

Our Lady's RC Primary School



Phonics Policy

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School Mission statement

"Learning and loving together; we grow with Jesus"

Our Core Values

During Summer 2020 workshops, we revisited both our Mission Statement and Core Values. This involved everyone in discussion, reflection and prayer about the values, Mission and Aims of our Catholic school. There was a calling to all to re-commit to our purpose and to work together to understand our roles and responsibilities as part of Our Lady's



During the workshops, the feedback from parents, and the views expressed by the children during sessions played a prominent role in the decisions we made.

Our Mission Statement is:

"Learning and loving together; we grow with Jesus"

The Core Values that provide the foundation for that Mission are:

**Faithful
Nurturing
Respectful**

**Positive
Forgiving
Honest**

**Safe
Fair**



Our Mission is represented by the design above. As with the statement itself, the logo was developed by all stakeholders, with the children in particular providing the symbolic ideas of **growth – the tree, love – the hearts and Christ – the Cross.**

Our Lady's R.C. Primary School

Phonics Policy

At Our Lady's RC Primary School, we believe that the teaching of Phonics plays a key role in helping children learn to read, write and spell. We follow the Sounds~Write Phonics Scheme which is a high-quality program endorsed by the DfE. Our aim is for the vast majority of children to be confident readers by the end of KS1. High quality Phonics teaching enables children to decode new words confidently and independently and leads to improved understanding. This will result in children being able to read for pleasure, undertake research and develop their comprehension skills. Sounds~Write phonics also teaches children how to spell words and this helps them to become confident writers.

The main objective of the teaching and learning of Phonics is to enable all children to access reading and writing at an age-appropriate level. This is best achieved when there is:

- A consistent whole school approach to the teaching of Phonics throughout Foundation Stage, KS1 and KS2.
- Rigorous planning, assessment, and tracking.
- Sufficient training provided to enable the implementation of Sounds~Write based teaching of Phonics by all staff involved in the teaching of Phonics.

At Our Lady's, we use the Sounds~Write Phonics Programme. Sounds~Write is a quality first Phonics Programme that offers the classroom teacher an instructional method that works because it is a structured, multi-sensory, incremental and co-ordinated approach to teaching children to read and spell. The principal attainment targets are:

- The majority of children to have completed the Initial code by the end of Foundation Stage.
- Higher achieving children (in Foundation stage and KS1) to be identified and moved through the planning progression at a more rapid pace.
- The majority of Year 1 children to pass the Year 1 Phonics Screening test.
- The majority of children to have completed the Extended code by the end of KS1.
- All children who did not meet these targets in KS1 to continue to follow the Sounds~Write programme in KS2.

Children failing to meet the principal attainment targets will receive targeted intervention which will be tracked and monitored.

Phonics

Sounds-Write is a method for teaching reading and spelling that is based on how children naturally learn language. It focuses on teaching children the sounds of their language first and then shows them how to write those sounds. This approach helps children understand how the English language works, linking sounds to letters in a clear way.

Sounds-Write uses structured lessons that teachers follow carefully to make sure students learn consistently. It combines reading and spelling in every lesson, as both skills are closely connected. Once children become confident readers, Sounds-Write continues to be used to strengthen spelling through Key Stage 2.

The program is designed for use throughout the whole school, from Early Years to Year 6 and beyond. It requires teachers who have completed specific training to deliver the lessons correctly. Since research shows that teacher knowledge is key to effective learning, Sounds-Write focuses on training teachers, rather than just offering resources.

The teaching of Phonics in Foundation Stage, KS1 and KS2 (for those who did not meet the attainment targets by the end of KS1) will be planned in accordance with our Phonics Policy and will include:

- Daily instruction in dedicated phonic lessons.
- Lessons planned by the class teacher using the Sounds-Write programme.
- Intervention groups which target the needs and ability of the children and make effective use of support staff.
- Appropriately-paced lessons that provide children with suitable tasks to demonstrate their learning using the Sounds-Write support materials.
- Planning should include high frequency words that children will be introduced to alongside phonics teaching.
- Planning should include nonsense words to determine how well children can blend and segment phonetically.

