

Sacred Heart Catholic Primary School

To live, love and learn joyfully in the family of Christ



Phonics and Reading Policy

Sacred Heart Phonics and Early Reading Policy

The overarching aim for English in the national curriculum is to promote high standards of language and literacy by equipping pupils with a strong command of the spoken and written word, and to develop their love of literature.

Intent

At Sacred Heart Primary School, we aim to ensure that all pupils:

- read fluently with good understanding
- develop the habit of reading widely and often, for both pleasure and acquiring information
- have a wide vocabulary, an understanding of grammar and knowledge of linguistic conventions needed for reading, writing and spoken language
- appreciate our rich and varied literary heritage.



Our Implementation

Sacred Heart's implementation of the reading curriculum is shaped by the needs of our children, our intent and our school values. The detail below outlines how we implement our intent towards reading, and should be read alongside our phonics and English maps for further detail.

Skilled word reading involves both the speedy working out of the pronunciation of unfamiliar printed words (decoding) along with the recognition of familiar printed words. Underpinning both is the understanding that the letters on the page represent the sounds in spoken words. This understanding is why phonics is emphasised in the early teaching of reading.

'Smart Kids Letters and Sounds – The Code'

The teaching of phonics begins in the Early Years Foundation Stage. From September 2022, we are implementing 'Smart Kids Letters and Sounds – The Code', which is an accredited systematic, synthetic phonics programme. Using this as a basis, we personalise the approach to ensure it caters to the unique needs of our cohorts and school. Its purpose is to provide a multi-sensory and engaging programme that meets all the expectations of the national curriculum in reading and spelling. Implementing the programme with fidelity, using the newly purchased resources and whole school training will support consistency of approach across the school. It will also ensure that the current rigour and high levels of achievement in terms of phonics teaching and learning is upheld.



Phonics in Reception:

In Reception, we provide a systematic, synthetic phonics programme, which ultimately teaches our children how to read and write. Our approach instils an understanding of the main sounds, which then leads to blending sounds into spoken words. This equips children with

the skills they require for reading and writing, providing a stable foundation to build upon throughout their school journey.

From the second week of teaching in September, during discrete, 20 minute daily lessons, children in reception are exposed to up to 5 new sounds a week, on average, quickly progressing through all necessary sounds to access books. These are then recapped and revisited through games and play in order to consolidate, support and challenge individual children. By the end of Reception, children will have been exposed to all main sounds: the integral building blocks of reading.

Within a Phonics lesson, children are taught:

- Grapheme-phoneme (letter-sound) correspondences
- The skill of blending (synthesising) phonemes in order to read words
- The skills of segmenting words into their constituent phonemes to spell
- That blending and segmenting are reversible processes
- How to articulate phoneme clearly and precisely
- Letter formation
- Tricky words - these are words which cannot be phonetically decoded and must be learnt by sight.

Phonics in Key Stage 1

In Year 1, phonics is taught twice a day and the key sounds are revised and consolidated in preparation for the Phonics Screening Test in the summer term. In Year 2, phonics is still taught to those children who require further support with their phonological awareness and understanding. In Year 2, all children will follow the Year 2 Spelling Curriculum using the Herts for Learning 'Essential Spelling' programme, which continues into KS2.

