

ST COLUMBA'S CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

POLICY AND AIMS FOR PHONICS

Jn 10:10: "I have come that they may have life and have it to the full"

The KEY DRIVERS feed into our policy and the teaching of phonics/reading.

Speaking, language and communication, PSHE/RSE, global links, pedagogy, emotional resilience, parent partnership, reflective learners, skills and creativity.

Introduction

This policy outlines the teaching, organisation and management of the phonics teaching at St. Columba's Catholic Primary School. The school's policy for phonics is based on Essential Letters and Sounds.

The implementation of this policy is the responsibility of all teaching staff. Our staff are thoroughly committed to the delivery of excellent phonics teaching and they are highly motivated to support children to enable all our children to be proficient readers and writers.

The National Curriculum programme of study for reading and writing describes what must be taught in each key stage: (This ensures continuity and progression in the teaching of phonics throughout the school.) In early years (EYFS), the curriculum is guided by the learning and development requirements from Development Matters.

Rationale

This policy is the formal statement of intent for phonics; it reflects the essential part that phonics plays in the education of our pupils. It is important that a positive attitude towards phonics is encouraged amongst all our pupils in order to foster self-confidence and a sense of achievement. The policy also facilitates how we, as a school, meet the legal requirements of recent Education Acts and National Curriculum Requirements.

Scope

For the children in Early Years and Key Stage 1 also to include catch up support for Key Stage 2 children.

Principles

The principles for teaching phonics are based on the following:

- Equity - excellence in education requires high expectations and strong support for all students.
- Curriculum - the curriculum must be coherent, focused on developing reading and writing skills across the key stages.

Phonics

- Teaching/Learning/Assessment – mastery approach to ensure progress and high attainment for all pupils. Consistently high standards of teaching and an accurate use of assessment to inform future planning.

Aims

- At St Columba's School we are committed to the delivery of excellence in the teaching of Phonics. We aim to develop each child so that they are able to read with fluency as well as develop a love of reading that will stay with our children all their lives.
- Being able to read is the most important skill children will learn during their early schooling and has far-reaching implications for lifelong confidence and well-being. Phonics is the prime means for teaching children how to read and spell words.
- Developing children's speaking and listening skills from the earliest stages and ensuring that beginner readers are ready to get off to a good start in phonics by the age of five is of importance for the future success of our children.
- At our school we put the upmost importance on developing these skills within a broad and rich language curriculum.
- The use of phonics is one of the many skills needed to be able to be a reader and writer.
- We aim to teach high quality phonics to ensure the children have the best start possible in reading and writing. The learning of phonics is the beginning of children's body of knowledge, skills and understanding that are an essential part of learning to read.
- In order to read and understand texts children must learn to recognise/decode the words on the page.
- Good quality phonics teaching allows the child to be secure in the skills of word recognition and decoding which allows children to read fluently. This will result in children being able to read for pleasure and will allow them to move onto developing higher order reading for meaning skills. These phonic skills need to be taught systematically and appeal to a variety of learning styles.
- At St Columba's we aim to provide the pupils with a curriculum, which will produce individuals who are literate, creative, independent, inquisitive, enquiring and confident. We also aim to provide a stimulating environment and adequate resources so that pupils can develop their phonic skills to their full potential. We aim to provide cross-curricular opportunities, including the use of IT.
- We will consider the needs of all pupils, including those with SEND and those who have the ability to reach 'greater depth' within the national expectations for each year group.
- There are regular catch up sessions to support learning

Specific

Our children are entitled to a Phonics curriculum which enables them to:

- Gain a progressively deeper understanding of the phonetic structure of the English language
- Apply their phonic knowledge and skills to decode unfamiliar words fluently and accurately.
- Read rapidly to apply what they have learned across the whole curriculum.
- Create fluent readers, confident speakers and willing writers.
- Develop a life-long love of reading.

Phonics in the Early Years:

In Nursery and Reception phonics lessons take place daily. In reception class we follow ELS

