

PHONICS POLICY

*St
Joseph's
Catholic
Primary
School, A
Voluntary
Academy*

St. Joseph's Catholic primary School

Phonics Policy

Little Wandle Letters and Sounds- Revised

“Growing in love, in the spirit of Christ, for the benefit of all.”

The Content of Our School

As a Catholic Academy, religious education and faith development are at the heart of our school curriculum developing the Catholicism and spirituality of our pupils. St Joseph's Catholic Primary Academy currently has 210 children on our roll, aged 3-11 years serving the localities of Ollerton, Boughton and surrounding areas. It is essential that our approach to teaching phonics is accessible to all learners, regardless of background.

Intent

Phonics

At St Joseph's Catholic Primary Academy, we believe that all our children can become fluent readers and writers. This is why we teach reading through *Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised*, which is a systematic and synthetic phonics programme. We start teaching phonics in Nursery and follow the [Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised progression](#), which ensures children build on their growing knowledge of the alphabetic code, mastering phonics to read and spell as they move through school.

As a result, all our children are able to tackle any unfamiliar words as they read. At St Joseph's Catholic Primary Academy, we also model the application of the alphabetic code through phonics in shared reading and writing, both inside and outside of the phonics lesson and across the curriculum. We have a strong focus on language development for our children because we know that speaking and listening are crucial skills for reading and writing in all subjects.

Implementation

Foundations for phonics in Foundation Stage One

- We provide a balance of child-led and adult-led experiences for all children that meet the curriculum expectations for 'Communication and language' and 'Literacy'. These include:
 - sharing high-quality stories and poems
 - learning a range of nursery rhymes and action rhymes
 - activities that develop focused listening and attention, including oral blending
 - attention to high-quality language.
- We ensure Nursery children are well prepared to begin learning grapheme-phoneme correspondences (GPCs) and blending in Reception.

Daily phonics lessons in Foundation Stage Two and Year 1

- We teach phonics for 30 minutes a day. In Reception, we build from 10-minute lessons, with additional daily oral blending games, to the full-length lesson as quickly as possible. Each Friday, we review the week's teaching to help children become fluent readers.
- Children make a strong start in Reception: teaching begins in Week 2 of the Autumn term.
- We follow the *Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised* expectations of progress:
 - Children in Reception are taught to read and spell words using Phase 2 and 3 GPCs, and words with adjacent consonants (Phase 4) with fluency and accuracy.
 - Children in Year 1 review Phase 3 and 4 and are taught to read and spell words using Phase 5 GPCs with fluency and accuracy.

Daily Keep-up and Rapid Catch Up lessons ensure every child learns to read

- Any child who needs additional practice has daily Keep-up or Rapid Catch Up support, taught by a fully trained adult. Keep-up lessons match the structure of class teaching, and use the same procedures, resources and mantras, but in smaller steps with more repetition, so that every child secures their learning.
- We timetable daily phonics lessons for any child in Year 2 or 3 who is not fully fluent at reading or has not passed the Phonics Screening Check.

These children urgently need to catch up, so the gap between themselves and their peers does not widen. We use the *Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised* assessments to identify the gaps in their phonic knowledge and teach to these using the Keep-up resources - at pace.

- If any child in Year 3 to 6 has gaps in their phonic knowledge when reading or writing, we plan phonics 'catch-up' lessons to address specific reading/writing gaps. These short, sharp lessons last 10 minutes and take place at least three times a week. Rapid Catch Up sessions will be streamed in KS2 to ensure all children are matched to the phase most appropriate for their individual needs.

Teaching reading: Reading practice sessions three times a week

- We teach children to read through reading practice sessions three times a week. These:
 - are taught by a fully trained adult to small groups of approximately six children
 - use books matched to the children's secure phonic knowledge using the *Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised* assessments and book matching grids on pages 11-20 of 'Application of phonics to reading'
 - are monitored by the class teacher, who rotates and works with each group on a regular basis.
- Each reading practice session has a clear focus, so that the demands of the session do not overload the children's working memory. The reading practice sessions have been designed to focus on three key reading skills:
 - decoding
 - prosody: teaching children to read with understanding and expression
 - comprehension: teaching children to understand the text.
- In Reception these sessions start in Week 4. Children who are not yet decoding have daily additional blending practice in small groups, so that they quickly learn to blend and can begin to read books.
- In Year 2 and 3, we continue to teach reading in this way for any children who still need to practise reading with decodable books.

Home reading

- The decodable reading practice book is taken home to ensure success is shared with the family.

- Reading for pleasure books also go home for parents to share and read to children.
- We use the *Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised* parents' resources to engage our families and share information about phonics, the benefits of sharing books, how children learn to blend and other aspects of our provision, both online and through workshops.

Additional reading support for vulnerable children

- Children in Reception and Year 1 who are receiving additional phonics Keep-up sessions read their reading practice book to an adult daily.

Ensuring consistency and pace of progress

- Every teacher in our school has been trained to teach reading, so we have the same expectations of progress. We all use the same language, routines and resources to teach children to read so that we lower children's cognitive load.
- Weekly content grids map each element of new learning to each day, week and term for the duration of the programme.
- Lesson templates, Prompt cards and How to videos ensure teachers all have a consistent approach and structure for each lesson.
- The Reading Leader and SLT use the Audit and Prompt cards to regularly monitor and observe teaching; they use the summative data to identify children who need additional support and gaps in learning.

Impact

Assessment

Assessment is used to monitor progress and to identify any child needing additional support as soon as they need it.

- Assessment for learning is used:
 - daily within class to identify children needing Keep-up or Rapid Catch Up support
 - weekly in the Review lesson to assess gaps, address these immediately and secure fluency of GPCs, words and spellings.
- Summative assessment is used:

- every six weeks to assess progress, to identify gaps in learning that need to be addressed, to identify any children needing additional support and to plan the Keep-up support that they need.

Statutory assessment

- Children in Year 1 sit the Phonics Screening Check. Any child not passing the check re-sits it in Year 2.

Ongoing assessment for catch-up

- Children in Year 2 to 6 are assessed through their teacher's ongoing formative assessment as well as through the half-termly *Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised* summative assessments.
- Rapid Catch Up will be assessed daily and summative data at the end of the 4 week catch up period.

SEND Provision

Additional phonics sessions are to be planned for as needed, using the 'keep up' or 'Rapid Catch Up' sessions. These will be carefully targeted using accurate assessment and resources to enable optimum progress for all children. There are opportunities to reinforce and apply acquired phonic knowledge and skills across the curriculum and these are tightly linked to pupil targets.

Roles and Responsibilities

The Headteacher has the responsibility for the leadership of the phonics curriculum and delegates responsibility to key staff:

- the Deputy Headteacher co-ordinates the work of the subject leaders and ensures that the phonics curriculum has progression and appropriate coverage;
- The subject leader is responsible implementing the *new Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised Scheme* for the medium term plans and liaising with class teachers over the content and delivery of phases. They evaluate and monitor standards in their subject;

- Class teachers ensure that phonics is taught and that the aims are achieved for their class. They plan collaboratively to ensure consistency across the year group and school;
- The Headteacher and Deputy Headteacher ensure that the progress of each pupil is tracked and that there is appropriate challenge support and intervention;
- Governors monitor the success of the phonics curriculum at whole Governing Body meetings through the Headteacher's report and reports from subject leaders.

Reviewed: November 2023

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