

# Literacy in Reception & Beyond at St Anne's

## The EYFS Framework

The EYFS framework places a great emphasis on speaking, listening and understanding spoken word. This will ensure that children have the basic skills to access the rest of the curriculum.

It is therefore important that you as parents think about the language and range of vocabulary that you use with your children. Model expected language, use a growing vocabulary (explain any new words your child does not understand) and move away from 'baby talk' and pretend words. At St Anne's adults are 'Language role models'. Think of yourself being a language role model too. Encourage your child to speak in complete sentences using correct grammar. If you ask your child a question, expect them to reply using spoken words, not shrugs or points. Expect your child to make eye contact when speaking with others or when being spoken to help with listening and social skills. Consider carefully any 'background noises' such as TV or computer games when having conversations. Perhaps switch these off to help with concentration.

**If children cannot listen, they will find it difficult to learn.**

**If children cannot talk in sentences, they will find it difficult to write in sentences.**

**If their spoken language is limited, their written language will be limited.**

**If a child's pronunciation is poor, their spelling will be poor.**

## Imaginative Pretend Play

During Nursery education your child will have already been given lots of opportunities to 'pretend'. It is still important to provide your child with plenty of opportunities for small world and role play, such as farms, cars, tea sets, dressing up, building blocks, cardboard boxes etc. This imaginative play will encourage speaking and listening and will also provide a creative mind that will help during independent creative writing. Don't forget to play with your child and be an 'active play role model'.

## Nursery Rhymes

Nursery rhymes are very important to know by heart. The more nursery rhymes a child knows, the better their understanding of language will be and therefore their reading and writing will also be better.

## Books, Books, Books!

Sharing books is one of the most important things you can do with your child. If you read one book a day to your child, they will have read over 1,800 books by the time they are 5 – so much language! Visit the library for more books and add books you enjoy to the EYFS Padlet that other children might enjoy.

## Vocabulary of Phonics

**Phoneme** - a, g, t

**Digraph** – “2 letters that make one sound” (*ee* and *or* ) Some digraphs (*oo* and *th*) can each make two different sounds (*book* and *moon* & *that* and *three*)

**Trigraph** – “3 letters that make 1 sound” (*igh* & *air*)

**Regular Words** – those words that can be sounded out using phonics (*cat*, *rain*, *three*)

**Sound Button** – A spot under a letter to help children identify the phoneme (.)

**Digraph line** – A line under a digraph to help children identify the digraph or trigraph ( \_ )

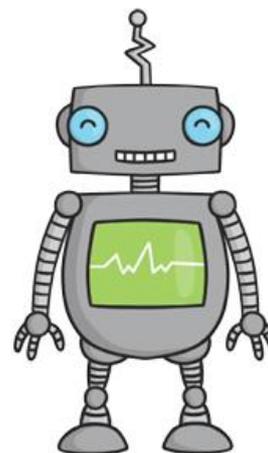
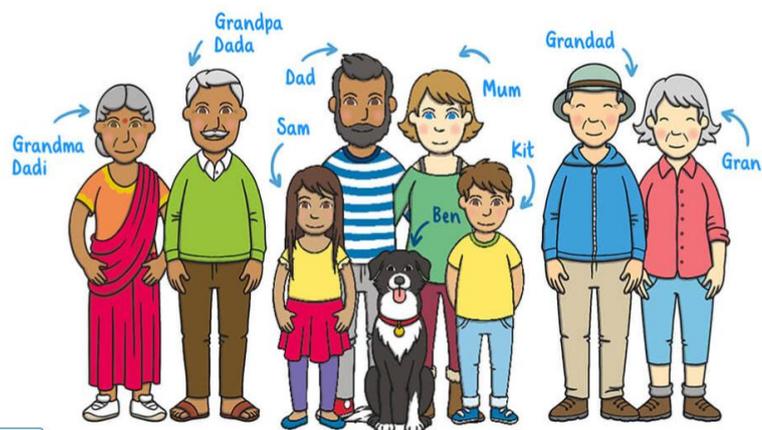
**Tricky Words** – those words that cannot be sounded out and need to be learned (*the*, *to*, *you*, *here*). You might sometimes hear the term **High Frequency Words**. These are the most common words that children will use.

**Segmenting** – The process of breaking up the individual sounds in words using our phoneme fingers to read or spell words, for example d-o-g

**Blending** - The process of segmenting a word and then running them together to make the word. For instance sounding out *d-o-g* and making *dog*.

