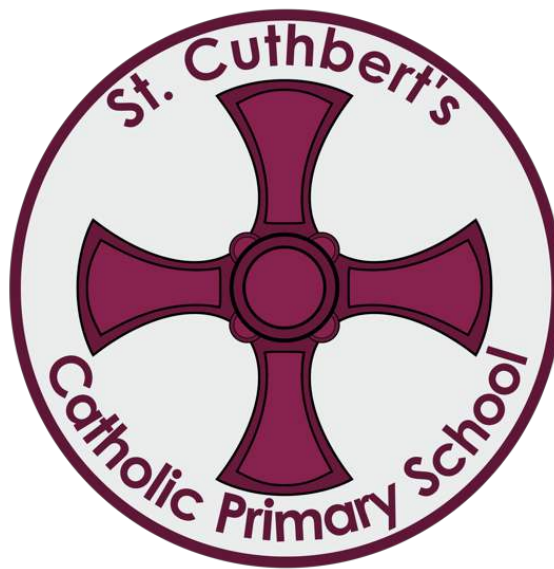


Spelling and Phonics Policy

St Cuthbert's Catholic Primary



Approved by: Governing Body

Date:

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1. Introduction

You are unique, talented and loved by God

Every child has the right to an education. (Article 28 UNCRC)

**Education must develop every child's personality, talents & abilities to the full.
(Article 29 UNCRC)**

This policy is written with consideration for the Gospel values of our Catholic school and for our ongoing commitment to the Rights of the Child which underpins our day-to-day practice and ethos. Although direct reference to these considerations are not continuously made, the policy has been written with full awareness of our responsibility and commitment to the faith and rights of our pupils.

As part of the Bishop Chadwick Catholic Education Trust (BCCET), we are committed to upholding the key values of our family of schools in the teaching of phonics and spelling:

- **Excellence:** Both phonics and spelling are planned, taught and monitored to enable staff and pupils to achieve excellence.
- **Respect:** all of our school family are created in the image of Christ and are treated with equity and fairness. We are committed to providing support, high expectations and challenge for our staff and pupils, no matter their starting point, to help them develop their phonic and spelling ability to the full.
- **Community:** we work as a community to achieve our aims and teach our pupils the value of collaboration and team work through phonics and spelling.
- **Gifts:** we support all staff and pupils to enable them to fulfil their potential.
- **Aspiration:** staff and pupils are supported to be the best they can be and we ensure the needs of every individual are met.
- **Celebration:** we recognise and celebrate success, resilience and positivity in spelling and phonics.

Our pupils are all unique individuals with their own strengths, aptitudes, interests and dreams. As a Catholic school community, we support each child to make the most of every opportunity we offer.

2. Vision

At St. Cuthbert's our phonics and spelling curriculum has been developed to ensure every child can reach their potential in both phonics and spelling and that an enthusiasm for and confidence in both is engineered in each child. Our school's philosophy of language is that the teaching of phonics and spelling has a crucial role to play in equipping learners with the language skills they need to become effective members of their own communities, the world of work, and of society in general. The study of English develops children's abilities to listen, speak, read and write for a wide range of purposes, so using language to learn and communicate ideas, views and feelings. It enables our children to express themselves creatively and imaginatively, as they become enthusiastic readers and spellers. Our children gain an understanding of how language works by looking at its patterns, structures and origins. Our well sequenced spelling and Sounds-Write Phonics curriculum ensures that:

- Our children develop key concepts about the way English is written.
- Our children practise the skills essential for reading and spelling accurately.
- Our children learn the sounds and the spellings of English.

At St. Cuthbert's, our children use their knowledge, skills and understanding in phonics and spelling across a range of different situations. Our well sequenced curriculum enables children to build on their skills. Staff are ambitious for all children and responsive to their learning to ensure a deep understanding.

3. Purpose of study

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.

(DfE 2013)

4. Aims & Intent

The national curriculum for English reflects the importance of spoken language in pupils' development across the whole curriculum – cognitively, socially and linguistically. Spoken language underpins the development of reading and writing. The quality and variety of language that pupils hear and speak are vital for developing their vocabulary and grammar and their understanding for reading and writing. Teachers should therefore ensure the continual development of pupils' confidence and competence in spoken language and listening skills. Pupils should develop a capacity to explain their understanding of books and other reading, and to prepare their ideas before they write. They must be assisted in making their thinking clear to themselves as well as to others, and teachers should ensure that pupils build secure foundations by using discussion to probe and remedy their misconceptions. Pupils should also be taught to understand and use the conventions for discussion and debate.

