



# St Ambrose Barlow Catholic Primary School

## Phonics Statement of Intent, Implementation and Impact



*Statutory Framework for Early Years states: Literacy. Reading: children read and understand simple sentences. They use phonic knowledge to decode regular words and read them aloud accurately. They also read some common irregular words. They demonstrate understanding when talking with others about what they have read. Writing: children use their phonic knowledge to write words in ways which match their spoken sounds. They also write some irregular common words. They write simple sentences which can be read by themselves and others. Some words are spelt correctly and others are phonetically plausible. The National Curriculum states: During Year One, teachers should build on work from the Early Years Foundation stage, making sure that pupils can sound and blend unfamiliar printed words quickly and accurately using the phonic knowledge and skills that they have already learnt. Teachers should also ensure that pupils continue to learn new grapheme-phoneme correspondences (GPCs) and revise and consolidate those learnt earlier. The understanding that the letter(s) on the page represent the sounds in spoken words should underpin pupils' reading and spelling of all words. This includes common words containing unusual GPCs. The term 'common exception words' is used throughout the programmes of study for such words.*

### **Intent:**

At St Ambrose Barlow Catholic Primary School, we aim to teach children to read effectively and accurately, using the *Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Phonics Revised* programme. This includes teaching synthetic phonics, ability to recognise and read tricky words from sight, and decoding words, as well as, spelling rules. The programme has a clear progression of the GPCs, and it has been designed to result in optimum learning. *Little Wandle* believes that to read fluently and confidently the phonetic knowledge must be embedded by using repetition, the planning allows for this repetition to occur. At St Ambrose Barlow Catholic Primary School, we are aware of the importance of repetition and how the phonetic knowledge learned by the pupils, transfers from their short-term to long-term memory. This will allow the pupils' application of phonetic knowledge automatic. Practice makes permanent.

The programme includes reading sessions which runs alongside the phonics sessions. The books in these sessions are tailor-made by *Big Cat* to match the phonetic ability of the children. At St Ambrose Barlow Catholic Primary School, we want children to be exposed to a wide range of fiction and non-fiction books and this is made possible through the *Big Cat* books. These books offer an opportunity for children to read decodable and tricky words as well as get exposure to new, challenging vocabulary. These sessions are purely to develop key reading skills: decoding, prosody (expression), and comprehension. We want to be able to nurture children's ability to read books, understand them, and have a passion to learn more, whilst developing the skills needed to read books, both during school lessons and for pleasure.

Our teaching structure follows the *Little Wandle* programme which outlines GPCs from phases two, three, and five, each with new phonemes to be learned; increasing with difficulty as you progress from phase two to five. This is taught across Reception and Year One, with additional intervention for pupils in Years two and above where necessary. We believe that the ability to read fluently is fundamental to a child being able to access the wider curriculum, as well as having a huge impact on children's self-esteem and future life chances. At St Ambrose Barlow Catholic Primary School, we intend for all of our children

to develop a love for reading, demonstrated by all staff, ensuring that reading has a high profile in all areas of the curriculum.

Using the *Little Wandle* programme, we teach children to:

- Read fluently, with expression, and read with meaning by having good comprehension.
- Develop the habit of reading widely and often, for both pleasure and information. The ultimate aim is to foster a life-long love of reading.
- Teach children the spelling rules associated with phonics which allows them to write accurately and coherently, adapting their language. This will then in turn allow them to read and write in a range of contexts, for different purposes, and audiences.

### **Implementation:**

- At St Ambrose Barlow Catholic Primary School, we believe that reading is an essential life skill and we are dedicated to enabling our children to become enthusiastic, confident, and lifelong successful readers. Phonics teaching is designed to help learners to remember in the long term the content they have been taught and to integrate new knowledge into larger concepts. To support this, we implement the following:
- Daily Phonics sessions, whereby the children learn new phonemes, improve their ability to segment and blend sounds, and their ability to apply this knowledge to their reading and writing.
- Phases two and three are taught in Reception, with a whole class approach. Pure pronunciation of phonemes and correct formation of graphemes are taught from the moment the children enter the school, giving all children an equal footing as they move through reception and into Year One.
- In Year one the GPCs from Phase three are recapped and Phase five is taught. Children who need extra support are taught in a small group setting, where keep-up sessions can be delivered.
- Phase five is recapped in Year two within Literacy lessons, with an emphasis being on choosing the correct spelling pattern when writing. For some children, who may not have passed the phonics screening check in Year One will be taught the previous phases in keep-up sessions. This will ensure that the children are continuing to use their phonics when writing or reading.
- Every week the children in Reception and Year One read three times in small groups of up to six children. These reading sessions focus on the use of sounds within words and how decoding words, using their phonetic ability, can lead to fluent reading.

When a *Little Wandle* session is delivered there is a consistent and concise method followed to ensure maximum benefit for the children involved. Correct resources from the programme are used effectively in ensuring a successful session. Half termly assessments are completed for all of the children in Reception, Year One, and for those children that are taught the *Little Wandle* scheme to measure the children's progress. These

assessments also highlight any areas that need to be addressed and allows staff to implement the keep-up interventions.

We work closely with parents to ensure that children can practice their phonics skills at home. Parent workshops have been used to introduce the *Little Wandle* sessions, outlining the aims of the schemes and now we, as a school intend on implementing them within our curriculum. Teachers across the school have all received *Little Wandle* training and they have an excellent understanding of phonics and the strategies used to teach early reading. Children have home reading books, as well as Big Cat E-books which are consistent with their phonics ability, providing that they can read 90% with ease. These reading books are under constant review and updated when needed.

### **Impact:**

By the time children leave St Ambrose Barlow Catholic Primary School, they are competent readers. They can have discussions about what they love to read, discuss their favourite authors and genres, and show a passion for their favourite books.

Throughout the teaching of phonics, we can measure attainment using the Key Stage One and Key Stage Two national assessments. The *Little Wandle* half-termly assessments are completed and these are used to show progress. In Year One, before the Phonics Screen check is completed in June, screening practices are used to identify children's gaps and also allow familiarity with the format of the test. We aim to increase this percentage each year. By using the systematic phonics scheme built by *Little Wandle* to provide our children with the phonetic knowledge in their long-term memory, allowing reading to become automatic.

The reading practice sessions have had an enormous impact already. The number of children that are receiving quality reading sessions has increased and their passion for reading has improved. The children are excited to get a new book and are exposed to tier two and three vocabularies, which then broadens their own vocabulary, which they use both verbally and within their writing.

At St Ambrose Barlow Catholic Primary School, we believe that successful phonics teaching leads to confident readers. We will continue to work collaboratively with parents and ensure all staff are confident at teaching phonics. This will allow our pupils to access all areas of the curriculum, using their phonetic knowledge when reading and writing. Phonics is a specific, defined body of knowledge, but once learned its use of it throughout life will be automatic.