



St Nicolas CE Primary School
PHONICS POLICY

COORDINATOR SIGNATURE:
(Mrs Edwards)

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mrs Edwards', with a large, stylized flourish at the end.

DATE ADOPTED:

December 2025

DATE FOR REVIEW:

December 2027

Additional notes:

Cross reference with the following policy/ies:

Phonics Policy

At St Nicolas Primary School we believe that it is essential that all children become confident, fluent readers and successful independent writers. We will provide systematic phonics teaching to provide a firm foundation for word reading and writing skills.

We aim to:

- establish consistent practice, progression and continuity in the teaching and learning of phonics throughout the school.
- ensure that all children participate in high quality phonics sessions led by well-trained teaching staff.
- teach children word work strategies that will enable them to become fluent readers and confident writers.
- provide fully decodable readers that are carefully matched to a child's developing phonics knowledge.
- track children's progress regularly to ensure that no child falls behind and to provide extra support for children who need it.

Teaching and Delivery

The teaching of Phonics at St Nicolas Primary School will follow the systematic synthetic phonics scheme, Rocket Phonics. All staff will be trained to deliver Rocket phonics lessons with regular in-house training updates to ensure consistent high-quality teaching. Extra support will be given to any staff wanting or identified as needing more support.

Reception and Key Stage 1 children will have quality daily phonics lessons that last for a minimum of 30 minutes each day. In the first half of the Reception year teachers will split this session into two halves – 15 minutes whole class input followed by 15 minutes small group work later in the day. Children's phonics progression will follow the Rocket Phonics pathway clearly mapping out each term's expectations throughout Reception and Year 1.

A whole class teaching approach will expose all children to the daily learning, differentiated by the level of support and the expected outcomes. Each phonics session will follow the four-part teaching and learning cycle of revisit and review, teach, practise and then apply new learning. Further necessary catch up sessions for those children who need them will be led by all staff.

The Rocket Phonics teaching sequence introduces each new letter sound correspondence over two days. The first day focuses on blending to read skills and the second day on segmenting to spell. Reading and writing are interlinked so there will naturally be overlap, but by separating the skills teaching has more clarity and children more opportunity to learn and apply before moving on. Teachers will make frequent links between phonics sessions and reading and writing throughout the day and across the curriculum.

Whilst phonics is not taught discreetly throughout Key Stage 2, many of the sounds and patterns are revised and developed through spelling sessions and literacy lessons. All staff are trained to deliver Rocket Phonics so that it can be used to support those who need it throughout school. For further details of how spelling is taught in Key stage 2, see the Literacy Policy.

School environment and resources

The Rocket Phonics wall freeze flashcards and sounds mats are visible for use in every Reception and Key Stage 1 classroom. These sound mats are also available in all other classrooms for those who need them to support their learning.

Children will read fully decodable reading books carefully matched to their phonics learning to practise newly acquired phonics sounds. They will also be reading books that allow them to develop fluency in sounds they have already learnt. Parents will have access to real and e-books at home to support their child's reading journey.

Assessment

Regular assessment will be used to keep children on track. A baseline assessment will take place within a few weeks of each child starting school. Formative assessments will be ongoing daily as teachers observe children's participation in lessons. Summative assessments will be used at the end of each six week teaching block in line with the Rocket Phonics scheme.

Children identified as being at risk of falling below expected progress will be identified and the following steps will be taken

- the children will be identified and discussed with all class staff
- provision of support from additional adults within phonics sessions will be provided where possible
- specific difficulties will be identified with extra sessions outside the daily teaching sessions to work on specific targets
- next steps will be shared with parents and home packs provided where appropriate

In the Summer term, all Year 1 children take part in the Phonics Screening check, a national statutory check on children's phonological awareness. Those children that do not achieve the threshold score for meeting the standard, will repeat the check in the Summer term of Year 2 and need to have carefully planned phonics sessions and possible intervention to ensure there are no learning gaps.

Children with learning difficulties will work towards their target within the Rocket Phonics pathway at a pace that is suitably challenging. Children who are gifted and talented will be working to deepen and broaden their understanding, with additional enrichment reading books that may contain words beyond the taught code. EAL children will receive appropriate support to enable them to access the curriculum.

Monitoring

The quality of phonics teaching and outcomes will be monitored by learning walks, observations of phonics being taught, work samples and by talking to children and listening to them read.