Reception						Year 1					
Autumn 1	Autumn 2	Spring 1	Spring 2	Summer 1	Summer 2	Autumn 1	Autumn 2	Spring 1	Spring 2	Summer 1	Summer 2
Phase 2	Phase 3a	Phase 3b	Phase 3b	Phase 4a	Phase 4b	PHASE 5a	PHASE 5b	PHASE 5c	Phase 5D	PHASE 5D +	
s, a, t, p, i, n, m, d, g, o, c, k, ck, e, u, r, h, b, f, ff, l, ll, ss	j, v, w, x, y, z, zz, qu, ch, sh, th, ng	ai, ee, igh, oa, oi, oo, oo, ow, ar, air, ear, ur, or, ure, er	CVC Words and longer words with double letters (rabbit) Revisit: All Phase 2 & 3 graphemes	CVCC, CCVC, CCVCC, CCCVCC	-est, -ing, -ed (sounds like 'd'), 't', 'id'), -er, -tch, -y, -ey, -ve, -le	Revisit: Phases 2, 3 & 4 Revisited ed ed tch y ey ve le ou, ea, ie, ir, oy, ay, ey, aw, ue, wh, ph, ew, oe, au a-e e-e i-e o-e u-e u-e /zh/ su	New Phoneme: zh (-s-, -ge) Alternative pronunciation: c (s), g (j), ch (sh/k), y (i), a (ar), i, o, u, e (e), ie (ee), er, ow (oa) ou (oo) Y (igh) a (ai) a (o) e (ee) u (oo) short ey (ay) ou (oa) Red – included on phonics screening	Alternative spellings: /l/el, al, il, /m/mb, mn, /s/se, ce, /z/se, ze, /sh/ti, ci, ssi, /c/t(ure) Alternative spellings: /ng/n(k), /zh/ge, /j/dge, g e, /r/wr, /n/kn, gn, /oo/oul	Alternative spellings: /air/are, ear, /ar/al, /ear/eer, er e, /or/ore, /ur/or, ear, /ai/ea, eigh, aigh, /u/o-e Alternative spellings: /u/ou, /air/ere, /s/st, sc, /or/oar, oor, al, a, augh, our	Revision in preparation for the phonics screening assessment	Alternative spellings: /air/are, ear, /ar/al, /ear/eer, er e, /or/ore, /ur/or, ear, /ai/ea, eigh, aigh, /u/o-e Alternative spellings: /u/ou, /air/ere, /s/st, sc, /or/oar, oor, al, a, augh, our
is, the, no, go, l, to, into,	said, her, he,	she, all, we, me,	are	there, so, were, like, have,	one, love, out, about,	Tricky words: here, your, asked,	eye, again, any, many, friend, hour,	once, beautiful, different,	laugh, improve, move		

How is Reading Taught?

In Reception and Year 1, children are taught the skills of reading primarily through Phonics lessons. They also share books as a class and with adults; in small groups and one-to-one with adults. Children participate in Guided Reading sessions, where the class are in small groups and carry out a carousel of reading activities throughout the week. In Year 2, children have Guided Reading sessions for the first two terms of the year. In Summer term, they begin Reciprocal Reading.

Reciprocal Reading, for KS2, is a whole class reading session, that takes place 4 times a week. One of these sessions is a written comprehension lesson. Reciprocal Reading is a well-researched method used to develop learners' reading skills, promote higher order thinking, develop listening and talking, and ensure access to the curriculum for all learners. Studies have also demonstrated that learners transfer their learning into other contexts.

Its aims are to:

- improve reading comprehension through the use of four reading strategies: predicting, questioning, clarifying and summarising
- scaffold the four strategies by modelling, guiding and applying the strategies while reading
- enable pupils to reflect on their reading and develop higher order thinking skills
- use the social nature of learning to improve reading comprehension
- be one strategy in promoting literacy across learning in all sectors.

This strategy does not replace independent reading but is one method of promoting greater understanding for all. Reciprocal Reading can begin with the teacher using the four strategies themselves when they read aloud to the class. The children then copy this process in their groups. When the children are comfortable with the process, they should be able to work independently of the teacher. This allows the teacher to work with all the groups, confident that the children are developing deep understanding of the text. The teacher can then lead a whole class discussion based around the findings of each group.

All children are taught writing through the use of high-quality texts as a model, and books are read as part of English lessons.

Reading one-to-one with an adult is an important way to teach and practise reading, and is carried out across all Key Stages.

Reading Books

In Reception, early reading is encouraged by providing pupils with non-worded reading books in the first instance. Once they have developed their phonics and decoding skills, Reception children are then moved on to texts that match their phonic ability and are fully decodable. This is usually once the first set of sounds are known within weeks three of the first term. However, every child learns at their own pace and therefore some children may require further support in oral blending and may continue with non-worded reading until suitable. Any concerns will be shared with parents promptly.



In Reception and Key Stage 1, each child will receive one book a week to take home which enables them to practice their phonics outside of the classroom setting. These books include a mixture of The Code reading books and Big Cat letters and Sounds which have been closely banded according to their phonics phase and both the sounds and tricky words contained within them. This means that each child's reading book is carefully aligned to the phonic sounds taught within class and the specific sounds each individual children needs to consolidate their learning. We ask that children in EYFS and KS1 read for 10 to 15 minutes daily, and books will be changed at least weekly to promote fluency.

Children in Key Stage One and Two also have the opportunity to take home a library book weekly.