Planning should reflect and build on prior learning. Staff must ensure that all children are given sufficient exposure to the letter sound correspondences that will be presented to them in the Year 1 phonics screening assessment, where children must use their phonic knowledge to correctly read 40 words. If the children do not achieve the allotted pass rate, they will receive targeted intervention before re-taking the test in Yr2.

Children will be matched to an appropriate book level that matches their phonic knowledge. For children learning the Initial code, Dandelion readers will be used alongside other appropriate phonic based reading schemes. For children learning the Extended code, other phonics-based reading schemes will be used to help children practise and consolidate their phonics skills.

In Key Stage Two, children will continue with Sounds-Write however they will now look at spellings and teacher will continue teaching polysyllabic words. The first step is to help students understand that these words are made up of syllables, and each syllable can be broken into individual sounds. Initially, the focus should be on the structure of the words. Once students grasp this structure, attention can shift to less common spellings and the schwa sound.

It's important that teachers ensure the words being taught are part of the students' spoken vocabulary and that they know how to pronounce them correctly.

Polysyllabic word lessons should begin when students understand that sounds can be spelled in different ways and that spellings can represent multiple sounds.

Teaching and learning

The approach to the teaching of phonics across the school will be consistent; and show progression of skills and knowledge.

- When teaching a new sound, ensure children are seeing how the sounds are represented in written form through adult modelling and through opportunities to practice writing in the air and on whiteboards. In addition, phonics based written work should be recorded in books on a regular basis.
- Ensure every lesson gives children opportunities to see, say, blend and segment sounds to make words and also to practise writing words.

- Use fingers to segment sounds and make sure you show the blend.
- Children to be taught in differentiated phonics groups.

Information on Letter Names

Letter names should be introduced after students fully understand that letters represent sounds in words. Teaching letter names too early can confuse students, as letter names don't help with reading and spelling. Toward the end of Reception, once students are confident with the Initial Code, letter names become helpful for discussing spellings. Teachers can start using letter names when explaining, for example, that the word "lick" uses the < c > < k > (cee, kay) spelling for the /k/ sound.

If a student asks how to spell the /w/ sound in "when" before letter names are introduced, the teacher should show the student how to spell it without using letter names. A small whiteboard can be helpful for this. It's important not to break the word "when" into individual letter sounds like /w/ /h/ /e/ /n/, as it only has three sounds: /w/ /e/ /n/. Once letter names are learned, both teachers and students can discuss spellings more clearly, like saying "the < c > < k > spelling of /k/ in 'lick'" or "the < w > < h > spelling of /w/ in 'when.'"

Capital letters should be introduced alongside lowercase letters. Many children already know some capital letters, often from their names. In phonics, capital letters are quickly introduced through names like "Sam" and "Tim," and at the start of sentences. Teachers should model how to write capital letters in the same way they teach lowercase letters, showing that letters represent sounds. Classroom displays can include both types of letters to support learning.

Assessment, Recording and Reporting

On-going formative assessment will be used by the class teacher and teaching assistants to determine how successful the children have been in their ability to recognise and write graphemes, orally blend and segment words and their ability to read and spell phonetically regular words.

Progress will be monitored using a phonics screening check. All children will be assessed at least once per half-term and this data will be analysed and used to determine which children need to join a Phonics intervention group. Children must be taught in differentiated groups and moved between these groups according to their progress. Children in Year 1 (and those in Year 2 who didn't pass the Year Phonics Screen) will take practise Phonics Screen tests once a term to monitor their progress. Assessment results will be shared with the Key Stage leads and SLT.

Management

The English Lead will monitor and evaluate the planning and teaching of Phonics within the school thorough observations, scrutiny of work, displays and on-going discussions with class teachers. All teachers and TA's who administer Sounds ~Write will receive Sounds~Write training to ensure that lesson delivery is a high quality and consistent with the School Phonics Policy.