

# Holy Cross Catholic Primary School



## PHONICS POLICY

**Spring 2023**

**Next review: Spring 2025**

**Mission Statement Motto:** *Building relationships with God and each other, we work hard in faith and hope to give our best in everything*

## **HOLY CROSS CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL**

### **Phonics Policy**

#### **Mission Statement**

**Holy Cross is a Catholic school which seeks to build a closer partnership with parents, Parish and the wider community. We work hard to provide an environment which is secure, stimulating and happy and where everyone is appreciated and enabled to give of their best.**

**We encourage all to have respect for each individual, to be honest, tolerant, just and forgiving and to develop a closer relationship with each other and through this, a closer relationship with God. We recognise Jean Baptiste Debrabant's vision that: "A Christian based education is a sure hope for the future of religion and society."**

#### **Rationale**

English has a pre-eminent place in education and in society. A high-quality education in English will teach pupils to speak and write fluently so that they can communicate their ideas and emotions to others, and through their reading and listening, others can communicate with them. Through reading in particular, pupils have a chance to develop culturally, emotionally, intellectually, socially and spiritually. Literature, especially, plays a key role in such development. Reading also enables pupils both to acquire knowledge and to build on what they already know. All the skills of language are essential to participating fully as a member of society; pupils who do not learn to speak, read and write fluently and confidently are effectively disenfranchised.

This policy outlines the teaching and learning of phonics and early reading skills at Holy Cross Catholic Primary school. The objective of this policy is to give direction to staff regarding teaching children early reading skills.

At Holy Cross Catholic Primary School we use the Read, Write Inc (RWI) programme to get children off to a confident start with their literacy and language. RWI is a teaching method based on phonics (the units of sound within words) and we teach children to recognise and apply the phonics in both their reading and spelling.

Evidence suggests that fidelity to a well-structured and systematic phonics scheme is the best, and fastest way of teaching children to decode. Read, Write Inc also supports children's ability to read high frequency, common exception words as well as teaching the skills required for effective comprehension of a text including vocabulary knowledge, reading fluency and inference and deduction skills.

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## **Aims**

The overarching aim for English in the National Curriculum is to promote high standards of language and English by equipping pupils with a strong command of the spoken and written language, and to develop their love of literature through widespread reading for enjoyment. The National Curriculum for English aims to ensure that all pupils:

- read easily, fluently and with good understanding
- develop the habit of reading widely and often, for both pleasure and information
- acquire a wide vocabulary, an understanding of grammar and knowledge of linguistic conventions for reading, writing and spoken language
- appreciate our rich and varied literary heritage
- write clearly, accurately and coherently, adapting their language and style in and for a range of contexts, purposes and audiences
- use discussion in order to learn; they should be able to elaborate and explain clearly their understanding and ideas
- are competent in the arts of speaking and listening; making formal presentations, demonstrating to others and participating in debate.

Using RWI, we aim to teach children to decode texts effortlessly so that they can put all their energy into comprehending what they read. With this, we hope that every child will grow to find pleasure and enjoyment through reading.

A sound understanding of phonics also supports children to spell effortlessly so that they can write fluently, accurately, and with confidence, focusing on the composition of their writing.

Through Read, Write Inc lessons children will:

- learn 70+ sounds and the corresponding letter/letter groups using simple picture prompts
- learn to read words using 'Fred Talk' (sounding words out) to start, then as they progress without 'Fred Talk';
- read stories featuring words they have learned to sound out
- show that they comprehend the stories by answering questions
- learn to write the letters/letter groups which represent 70+ sounds.
- learn to spell words by saying the sounds in 'Fred Talk'
- write simple and complex sentences

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## **Organisation (Implementation)**

The RWI scheme advocates that phonics lessons should be delivered using the 5 Ps:

- Pace – good pace is essential to the lesson
- Praise/Positive Teaching – children learn more effectively in a positive climate
- Purpose – every part of the lesson has a specific purpose
- Participation - a strong feature of RWI lessons is partner work (based on research which states that 70% of learning comes from partner talk)
- Passion – this is a very prescriptive programme. It is the energy, enthusiasm and passion that group leaders put into the lesson that bring the teaching and learning to life!