All pupils should be enabled to participate in and gain knowledge, skills and understanding associated with the artistic practice of drama. Pupils should be able to adopt, create and sustain a range of roles, responding appropriately to others in role. They should have opportunities to improvise, devise and script drama for one another and a range of audiences, as well as to rehearse, refine, share and respond thoughtfully to drama and theatre performances.

4.1 Spelling programme of study

The programmes of study for spelling at key stages 1 and 2 consist of a statutory appendix. This gives an overview of the specific features that should be included in teaching the programmes of study. Opportunities for teachers to enhance pupils' vocabulary arise naturally from their reading and writing. As vocabulary increases, teachers should show pupils how to understand the relationships between words, how to understand nuances in meaning, and how to develop their understanding of, and ability to use, figurative language. They should also teach pupils how to work out and clarify the meanings of unknown words and words with more than 1 meaning. References to developing pupils' vocabulary are also included in the appendices.

Pupils should be taught to control their speaking and writing consciously and to use Standard English. They should be taught to use the elements of spelling, grammar, punctuation and 'language about language' listed. This is not intended to constrain or restrict teachers' creativity, but simply to provide the structure on which they can construct exciting lessons. A non-statutory [glossary](#) is provided for teachers.

4.2 Reading programme of study

The programmes of study for reading at key stages 1 and 2 consist of 2 dimensions, one of these being word reading.

Skilled word reading involves both the speedy working out of the pronunciation of unfamiliar printed words (decoding) and the speedy recognition of familiar printed words. Underpinning both is the understanding that the letters on the page represent the sounds

in spoken words. This is why phonics is emphasised in the early teaching of reading to beginners (ie unskilled readers) when they start school in our Reception class.

At St Cuthbert's we also aim for our pupils to:

- listen with concentration in order to be able to identify the main points of what they have heard;
- develop confident, independent readers and spellers through the good quality teaching of phonics from the beginning.
- Make good progress regardless of their ability.

5. School Curriculum Intent

At St. Cuthbert's, we follow the Sounds~Write phonics programme. Sounds~Write is a DfE validated, research supported, systematic phonics programme. The program offers a 4-day training course to ensure staff are fully equipped to teach effective, high-quality phonics using the lesson scripts provided. We strive for all our children to leave St. Cuthbert's as confident readers who can apply phonic knowledge to writing and spelling.

5.1 Early Years

The DfE identifies three areas that are particularly important for *building a foundation for igniting children's curiosity and enthusiasm for learning, forming relationships and thriving. These are the prime areas:*

- *communication and language*
- *physical development*
- *personal, social and emotional development*

Providers must also support children in four specific areas, through which the three prime areas are strengthened and applied. The specific areas are:

- *literacy*
- *mathematics*
- *understanding the world*
- *expressive arts and design*

Within reading, spelling and phonics, expectations are that a curriculum will adhere to these principles:

It is crucial for children to develop a life-long love of reading. Reading consists of two dimensions: language comprehension and word reading. Skilled word reading, taught later, involves both the speedy working out of the pronunciation of unfamiliar printed words (decoding) and the speedy recognition of familiar printed words.

Our EYFS curriculum is built around the [Development Matters non-statutory guidance](#) and is assessed using Early Learning Goals. Phonics is taught daily for 40 minutes, through the use of the Sounds-Write programme. Reading and phonics are encouraged in all areas in the EYFS classroom through self initiated and teacher led focus tasks. Children are listened to read on a 1:1 basis twice weekly, once by the class teacher and once by the class teaching assistant. This supports their development in their phonic knowledge.

5.2 National Curriculum for Y1 to Y6

We follow the spelling programmes of study as laid out by the National Curriculum: The programmes of study for English are set out year-by-year for key stage 1 and two-yearly for key stage 2. The single year blocks at key stage 1 reflect the rapid pace of development in word reading during these 2 years.

