

# SS John Fisher and Thomas More Catholic Primary School

Saints John Fisher and Thomas More Catholic Primary School serves a large housing estate south of Manchester. Children that attend the school come from families facing a variety of challenges. A recent survey found 33 different languages are spoken in homes in the area.

## Ofsted - from Inadequate to Good in less than two years

The school was rate Inadequate in April 2016. In response, the leadership team made radical changes to literacy teaching.

"I was interested in *Read Write Inc.* and I spoke to headteachers and teachers who taught it at schools nearby," said headteacher Dominic Hemington at Saints John Fisher and Thomas More. "We heard about the Education Endowment Foundation trial, which included the opportunity for fully-funded training. We had training in Autumn 2016 and by November *Read Write Inc.* was fully implemented across the school."

"Our children are avid readers. They read more, because they can. Children from our more vulnerable families, who did not read widely before, now read all the time. Because they choose to read more, their comprehension is developing too."

By February 2018 Ofsted rated the school Good and highlighted phonics teaching as particularly strong. "*Read Write Inc.* had an impact in less than two years." Dominic said.

Year	National	Manchester Total	SS JF and TM
2015	77%	73%	73%
2016	81%	78%	76%
2017	81%	79%	82%
2018	82%	80%	98%

Source: Department for Education and Ruth Miskin Training

Pupil Premium - 56%

EAL - 52%

## Reading widely and often

"Every morning between 9am and 10am the whole school teaches either Phonics, Fresh Start or Literacy and Language.

"Later in the day we have additional sessions focussing on building a love of reading and comprehension.

"We chose texts that are associated with the current topic or the Literacy and Language books. This introduces the children to a wider variety of high quality literature that links into other areas of the curriculum.

"*Read Write Inc.* was the seismic shift we needed. We see the benefits every day. Like any good quality programme, you have to commit fully.

You have to organise a new curriculum around it, your timing, staff, coaching. As a head, I have to commit to supporting my staff with it. Impact comes from commitment."

Dominic Hemington - headteacher at SS John Fisher and Thomas More Catholic Primary School.

"By the end of the year, each child in each year group knows many stories well, and takes pleasure in hearing and reading their class stories. We aim to provide a language rich environment, based on the core belief that reading changes everything."