



Intent

At St Patrick's Catholic Voluntary Academy, phonics is a high priority where we are passionate about ensuring all children become confident, enthusiastic and life-long readers and writers. We believe that systematic, synthetic provides the strong foundations of learning to make the development into fluent reading and writing easier. Our intention is that through effective teaching of phonics, children learn to segment words to support their spelling ability and blend sounds to read words.

Implementation

At St Patrick's Catholic Voluntary Academy, we use the ALS Letters and Sounds programme, a quality first teaching approach for phonics. This allows our phonics teaching and learning to be progressive and consistent from our Nursery up to Year 2 and beyond and to recognise when learning milestones have been achieved. Children in our Nursery work on Phase One phonics, which concentrates on developing their speaking and listening skills and sound discrimination. This lays the foundations for using the sounds they learn in Reception and KS1. As children move into Reception, they continue to build on their listening skills and when most of the children can orally blend and begin to segment they are quickly introduced to Phase 2 which marks the start of a systematic phonics approach. They have discrete, daily phonics sessions where they revise previous learning, are taught new graphemes/phoneme correspondences, practise together and apply what they have learnt. Through our phonics scheme, the children are taught the 44 phonemes that make up all the sounds required for reading and spelling. These phonemes include those made by just one letter and those that are made by two or more. Throughout Year 1, the children work through Phases 4 and 5 as they grow in confidence and experience. In Year 2, the children are then introduced to alternative ways of representing the same sound to therefore strengthen their spelling ability.

Impact

Through the teaching of systematic phonics, our aim is for children to become fluent readers by the end of Key Stage 1. They develop a confidence and a 'can-do' attitude towards reading and therefore their love of reading is fostered both personally and by the staff at St Patrick's. Children can then focus on developing fluency and comprehension throughout the school. Targeted and timely intervention sessions enable a greater proportion of pupils to keep up to meet year group expectations or, in the case of those working significantly below expectations, to make better than expected progress. The phonics subject lead provides an action plan for the subject and monitors this throughout the year while addressing new areas for development and improvement annually as well as regular staff training. Attainment in phonics is measured by the regular class phonics assessments and the phonics screening test at the end of Year 1.