[Programmes of study for Years 1 to 6 can be found here.](#)

5.3 Inclusion

At **St. Cuthbert's Catholic Primary** School we enable access to the whole curriculum for every pupil and to ensure progression and reinforcement of skills and concepts throughout the year groups.

Literacy is a basic skill and is key to creativity, imagination and critical thinking. We want our pupils to find learning exciting, compelling and intrinsically worthwhile.

At **St. Cuthbert's Catholic Primary** School, we teach to all children, whatever their ability. Phonics, reading and spelling are a central part of the school curriculum to provide a broad and balanced education to all children and to enable them to access information for the whole of their lives. Pupils are always included in whole class Sounds-Write lessons, spellings and activities. The structure and simplicity of the Sounds - Write approach makes it a programme accessible to all learners and helps them to make good progress with their reading and spelling. The scheme follows a mastery approach where the whole class are taken on the learning journey together. Constant assessment by trained professionals during the session allows for responsive in lesson intervention as well as challenge for individuals progressing more quickly. The interleaving approach allows for regular retrieval and practice of previously taught code.

There are times when pupils may require further support. This may include deviating from long terms planning for a whole class, pre-learning sessions, access to tutoring, focused phonic support through interventions; precision teaching and opportunities to work more closely with teachers or teaching assistant to scaffold learning.

Once identified, pupils with special educational needs in speaking and listening, reading, spelling or writing will have their needs assessed and appropriate action taken in line with the “Code of Practice” (see school’s Special Needs Policy).

We build pupils’ confidence and self-esteem, and enable them to become effective language users by:

- sharing teaching and learning objectives and clarifying expected outcomes in a language that pupils can understand
- teaching children to self-monitor
- encouraging children to learn from and support one another, and to realise that they do not all have to be at the same level or arrive at the same point at the same time. There are many routes to the same destination.
- positive and constructive oral and/or written feed-back

Throughout, Sounds~Write promotes the use of multi-sensory engagement with the materials pupils are working with in a manner that is commensurate with the level and abilities of the children being taught.

In addition to being multi-sensory, the Sounds-Write programme has pace and utilises an array of stimulating lessons and resources. It also enables practitioners to adapt the challenges placed before the learner in order to meet their individual needs.

We create an environment where **all** children can make progress. We teach **all** children and ensure that **all** children know this.

Pupil Premium

All pupils are given the opportunity to reach their full potential through support, experience and the tools necessary to support their learning, their independence and their achievements.

At St. Cuthbert’s we direct Pupil Premium funding towards resources, activities, staffing etc to support the above rationale. Possible examples, appropriate to pupil need, may be:-

- One to one tuition
- Booster classes
- Intervention programmes
- Specific Class based resources
- Enhancement activities and experiences.

6. Implementation

6.1 Sequence of learning

Phonics

The Sounds-Write programme provides lesson plans that are clearly structured within a systematic, synthetic phonics programme. It teaches all key elements of conceptual understanding, factual knowledge, and the three essential skills of blending, segmenting and phoneme manipulation necessary for learning to read and spell and it does so on a **daily** basis until all children achieve the automaticity that underlies the fluency of every successful reader.

The programme uses an interleaving approach to ensure that new code is taught and previous learning is regularly reviewed. We explicitly teach the children the 3 skills of:

- Blending (putting sounds together to read a word)
- Segmenting (breaking a word into sounds to spell)
- Phoneme manipulation (sound swapping).

The programme is designed to provide all practitioners, whether they are teachers, teaching assistants, educational psychologists, or even interested parents or carers, with a clear understanding of how the English alphabet code works. We show how to teach it in carefully structured, sequential steps from simple CVC words like **sat** to very much more complex, five- and six-syllable words like **personification**. It is designed for the teaching of discrete, daily sessions, progressing from simple to more complex phonic knowledge and skills and covering all the major sound/spelling correspondences.

We believe that the alphabetic principle is also taught most successfully by engaging young learners in vigorous, interactive and enjoyable phonics activities that are also situated within a language-rich curriculum.

Sounds-Write is a quality first phonics programme. Its purpose is to provide classroom professionals with a comprehensive system with which to teach reading, spelling and writing. It will be introduced in YR, taught in KS1 and fine-tuned throughout the rest of Key Stage 2. In addition, it also serves very successfully as an intervention or catch-up programme.

