Reading and Phonics at St Martin de Porres Catholic Primary School

At St Martin's we believe that reading is essential for children's development and supports their knowledge and understanding in a variety of subjects. Enjoying and sharing books, in school and at home, leads to children seeing books as a source of pleasure. We encourage children to have an interest in reading and, through enjoyment, hope to instil a love of reading and so motivating them to value reading.

Below is information about the phonics and reading schemes we use at St Martin's to teach and support your child.

Starting in Early Years children are taught phonics using the 'Letters and Sounds' programme. It aims to build children's speaking and listening skills in their own right as well as to prepare children for learning to read by developing their phonic knowledge and skills. It sets out a detailed and systematic programme for teaching phonic skills for children starting by the age of five, with the aim of them becoming fluent readers by age seven.

A programme called 'Jolly Phonics' is also used to reinforce the sounds through music and rhyme.

In Year 1, and continuing into Year 2, the children's phonics teaching is supported by following a scheme of phonic based reading books. These are mainly Rigby Star Phonic books which support children in learning to spell and read.

All children, from Foundation stage to Year 6, have access to a wide range of interactive reading books via Bug Club. This is an engaging collection of books which has a reward system to motivate readers and challenges them through a range of questioning. These books are accessed online and can be enjoyed at home as well as school. Every child has their own unique login for Bug Club and the level of reading books is chosen specifically to meet the needs of every individual child by the Class Teacher. Please speak to your child's Class Teacher if you need a reminder of the login or password details.

At St Martin's we encourage regular reading at home so children are also provided with reading books from a mixed range of texts. Most of the books in the schools' reading scheme are from Oxford Reading Tree. Other books from other schemes have been chosen to ensure that there is a wide breadth of topics and genres covered which will suit the likes of various children. This breadth also provides challenge and variety for our more able readers who will, at the appropriate time, become "free readers" thus allowing them to choose any reading book from the school's library.

All children are provided with a reading record booklet and we ask that parents use this to record any reading at home.

The table below is a summary based on the Letters and Sounds guidance.

Phase	Phonic Knowledge and Skills
Phase One (Nursery/Reception)	Activities are divided into seven aspects, including environmental sounds, instrumental sounds, body sounds, rhythm and rhyme, alliteration, voice sounds and finally oral blending and segmenting.
Phase Two (Reception) up to 6 weeks	Learning 19 letters of the alphabet and one sound for each. Blending sounds together to make words. Segmenting words into their separate sounds. Beginning to read simple captions.
Phase Three (Reception) up to 12 weeks	The remaining 7 letters of the alphabet, one sound for each. Graphemes such as ch, oo, th representing the remaining phonemes not covered by single letters. Reading captions, sentences and questions. On completion of this phase, children will have learnt the "simple code", i.e. one grapheme for each phoneme in the English language.
Phase Four (Reception) 4 to 6 weeks	No new grapheme-phoneme correspondences are taught in this phase. Children learn to blend and segment longer words with adjacent consonants, e.g. swim, clap, jump.
Phase Five (Throughout Year 1)	Now we move on to the "complex code". Children learn more graphemes for the phonemes which they already know, plus different ways of pronouncing the graphemes they already know.
Phase Six (Throughout Year 2 and beyond)	Working on spelling, including prefixes and suffixes, doubling and dropping letters etc.