Children continue to access Read, Write Inc lessons until assessment shows that they are confidently using 70+ sounds to decode and read both real and 'nonsense' words of multiple syllables.

### **Groupings**

Pupils work within ability groups across FS, Years 1 and 2, and smaller groups in Year 3, 4 5 and 6 where needed. Ability groups are organised using on-going assessments carried out every half term. The reading leader will group the children in light of the outcomes of the individual assessments. Less able children will be placed into small groups, where possible. Struggling readers and those at risk of falling behind are taught by the most skilled members of staff.

### **Parental Involvement**

Parents meetings are held during the Autumn term to introduce parents to RWI, and the way in which we teach their children to read. In the Spring term, parents are also given the opportunity to attend workshops to work alongside their child during phonics lessons.

### **Interventions**

Any child who is not making expected progress within RWI will be given additional 1:1 tutoring in phonics. These interventions follow a set structure based on the RWI 1:1 Interventions set out in the RWI Handbook. The Reading Leader specifies which children require which interventions based on half termly analysis of RWI assessments.

## **Inclusion**

All Read Write Inc lessons are pitched at the appropriate level for the needs of the pupils in the group, as groupings are based on assessment of children's prior phonics knowledge. For children with significant additional needs, smaller groups and/or 1:1 support is provided.

The RWI scheme uses a combination of pictures and rhymes/phrases to support children to remember the sounds being taught, and the direct instruction format of the lessons further aids children with EAL and SEND to retain the learning.

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### **Assessment and Recording of Work**

In addition to half termly Read Write Inc assessments, which assess the children's ability to use the phonemes they have learned to decode both real and pseudo words, teachers use ongoing assessment for learning within RWI lessons to assess how well children:

- read the grapheme chart
- read the green and red word lists
- decode the ditty/story
- comprehend the story

If a child is making accelerated progress, they may be reassessed before the end of half term, and depending on the outcome of the assessment, they may move up a group if it is deemed in their best interests. Children new to the school will be assessed within their first few days and placed in an appropriate ability group as soon as possible so that no learning time is lost.

Children complete the spelling part of the speed sounds sessions in smaller red books. They will mark these in purple pen through self-assessment.

### **Monitoring, Review and CPD**

The Reading Leaders monitor the teaching and learning of early reading skills through lesson visits, analysis of half termly phonics assessments and monitoring of marking in pupils' phonics books.

Staff training for Read, Write Inc includes:

- Coaching sessions and modelled teaching from the Reading Leader
- Whole school Read, Write Inc Development Days
- Access to online RWI training materials including model lessons
- Provision of RWI Handbooks with lesson plans

### **Responsibilities**

It is the responsibility of the Reading Leader to:

- Organise half termly RWI assessments and group children accordingly
- Assign teaching staff to groups
- 'Drop in' on RWI groups to give advice on teaching and to informally check that pupils are in the correct groups
- Offer coaching sessions to staff to ensure the set routines in the handbook are being followed correctly
- Where necessary, model lessons
- Liaise with the head teacher regarding groupings, teaching spaces and other pertinent matters
- Organise regular development days with for the school to improve practise and keep up to date
- Ensure staff have adequate level of training in place- this may be formal or informal

**Core Values:** *Respect, Honesty, Tolerance, Justice, Forgiveness*

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- Audit resources, ordering any new ones required
- Monitors marking (see above)
- Ensure staff have access to the correct planning for their group (provided by the handbook)

## **Resources**

The following resources are required for effective teaching of Read, Write Inc:

- Fred (soft frog toy for younger children)
- Speed sound cards (A4 and smaller) set 1, 2 and/or 3
- Red words
- Green words
- Story books
- Story green words
- Story red words
- Get writing! Booklets
- IWB slide shows to go with story booklets – or printed equivalent
- Speed sounds chart
- Handbook (provides all planning for all colour groups)

## **Review and Adoption**

This policy will be reviewed annually, and was last reviewed by the Phonics Subject Leader in March 2023

**Further Documents:** English policy