- At the start of nursery phonics lessons will be delivered daily, lasting for 5-10 minutes at the start of the year- but these sessions increase in length as the children's listening, concentration and stamina improve. After a short input children can move to the provision to access phonics resources that enhance their learning.
- In Nursery our focus is primarily on Phase 1 phonics. The 7 aspects of phase 1 are covered throughout the year. These are:
 - 1: Environmental sounds.
 - 2: Instrumental sounds. ...
 - 3: Body percussion. ...
 - 4: Rhythm and rhyme. ...
 - 5: Alliteration. ...
 - 6: Voice sounds.
 - 7: Oral blending and segmenting.
- In Nursery, phonics lessons will focus on developing children's skills within these 7 areas.
- We offer the opportunity for some nursery children to progress to phase 2 when they are ready. We are aware that all children are not ready but we expose them at their level.
- Phase 1 phonics does not stop when the children move on but is interwoven into the teaching of each phonics phase.
- Our nursery children are at different levels of development, so those who need additional support, are targeted during free play. Intervention sessions are also delivered in small groups and 1:1 if required.
- Phonics sessions take a range of forms, including whole class sessions, listening games using environmental sounds and instruments, whiteboard activities, oral blending and alliteration, lots of adult modelling and reading and listening to stories, as well as discrete sessions.
- Phonics is modelled and supported throughout all activities during the day.
- Reception class begin the Autumn Term working on Phase 2 as a whole class. Our children work systematically through the phases following ELS. The aim is for Reception children to start phase 5 in summer term reception class.
- Phonics sessions are taught discretely; supporting activities are placed in the environment to reinforce the skills learnt. These are adult led.
- As previously mentioned, the children in Reception also have access to interventions to support them in their phonics learning if they have been identified as needing more consolidation to progress to the end of the phonics phase.
- The scheme includes clear and rigorous coverage of phonics sounds, tricky words and essential skills to support children in their reading and writing journey.

Phonics

- All Early Years children are assessed during the autumn term as a baseline and these assessments are revisited throughout the school year. Initially, the children all attend the phonics sessions together but children are identified for catch up.
- All our Early Years staff have been trained in Phonics teaching and are able to help the children to progress in their learning in engaging sessions.
- Lessons follow a set format throughout the school
- Children will be required to build their stamina for reading and writing in these sessions and their emotional resilience will be improved through persevering with new learning.
- Children who require further support are also provided group or 1:1 reinforcement sessions.
- During the children's literacy and other subject sessions phonics skills are revisited as well as sentence structure and independent writing.

Provision for SEND

Pupils are provided with a variety of opportunities to develop and extend their literacy skills in and across each phase of education. Pupils with additional needs will be supported by the class teacher where possible, with inclusion at the heart of every lesson. Support staff may be used within lessons, with direction from the class teacher. Some children need strategies other than phonics to support their reading.

Intervention

- Children who need extra support to develop their phonic knowledge across the EYFS, Key Stage 1 and 2 are identified and targeted for intervention.

Higher Ability

When children demonstrate a gift for reading we aim to ensure challenge and support. We try to support stamina by giving further opportunity to read phonics books but also other books that provide access to more words and bigger story lines. We use the Oxford Owl home reading platform to support parents with this too. We ensure we work through the 'Big 5' essential reading components.

Classroom environment

In the EYFS and KS1 teachers will develop phonics displays within their classroom which focus on the phonemes and key words they have been concentrating on in their phonics sessions. There will be regular opportunities for pupils to engage with these phonics

Phonics

displays and activities in order for them to reinforce their learning from the daily session. Phonics is needed in areas of provision.

All EYFS and KS1 classrooms will have a display of phonemes and HRSW (harder to read and spell words) as appropriate to the year group and ability of the children. In nursery, reception and year 1, phonics based activities will be placed in the continuous provision environment for the children to access during choosing time. Children will access these independently or with adult support.

The teaching of phonics at our school provides opportunities for:

- Whole class teaching
- Individual work
- In line with the School's policy and commitment to excellence in Phonics, each class in Reception and KS1 will teach phonics as a discrete lesson every day and will include phonics as part of teaching and learning throughout other curriculum lessons on a daily basis.
- The structure of each lesson at St. Columba's and the journey of phonics across the week enables all aspects of the blending and segmenting of phonemes/graphemes; lessons are uniquely planned and tailored to meet the needs of all our learners

Assessment

- Children's progress in developing and applying their phonics knowledge is carefully assessed and monitored using an online ongoing tracking document- which moves on with the children year on year.
- Teachers use daily phonics sessions to monitor children's progress and assess children through their writing and reading.
- Children work 1:1 with staff to be assessed on knowledge
- The English and Phonics leaders will collect in data from these tracker sheets each term to identify the progress children are making throughout the school.
- Through this tracking our SLT will be able to identify gaps in learning within classes and year groups and any trends across Key Stages enabling these areas to be addresses.
- Learning is discussed with the children as they are reading

Reading Books

- From Early Years to the end of Key Stage One the children will be given home school reading books in line with their phonics phase. For some children this continues into KS2 The rationale behind this is to enable the children to practise at home the phonemes they have recently learnt but also to enable the books to be 100% decodable for the children without any additional sounds that they might not have learnt yet. Reading between home and school encourages parent partnership and provides further opportunities for the child to learn and develop their phonics skills. Our school also subscribes to Oxford Owl. This is an excellent resource for parents to find additional reading books for their children

Phonics

based on their phonics learning. Class teachers keep parents up to date with their phonics level via tapestry posts and comments in their child's reading record.

