



Great Crosby Catholic Primary School
“..that they may have life and have it to the full.” John 10:10

Phonics Statement.

This is a statement of the principles and strategies for the teaching of phonics at Great Crosby Catholic Primary School. This policy should be read in conjunction with other English related policies, other teaching and learning and assessment policies.

Phonics and Early Reading Policy

At Great Crosby Catholic Primary School, we aim to develop the full potential of all our pupils as confident, literate readers and writers. In order for this to happen, it is vitally important that children have a secure understanding of the letter sounds, names and spelling systems of the English language. Phonic skills need to be developed in a systematic way, based on a phase approach.

Intent

Phonics (reading and spelling)

At Great Crosby, we believe that all our children can become fluent readers and writers. This is why we teach early reading through *Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised*, which is a systematic and synthetic phonics programme. We start teaching phonics in Nursery/Reception 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 Great Crosby, 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.

Comprehension

At Great Crosby, we value reading as a crucial life skill. By the time children leave us, they read confidently for meaning and regularly enjoy reading for pleasure. Our readers are equipped with the tools to tackle unfamiliar vocabulary. We encourage our children to see themselves as readers for both pleasure and purpose.

Because we believe teaching every child to read is so important, we have a Reading Leader and a Phonics Leader, both of whom drive the early reading programme in our school. These people are highly skilled at teaching phonics and reading, and monitor and support our reading team, so everyone teaches with fidelity to the *Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised* programme.

Implementation

Foundations for phonics in Nursery



- 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 Reception and Year 1

- We teach phonics for 20-30 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 lessons ensure every child learns to read

- Through teacher assessment, targeted children are given additional practice through Daily Keep-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, 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.
- In year three, small groups of children receive the Little Wandle Rapid Catch Up interventions.

Teaching reading:

Reading practice sessions

- We teach children to read through reading practice sessions. 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 key reading skills:
 - decoding
 - prosody: teaching children to read with understanding and expression.
- 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 we continue to teach reading in this way for any children who still need to practise reading with decodable books.

Reading Mastery 5.

At Great Crosby, we use Reading Mastery 5 (RM5) to teach and develop reading comprehension from Reception upwards. These sessions follow the same structure each week and involve the children in sharing and then reading an extract independently, summarising, predicting, text talk, the acquisition of new vocabulary, answering inferential and literal questions and discussing an issue linked to the text. During each session, the children are encouraged to use sentence starters to begin either verbal or written answers, and record their answers in writing

Home reading

- The decodable reading practice book is taken home at the weekend to ensure success is shared with the family. This book is also available to use on the Collins E-Reading website.
- Reading for pleasure books also go home for parents to share and read with the children.
- To engage our families and share information about reading and phonics; the benefits of sharing books; how children learn to blend and other aspects of our provision, we provide reading support booklets, which outline how reading is taught and how parents/ carers can support their children in the reading process. We also run reading and phonics workshops and meetings.

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 phonics lead uses 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.

Ensuring reading for pleasure

'Reading for pleasure is the single most important indicator of a child's success.'
(OECD 2002)

'The will influences the skill and vice versa.' (OECD 2010)

We value reading for pleasure highly and work hard as a school to grow our reading for pleasure pedagogy.

- We read to children every day. We choose these books carefully, as we want children to experience a wide range of books, including books that reflect the children at Great Crosby, and our local community, as well as books that open windows into other worlds and cultures.
- Every classroom has an inviting book corner that encourages a love for reading. We curate these books and talk about them to entice children to read a wide range of books.
- In Nursery/Reception, children have access to the reading corner every day in continuous provision.
- Children from Reception onwards have a home reading record. The parent/carer records comments to share with the adults in school and school staff will acknowledge what has been written on a regular basis, to ensure communication between home and school.
- As the children progress through the school, they are encouraged to write their own comments and keep a list of the books/authors that they have read.
- We participate in initiatives such as World Book Day or National Poetry Day.
- Children across the school have regular opportunities to engage with a wide range of reading for pleasure events (theatre trips, cinema trips, author visits and workshops, national events etc).
- We use a whole school text or study the same author at the end of each academic year.

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 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
 - by SLT and scrutinised through the *Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised* assessment tracker, to narrow attainment gaps between



different groups of children and so that any additional support for teachers can be put into place.

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 who have not passed the Phonics Screening check are assessed through their teacher's ongoing formative assessment as well as through the half-termly *Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised* summative assessments.

Homework.

Homework is set in Year One and Two to support phonics taught in class through tasks such as:

- Practising phonics skills in spelling words;
- Reading and activities linked to reading;
- Writing tasks;
- Direction to online games and resources.