**Robot Rick Fingers** – Using your fingers to segment and blend to read words out loud like a robot

## Twinkl Phonics Scheme



At St Anne's we follow the DfE approved Twinkl Phonics Scheme for the teaching of phonics. This splits the teaching of phonics into six levels. Level 1 encourages the children's listening and speaking skills. Level 2 to Level 6 the children are taught the phoneme sounds and spelling rules needed to become competent readers, spellers and writers. These five levels will be covered from Reception – Year 2 and beyond.

There are around 42 main sounds of English which are taught to the children, not just the 26 letters of the alphabet. Some sounds called 'digraphs' which are written with two letters (*ck*, *ee* and *or*). We say "2 letters 1 sound". Some of these digraph sounds (*oo* and *th*) can each make two different sounds (*book* and *moon*, *that* and *three*). In Reception, the children are introduced to one way of making each sound (Level 2, Level 3 & Level 4). In Year 1 and Year 2, they will learn alternative ways of making these sounds and learn spelling rules (Level 5 & Level 6).

Level 2: s, a, t, p, i, n, m, d, g, o, c, k, ck, e, u, r, h, b, f, ff, l, ll, ss,

Level 3: j, v, w, x, y, z, zz, qu, ch (chip), ar (farm), sh (shop), or (for), th (thin/then), ur (hurt), ng (ring), ow (cow), ai (rain), oi (coin), ee (feet), igh (night), air (fair), oa (boat), oo (boot/look), er (corner).

Level 4: Revise each sound above, use words with consonant blends (bl, st, dr etc), read regular words with 3, 4, 5 & 6 letters using these sounds and become confident with 'tricky words' (those that cannot be sounded out and need to be read on sight).

### Learning the phonemes, digraphs & trigraphs

When learning the sounds, each letter sound has a story, song and action which helps children remember the letter(s) that represent it. As children become more confident, they will no longer need to use the action. Children should learn each letter by its sound, not its name. This will help in blending (see later). The names of each letter will follow later in the year. The letters are not introduced in alphabetical order. This has been done so children can make more simple three-letter words quicker than by using any other letters. The letters *b* and *d* are introduced in different times to avoid confusion with each other. We aim to introduce 3 - 4 sounds a week. There are parent information sheets available on the class webpage.

### Letter Formation & Handwriting

The correct pencil grip is of prime importance. If a child's hold starts incorrectly, it is very difficult to correct later on. We sing the song "one finger one thumb on your pencil" to help. We encourage the children to use "duck fingers" to hold their pencil. A child needs to form each letter the correct way. The letter *c* is introduced in the early stages as this forms the basic shape of some other letters, such as *d*. Please use the pencil given out whenever your child writes at home.



We show the children on the board first using the 'magic pencil' using the rhyme. Then the formation is copied in the air, on the floor or on someone's back using our 'magic fingers'. We play with letter formations and practice using foam and sand etc. It is only then that we introduce pencils and paper. Lower case letters are always introduced first. Capital

letters are only used for names, but we do learn what they look like. They will be used later in the year when starting to write sentences. The children should always use print writing. Joined up writing will be introduced in Year 1 and beyond using pre-cursive & cursive style. The PowerPoint and class webpage gives you many examples and resources you can use.

### **Segmenting and Blending**

Segmenting is the process of breaking up the individual sounds in words using our phoneme fingers, for example, d-o-g. Blending is the process of segmenting a word and then running them together to make the word. We use our 'Robot Rick fingers' to help. For instance sounding out *d-o-g* and making *dog*. It is a technique every child will need to learn, and it does improve with practice. Don't worry if your child doesn't pick this up straight away. Keep practicing! To start with, you should sound out the word and see if a child can hear it, giving the answer if necessary. The diagraphs (those sounds with two letters, eg. sh) should be sounded as the diagraph and not split (sh and not s-h). In school we use 'sound buttons' (for phonemes) and 'digraph lines' (for digraphs & trigraphs) to help sound out words when reading. 'Nonsense words' are used to ensure that children are sounding out carefully – vop, fem, cherf.....

There are many words on our Phonics & Reading class webpage. Please make these into flash cards or use them on the screen. Please only use words that include letter sounds the children know. Use these flash cards for children to read, copy to write and then spell to write for themselves. I will also send some words home for you that might not have sound buttons on.