- There are instances when staff feel other books need to be read alongside the phonics books and this is judged on an individual basis.
- At St Columba's we aim to focus our learning of reading on the National Reading Panel's 5 essential components for reading ('the big 5') these are:

1. Explicit instruction in phonemic awareness.

2. Systematic Phonics instruction.

3. Techniques to improve fluency- fluency includes; accuracy, speed, understanding and prosody

4. Teaching vocabulary

5. Reading comprehension

- Through our phonics lessons we cover each of these aspects, systematically teaching phonics, picking up on new words as they are introduced, asking questions about the stories and encouraging fluency by providing opportunities for reading aloud.
- The link with parents is crucial and this is supported through Tapestry and face to face meetings. Staff hold regular reading meetings to support parents with reading at home.

Year 1 Phonics Screening Check

In the summer term, all children in year 1 will undertake the National Phonics Screening Check. This is an assessment carried out in school during which the children will be assessed on their ability to segment and blend a range of 40 real and 'alien' words. Alien words are a selection of phonetically decodable nonsense words. The words in this assessment will gauge the understanding of the children's understanding of the phonemes learned and give the school the knowledge of where the gaps are. If the children are not secure in recognising, segmenting and blending these words and therefore do not pass the assessment, they will be offered further support as they enter Year 2 and will be able to repeat the assessment in the summer of year 2. This assessment also allows us to put in specific and personal support for those children who require additional assistance. If a child does not meet the expected standard in Year 2 then phonics teaching and learning will be continued into Key Stage 2. At this point, the child will also be monitored by the SENCO to assess for additional needs.

Phonics in KS2

Phonics is needed in KS2 to support spelling and reading. In KS2 staff are aware of the need to refer back to previous learning to support this continued journey. Phonics does not just disappear because you are in the juniors. KS2 teachers have phonics displays in classrooms and refer back to phase 5 to support spelling when needed. Children in KS2 have continued phonics sessions depending on their need.

Role of the Coordinator

- Ensure continuity and progression from year group to year group. Monitor and evaluate progress and attainment in phonics across the school and compare with national standards to address areas of weakness.
- Provide all members of staff with guidelines and a scheme of work to show how aims are to be achieved and how the variety of all aspects of phonics should be taught
- Advise on in-service training to staff where appropriate.
- Advise and support colleagues in the implementation of assessment of phonics throughout the school.
- Provide information to parents and invite them to watch / be involved in a phonics lesson
- Assist with the requisition and maintenance of resources required for the teaching of phonics. This will be within the confines of the school budget.
 - Monitor the reading scheme throughout the school

Role of the Class Teacher

- Ensure progression in the acquisition of phonics skills with due regard to the National Curriculum for English. Follow the scheme of work, to meet the needs of ALL pupils in their class.
- Provide accurate assessment data to the co-ordinator that matches the ability of each pupil. Provide evidence (in books/photos etc) to support this.
- Develop and update skills, knowledge and understanding of where necessary.
- Follow the scheme daily
- Hear readers and consider the 'Big 5' to support learning.

Expectations

By the end of EYFS children should:

- Read and understand simple sentences.
- Use phonic knowledge to decode common words and read them aloud accurately
- Confidently read by sight the Stage 2 and 3 common exception words
- Use phonic knowledge to write words in a way which matches how the sounds are said.
- Write some irregular common words.

By the end of Year 1 children should:

- Apply phonic knowledge and skill as the prime approach to reading unfamiliar words that are not completely decodable;
- Read many frequently-encountered words automatically;
- Read phonically decodable three-syllable words;
- Read a range of age-appropriate texts fluently;
- Demonstrate understanding of age-appropriate texts.
- Read decodable words that end -s, -es, -ing, -ed, -er, -est
- Say the correct sound to grapheme for all the 40+ phonemes up to Stage 5.

By the end of Year 2 children should

- Read accurately most words of two or more syllables.

Phonics

- Read most words containing common suffixes.

Appendix

Phase 1

Aspect 1 - General sound discrimination - environmental

The aim of this aspect is to raise children's awareness of the sounds around them and to develop their listening skills. Activities suggested in the guidance include going on a listening walk, drumming on different items outside and comparing the sounds, playing a sounds lotto game and making shakers.

Aspect 2 - General sound discrimination - instrumental sounds

This aspect aims to develop children's awareness of sounds made by various instruments and noise makers. Activities include comparing and matching sound makers, playing instruments alongside a story and making loud and quiet sounds.

Aspect 3 - General sound discrimination - body percussion

The aim of this aspect is to develop children's awareness of sounds and rhythms. Activities include singing songs and action rhymes, listening to music and developing a sounds vocabulary.