In EYFS and KS1, all children's reading books are linked to their individual phonic level until they are read to move onto the school colour banded reading scheme.

The skills are taught within three units:

The Initial Code: This is the beginning of the program, taught as soon as the children start school in EYFS. It begins by introducing code involving one sound, one spelling, one syllable and CVC words. As we progress, it increases in complexity moving onto four, five and six sound words with the structure CVCC, CCVC, CCVCC/CCCVCC before introducing the most common consonant diagraphs.

From Year 1 onwards, they are taught '**The Extended Code**'. Here, we teach the remaining common vowel and consonant sound to spelling correspondences until all of the forty-four sounds in English have been covered. These include two letters, one sound, same sound, different spelling (o/oa/ow/o-e) and same spelling, different sound (great/beat).and polysyllabic Words.

The Polysyllabic words unit runs parallel to **The Extended Code**, progressing from two syllable to six syllable words. The level of challenge in each year group is carefully considered and reflects the teaching of our English lessons across the school.

Spelling

Our sequences are planned using our whole school long term mapping and our medium-term plans are adapted according to the needs of the class.

- Long Term Planning is broadly in line with National Curriculum and maps out the spelling rules to be taught.
- Medium Term Plans follow the sequence of learning from the school long term plan but are adapted according to priorities and the particular needs of the cohort
- Our year group assessment maps out progression in year groups. Spelling is assessed weekly in spelling tests and through the use of GAPS analysis.

6.2 Timetabling

- In EYFS and KS1, all children are taught a daily phonics lesson
- Spelling is taught a minimum of 3 times per week in all classes and a Friday spelling test takes place for all children.
- Homework - All children take home a home reading book and log each night and it is expected that they read 3 to 4 times weekly at home. All children should also be learning and practising the taught spelling rule at home and have access to Spelling Shed to support with this.

6.3 Classroom Environment

- Classes have displays that reflect the current spelling rules and phonic phonemes.
- Classes all have an accessible and inviting reading area.
- All children have access to the whole school library.

6.4 Lessons

- Each lesson focuses on clear objectives and is clearly structured.
- Each lesson is easy to follow using systematic, synthetic phonics
- Lessons teach all key elements of the conceptual understanding, factual knowledge, and the three essential skills of blending, segmenting and phoneme manipulation necessary for learning to read and spell.

6.5 Staff Development

We are committed to the ongoing development of spelling and phonics.

- EYFS staff and Year 1, 2 and 3 teachers have all been trained in the Sounds-Write programme so that they can implement it and teach it effectively.
- Teaching Assistants have all been trained and deliver interventions
- Eventually, all staff will be trained in the Sounds-Write programme as it is rolled out throughout the whole school.
- Each year, we identify a focus area for improvement which is included in our School Improvement Plan.
- We dedicate a minimum of one training session each term to develop staff knowledge in English teaching.

7. Impact

Senior Leaders, English leads, teachers & teaching assistants are all responsible for monitoring the impact of the phonics and spelling curriculum to ensure pupils have a positive experience of spelling and phonics.

- Teachers and Teaching Assistants use questioning, support and challenge effectively to gauge understanding in lessons and ensure the vast majority of pupils keep up
- At each assessment point, pupils are assessed and teachers will make a judgement about any consolidation that needs to take place. Children are assessed using teacher judgements, the National Curriculum, Sounds-Write assessment and GAPS analysis.
- These assessments are used to inform future planning and address misconceptions
- Timetabling includes additional time beyond the spelling and phonics lessons to provide intervention where needed.

- Teaching & Learning is monitored through the Five Strand approach in line with BCCET which includes:
 - a. Checking of planning by subject lead / SLT to ensure thorough and timely coverage
 - b. Lesson observations
 - c. Shared monitoring of books with opportunities for discussion and shared practice to monitor impact collectively
 - d. Monitoring of assessment data
 - e. Pupil Voice

8. Review

This policy links to

- Writing Policy
- Reading Policy
- Marking & Feedback Policy
- SEND Policy
- EYFS Policy

This policy will be reviewed annually by:

- English co-ordinator
- Phonics and Early reading Lead
- SLT
- Link governor or whole governing body