



St. Peter's Catholic Primary School

part of the wider Christus Trust, Multi Academy Trust



Mission Statement

Loving and learning together, with Jesus

Phonics and Early Reading

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Phonics and early reading policy

The context of our school

At St Peter's reading is highly valued. Every part of our curriculum is designed to absorb the children in high quality vocabulary and texts. We are passionate about inspiring a lifelong love of learning, which is why the skill of reading is important at such an early age. The EEF states:

'Reading enables children to not only learn across the curriculum but also to access numerous aspects of daily life, influencing the opportunities that they have available to them in the future.'

It is essential that our approach to teaching phonics and reading is accessible to all learners.

Intent

Phonics (reading and spelling)

At **St Peter's Catholic Primary** we believe that all our children can become fluent readers and writers. This is why we teach reading through *Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised*, which is a systematic and synthetic phonics programme. We start teaching phonics in 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 **St Peter's**, 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 **St Peter's**, 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.

We believe teaching every child to read is important. Teachers are highly skilled and equipped to deliver the early reading programme in our school. We monitor and support our reading team, so everyone teaches with fidelity to the *Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised* programme.

Implementation

EYFS

- 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
 - learning a range of nursery rhymes and action rhymes
 - activities that develop focused listening and attention, including oral blending
 - attention to high-quality language.

Daily phonics lessons in Reception and Year 1

- We teach phonics for 20 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 4 of the Autumn term, following initial baseline assessments.
- 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 Phases 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

- Any child who needs additional practice has 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 and above 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 assessments to identify the gaps in their phonic knowledge and teach to these using Little Wandle resources – at pace.
- These short, sharp lessons last 15-20 minutes daily and have been designed to ensure children quickly catch up to age-related expectations in reading.

Teaching reading: Reading practice sessions

- We teach children to read through reading practice sessions once a week.
- 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.



- 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 focus on three key reading skills:
 - decoding
 - prosody: teaching children to read with understanding and expression
 - comprehension: teaching children to understand the text.
- 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 Years 2 and 3, we continue to teach reading in this way for any children who still need to practise reading with decodable books.

Home reading

- The decodable reading practice book is taken home to ensure success is shared with the family.
 - Reading for pleasure books also go home for parents to share and read to children. We share the research behind the importance and impact of sharing quality children's books with parents through workshops, leaflets and the [Everybody read!](#) resources.
 - We use the [Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised parents' resources](#) to engage our families and share information about phonics, the benefits of sharing books, how children learn to blend and other aspects of our provision, both online and through workshops.

Additional reading support for vulnerable children

- Children in Reception and Year 1 who are receiving additional phonics Keep-up sessions read their reading practice book to an adult daily.

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 planning map each element of new learning to each day, week and term for the duration of the programme.
- Little Wandle Resources, the script and 'How to' videos ensure teachers all have a consistent approach and structure for each lesson.

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 **St Peter's** and our local community as well as books that open windows into other worlds and cultures.
- Every classroom has a book corner designed to aid cognitive retrieval and retention which also encourages a love for reading. We curate these books and talk about them to entice children to read a wide range of books.
- In Reception, children have access to the reading corner every day in their free flow time and the books are continually refreshed.
- Children from Reception onwards have a home reading record. The parent/carer records comments to share with the adults in school and the adults will write in this 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.
- Each class visits the school library every week to hear a shared story/ change their books.
- The school library is made available for classes to use at protected times. Children across the school have regular opportunities to engage with a wide range of Reading for Pleasure events (book fairs, author visits and workshops, national events etc).
- We use the Everybody read! resources to grow our teachers' knowledge of current books, the most recent research and to grow our own Reading for Pleasure practice.

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 support
 - Throughout lessons, teachers assess the gaps, address these immediately and secure fluency of GPCs, words and spellings.
- **Summative assessment** for [Reception](#) and [Year 1](#) is used:
 - Children's progress is assessed regularly, to identify gaps in learning that need to be addressed, to identify any children needing additional support and to plan further support.
 - by SLT and scrutinised through a gap analysis *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.

- **Fluency Assessments:** measure children’s accuracy and reading speed in short one-minute assessments. They are used:
 - Fluency assessments are used as a baseline assessment in Year 2 to ensure the children have maintained fluency since the end of Year 1.
 - to assess when children are ready to exit their programme. For Year 1 children, this is when they read the final fluency assessment at 60–70+ words per minute. Older children can exit when they read the final fluency assessment at 90+ words per minute. At these levels, children should have sufficient fluency to tackle any book at age-related expectations. After exiting their programme, children do not need to read any more fully decodable books.
 - Children from Year 3 -6 use Rapid Reads to ensure they continue to decode and build fluency as they progress in their reading.
- A **baseline assessment** is used:
 - with any child new to the school in [Reception](#) and [Year 1](#) to quickly identify any gaps in their phonic knowledge and plan and provide appropriate extra teaching.
- **Interventions** are used:
 - to quickly identify any gaps in the phonic knowledge of new children joining the school and plan and provide appropriate support where needed.

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 and tracking for children that did not pass the phonics screening test:

- Children from Year 2 to 6 are assessed and tracked through:
 - assessments to quickly identify any gaps in their phonic knowledge and plan appropriate support
 - the fluency assessments
- The fluency assessments measure children’s accuracy and reading speed in short one-minute assessments. They also assess when children are ready to exit reading decodable books, which is when they read the final fluency assessment at 90+ words per minute.