider use of vocabulary.
- Vocabulary mats are used where needed and thesauruses and dictionaries which are easily accessible for pupils to use.
- Teaching a range of genres across the school (progressing in difficulty) both in English and other curriculum areas; resulting in pupils being exposed to, and knowledgeable about, literary styles, authors and genres. They can express preferences and give opinions, supported by evidence, about different texts.
- Displays of writing, in class, shared areas and on the school website, giving a purpose and audience, to encourage pride in work and to show that work is valued.
- Reading and writing events (throughout the year) to encourage and promote enjoyment and opportunities to develop lifelong learning.

Impact

Impact measures will ensure children not only acquire the appropriate age-related knowledge linked to the curriculum, but also skills which equip them to progress from their starting points, and within their everyday lives.

In the long term, pupils will…

- be able to read fluently both for pleasure and to further their learning.
- regardless of ability, be able to succeed in phonics, reading and English lessons because work will be appropriately scaffolded.
- have a wide vocabulary and be adventurous with vocabulary choices within their writing.
- leave primary school being able to effectively apply spelling rules and patterns that they have been taught.