

Teaching Phonics at Corpus Christi Primary

Intent

At Corpus Christi we strive to give every child the confidence and skills to become happy, fluent readers, who enjoy reading for pleasure. Reading is the bedrock of the curriculum and therefore we believe in the importance of inspiring life long readers, right from the start of their educational journey. Phonics is the foundation of this journey, from which a love of reading can develop, and therefore we plan a highly structured programme of daily lessons across Early Years and KS1 but also into KS2 for those children who need such interventions to achieve expected progress in reading. We teach through the “Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised” systematic and synthetic Phonics programme, from Early Years onwards which ensures children build on their growing knowledge as they move through the school.

We aim for children to be able to apply their phonic knowledge to confidently spell many words either correctly or phonetically using the sounds they have learnt. They will learn spelling alternatives for different sounds and be able to apply these consistently.

Children’s reading books show a cumulative progression in phonic knowledge that match the grapheme-phoneme correspondences they know and plenty of opportunities are given to practise in order to support decoding skills. They are equipped with the tools they need to tackle unfamiliar vocabulary.

Staff ensure that an appropriate progression of skills is in place which supports pupils knowing more and remembering more phonics knowledge and develops them as readers and writers. Pupils are supported to be the best readers they can be, so struggling readers are supported and more competent readers extended.

Implementation

In Nursery we provide a balance of child-led and adult led experiences for all children including sharing high quality stories and poems, learning a range of nursery rhymes, activities that develop focused listening, and oral blending. We aim for our Nursery children to be well prepared to begin learning grapheme-phoneme correspondences and blending in Reception.

We follow the Little Wandle scheme 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 Phonics lessons can take the form of both whole class and/or differentiated small group sessions depending on individual need. Each session gives an opportunity for children to revisit their previous experience, be taught new skills, practise together and apply what they have learned.

Any child who needs additional practice has daily Keep Up support, taught by a fully trained adult. We timetable daily Phonics lessons for any child in Year 2 or 3 or 4 who is not fully fluent at reading or has not passed the Phonics Screening Test. Assessments are used to identify gaps in their phonic knowledge and teach to these using the Keep Up resources.

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.

Initial activities focus on developing speaking and listening skills and rhyming. Children are taught to hear sounds in words then grapheme-phoneme correspondence is introduced. The process of segmenting and blending words and selecting letters to represent phonemes is taught. Children are introduced to reading and spelling common exception words. Then children move on to cover phonemes represented by more than one letter and the reading and spelling of high frequency and tricky words continues to be taught. Next children start to read and spell words containing adjacent consonants, continuing to broaden their knowledge of phonemes and graphemes. They learn new graphemes and alternate pronunciations for these and graphemes they already know. Finally, they develop a range of spelling strategies, including prefixes and suffixes, doubling and dropping letters where necessary.

We teach children to read through reading practice sessions either daily or three times or once a week depending on their current attainment. These are taught by a trained adult to small groups using books matched to Phonic assessments and monitored by the class teacher who rotates and works with each group on a regular basis.

Each reading session is designed to focus on three key reading skills:

Decoding

Prosody (understanding and expression)

Comprehension

The decodable reading practice book is taken home to ensure success is shared with the family and repeated practice consolidates learning. To engage our families, we share information about the Phonics scheme, the benefits of sharing books, how children learn to blend and other aspects of our provision, both online and in workshops.

All the teachers and TAs have been trained so that we all use the same language, routines and resources to teach children to read. Weekly content grids map each element of new learning to each day, week and term.

Impact

Through the teaching of systematic Phonics, our aim is for children to become fluent readers, able to focus on developing fluency and comprehension as they move through the

school. Children are encouraged to develop their love of genres and authors and to review books objectively. In this way they develop a deep love of literature across a range of cultures, genres and styles.

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 and Summative assessment every six weeks to assess progress and to identify children needing Keeping Up support.

Our Phonics Results :

END OF Y1 PHONICS

	2017	2018	2019	2022
PASS MARK	82.8%	87.5%	76.7%	79%

Phonics scores increased then slipped to below national average in 2019. Only to raise again to above national average in 2022.

PRIORITY

- Continue to maintain attainment in Phonics to 'at least' national average.