Aspect 4 - Rhythm and rhyme

This aspect aims to develop children's appreciation and experiences of rhythm and rhyme in speech. Activities include rhyming stories, rhyming bingo, clapping out the syllables in words and odd one out.

Aspect 5 - Alliteration

The focus is on initial sounds of words, with activities including I-Spy type games and matching objects which begin with the same sound.

Phase 2

In Phase 2, children begin to learn the sounds that letters make (phonemes). There are 44 sounds in all. Some are made with two letters, but in Phase 2, children focus on learning the 19 most common single letter sounds.

Although the order in which sounds are taught will depend on which scheme your child's school follows, usually, they will learn the most commonly used phonemes first, starting with: /s/, /a/, /t/, /p/, /i/, /n/.

By the end of Phase 2 children should be able to read some vowel-consonant (VC) and consonant-vowel-consonant (CVC) words, and to spell them out. They also learn some high frequency 'tricky words' like 'the' and 'go.' This phase usually lasts about six weeks.



Phase 3

Phase 3 introduces children to the remaining, more difficult and/or less commonly used phonemes. There are around 25 of these, depending on which scheme is followed, mainly made up of two letters such as /ch/, /ar/, /ow/ and /ee/. They learn the names of the letters, as well as the sounds they make. Activities might include learning mnemonics (memory aids) for tricky words, practising writing letters on mini whiteboards, using word cards and singing songs like the Alphabet Song.

Phase 3 takes most children around 12 weeks. By the end, they should be able to say the sound made by most, or all, Phase 2 and 3 graphemes, blend and read CVC words made from these graphemes, read 12 new tricky



Phonics

words and write letters correctly when given an example to copy.

Phase 4

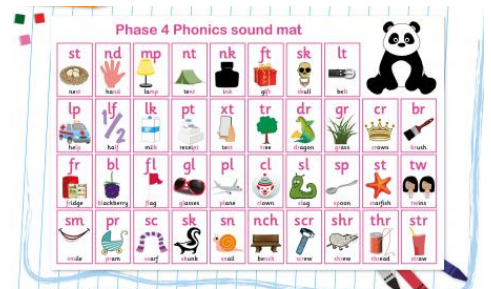
By now, children should be confident with each phoneme.

In Phase 4 phonics, children will, among other things:

- Practise reading and spelling CVCC words ('such,' 'belt,' 'milk' etc)
- Practise reading and spelling high frequency words
- Practise reading and writing sentences
- Learn more tricky words, including 'have,' 'like,' 'some,' 'little'

Children should now be blending confidently to work out new words.

They should be starting to be able to read words straight off, rather than having to sound them out. They should also be able to write every letter, mostly correctly. This phase usually takes four to six weeks, and most children will complete it around the end of Reception.



Phase 5

- Phase 5 generally takes children the whole of Year 1. Children learn new graphemes (different ways of spelling each sound) and alternative pronunciations for these: for example, learning that the grapheme 'ow' makes a different sound in 'snow' and 'cow'.
- They should become quicker at blending, and start to do it silently.
- They learn about split digraphs (the 'magic e') such as the a-e in 'name.'
- They'll start to choose the right graphemes when spelling, and will learn more tricky words, including 'people,' 'water' and 'friend'. They also learn one new phoneme: /zh/, as in 'treasure.'
- By the end of Year 1, children should be able to:
- Say the sound for any grapheme they are shown
- Write the common graphemes for any given sound (e.g. 'e,' 'ee,' 'ie,' 'ea')
- Use their phonics knowledge to read and spell unfamiliar words of up to three syllables
- Read all of the 100 high frequency words, and be able to spell most of them
- Form letters correctly



At the end of Year 1, all children are given a Phonics Screening Check to ensure they have mastered the appropriate knowledge.

Phase 6

Phase 6 phonics takes place throughout Year 2, with the aim of children becoming fluent readers and accurate spellers.

By Phase 6, children should be able to read hundreds of words using one of three strategies:

- Reading them automatically
- Decoding them quickly and silently
- Decoding them aloud

Children should now be spelling most words accurately (this is known as 'encoding'), although this usually lags behind reading.

They will also learn, among other things:

- Prefixes and suffixes, e.g. 'in-' and '-ed'
- The past tense
- Memory strategies for high frequency or topic words

Phonics

- Proof-reading
- How to use a dictionary
- Where to put the apostrophe in words like 'I'm'
- Spelling rules

Although formal phonics teaching is usually complete by the end of Year 2, children continue to use their knowledge as they move up the school. The whole aim of phonics teaching is not just to learn the sounds, but to use them as a tool for reading and spelling.