### **HOW TO HELP AT HOME**

- ❖ Fine-motor control activities
- ❖ Nursery rhymes & songs
- ❖ Role play / small world play with your child
- ❖ Bedtime stories
- ❖ 1000 Story Books
- ❖ Be a 'language role model'
- ❖ Be an 'active play role model'
- ❖ Talk with your child
- ❖ Make up stories
- ❖ Share a variety of books
- ❖ School Sound Books
- ❖ Go on a sound hunt in the park
- ❖ Share and read Flash Cards
- ❖ Hear your child read their school reading scheme books every day and make sure they are in school every day
- ❖ Other Reading Books
- ❖ Visit Streetly Library
- ❖ Videos on class pages
- ❖ Geraldine the Giraffe videos
- ❖ Phonics Play Website
- ❖ Letter / word games
- ❖ School Tricky Word Books
- ❖ Dictation Books (later in the year)
- ❖ Practice letter formations

### **Sound Books & Flash Cards**

Each child has their own sound book. I will also send home all the flash cards we will be covering. Please keep these safe for the rest of the year. If you lose them, a copy is available on the class website. As each sound is introduced, I will inform you of the phonemes we have covered in the week. Please stick this into your child's sound book. You should then use this book with your child to share reading to help your child become more fluent in knowing the letter sounds by looking through this as often as you can. The flash cards with picture clues are available on the class webpage.

### **Regular Word Flash Cards**

You will find these on the class webpage within each Level. These can be printed out or used on screen. I will also send home a variety of flash cards through the year for your child to use at home.

### **School Reading Scheme Books**

Children have initially been given books with story lines with few / no words. These are for the children to tell the story for themselves relating it to the pictures (links with language and speaking). We have a variety of schemes that have been carefully matched to the Twinkl Phonics Scheme, so children will have access to a wide range of texts through the year. Once the process of blending has begun and as individual children become more confident, story books with words that can be blended (phonic based books) will be introduced and sent home. They will be phonically decodable at the level we have introduced in school and the level your child is working at. We recommend that you hear your child every day.

**Reading books and reading records should be available in school every day.**

Children will be heard read in school by staff, students and reading volunteers. The books will not be changed every day, but when the child reads with fluency and accuracy. Please make sure you record every time you hear your child read this book at home and write constructive comments in your child's reading record. You may want to use this record to include progress with the phonics work too. Remember that reading is not just about reading the words on the page, but about understanding what you are reading and having fun. We are trying to develop comprehension skills, reading expression as well as accuracy. Please look on the Parent Information Sheets webpage for support with developing reading comprehension.

### **Other Reading**

Encourage your child to read as much as possible. Reading scheme books can only teach a certain number of skills. Reading a variety of story books, comics, newspapers, leaflets, signs in the street etc will give your child a diverse reading ability. We are trying to teach the children to read for life and not just for school or to get to the next level.

### **Tricky Word Books**

Your child will be given a 'tricky word' book. These are usually words that cannot be sounded out. Please use this in the same way as the sound book to revise and become familiar with these words. Once the children are confident with many of the tricky words, please begin to learn to spell them. There are several ways of learning tricky spellings:

- 1) Look, Copy, Cover, Write and Check: Look at the word to see which bit is tricky. Ask the child to try writing the word in the air saying the letters. Cover the word and see if the child can write it correctly. Check to make sure. Include your child in this checking process. They can also tell you how it was wrong.
- 2) Say it as it sounds Say the word so each sound is heard. For instance, the word 'was' is said as 'w-a-s'; the word Monday is said as 'Mon-day'.
- 3) Mnemonics: The initial letter of each word in a saying gives the correct spelling of a word. For instance, laugh - Laugh At Ugly Goat's Hair.

### **Dictation Books**

Later in the year the children will be given a 'dictation writing book' and a dictation list. Dictation books should be in school every week (day TBA) for them to be marked and home by Friday to try the next list. Each word in the list should be called out. Let the children try to hear and write each sound they can hear in the word for themselves to spell the words (they will probably need to use Robot Rick fingers). At the end of the list you may want to go through and check them with your child and write the correct spelling at the side of their attempt if it cannot be read or is wrong. You might also like to ask your child to say and write sentences about each word.

### **Books, Books, Books - 1000 Stories & Streetly Library**

Please make sure you share your child's 1000 Stories books with your child daily. This will continue in Year 1.

Remember to join Streetly Library. We are lucky to have this facility close to school, so it would be a shame to waste the opportunity. We will be visiting regularly on Friday's starting shortly (once every two weeks).

**Remember, we are trying to teach children to learn to read for life and to foster a love of reading – not just read the reading scheme books and get to the next level!**