Once children have completed 'Smart Kids Letters and Sounds – The Code', they take home a banded book and their library book. Children continue to be given support in what books to choose as their individual reading book. The banded books are organised by colour and continue throughout KS1 and KS2. When children complete the banded book stages, they are a 'Free Reader'. We ask that children in KS2 read for 15 to 20 minutes daily, and books will be changed when they are finished.

How do we record Reading?

Every child is given a Reading Record. This is a record of their book level and the texts that they have read in the current academic year. As children age, they take an increased responsibility for recording their reading. In Reception and Year 1, the Reading Record is written in by their parents. Its purpose is to help parents/families read with their children at home and is a key link between school and home.

Reading is also recorded by adults in the Class Reading Folder. This contains the Class Reading Tracker, Reading Progression Statements/Year Groups and Book Bands (for reference), Reading Record Class Tick Sheet (showing target children), Children's Individual Reading Record Sheet, and Reading Benchmark Assessments. This is where adults make comments and keep assessment data.

How do we monitor Progress?

Phonics is taught following the 'Smart Kids Letters and Sounds – The Code' progression of sounds to ensure a systematic approach. Phonics lessons follow the same daily sequence. Planning includes many opportunities for assessment for the graphemes taught and informs day-to-day planning which teachers adapt and change according to pupil needs. For example, prioritising daily reading for targeted individuals.

Phonics is formally assessed half termly to identify gaps in learning to inform future planning and intervention. By assessing the children at the end of each phonics teaching block (every 6 weeks), using the Code assessment, teachers can monitor each child's progress, adjust planning as required to correct misconceptions and ensure each child is receiving the support they need. Daily keep up sessions can then be provided by trained adults for those pupils identified as falling behind. Further small groups are put in place to support children, as needed.

For all year groups, summative data is submitted once a term and pupil progress analysis is taken from this. Pupils identified by class teachers and in pupil progress meeting as not making progress, have interventions planned for them and teaching staff are aware of who is a priority for intervention/support. At the end of Year 1 and 2 children complete the NFER reading assessments, which aid teachers in next steps. In KS2, children complete the NFER reading assessments in late Autumn or early Spring, and in the Summer term. This prepares children for formal assessments such as the KS2 SATS in Year 6.

How do we promote a love of reading?



Whilst we recognise and promote the importance of phonics as a foundation to enable children to read confidently, we also recognise how critical it is during early reading exposure that children listen to, and enjoy, a variety of stories and texts. Our texts, documented within our English map, represent the books we feel all children here at Sacred Heart should read and, additionally, are linked to our curriculum intent and school values. In a similar vein,

we also use this exposure to core texts to develop and enhance children's comprehension of what they are reading or listening to.

All staff are expert readers, modelling reading skills, discussing texts read with the pupils and sharing their own love of reading. Children vote to choose a class story or poem to promote a love and enjoyment of stories, immersing them in the world of imagination. Our learning opportunities incorporate a range of fiction, non-fiction, and poetry, to expose pupils to different texts they may enjoy.

How do we train staff to be reading experts?

Teaching staff, including learning support assistants, receive regular phonics and reading training. The English Leader coaches staff as well as highlights appropriate continuing professional development using 'Smart Kids Letters and Sounds – The Code', HFL Education English Advisers and Dandelion Learning. The English Leader attends regular cluster meetings and disseminates relevant information to staff, providing guidance to staff and attends ongoing training and is supported by HFL Education English Advisers. The English Leader monitors reading as part of the school self-evaluation schedule, identifying strengths and next-steps to ensure ongoing development and consistency of approach across the school. This ensures that the current rigour in terms of phonics teaching is upheld.

How can you help your child?

At Sacred Heart we fully understand the importance of parental support. Therefore, during the first half term in Autumn all EYFS and Year 1 parents will be invited to a phonics workshop. This is aimed at helping you to support your child at home with phonics and reading. You will also be given a weekly signpost detailing the sounds and tricky words that have been learnt that week. Your child's reading progress will also be shared during the parent consultation in Autumn and the mid- year report. Children each have a Reading Record to support themselves with reading. Parents and carers are asked to use this Record when helping your children with their daily reading. Please also take a look at the yearly curriculum map of phonics on the school website.

Further links and information:

<https://www.smartkids.co.uk/collections/letters-sounds>

[English curriculum whole school overview](#)

[Curriculum overview for Reception, year 1 and 2](#)