



*Christ Be
Our Light*

ST PIUS X
CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Reading & Phonics in Early Years and KS1



This booklet contains information about how reading and phonics is taught at St. Pius X. Within this booklet you will find helpful tips for you as parents and carers to help your child become better readers.

Included in this booklet:

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What is Phonics?

Phonics is a way of teaching children to read quickly and skilfully. They are taught how to:

- recognise the sounds that each individual letter makes;
- identify the sounds that different combinations of letters make- such as 'sh' or 'oo';
and
- blend these sounds together from left to right to make a word.

Children can then use this knowledge to 'de-code' new words that they hear or see. This is the first important step in learning to read.

Why teach phonics?

The ability to read and write well is a vital skill for all children, paving the way for an enjoyable and successful school experience. Phonics helps children to develop good reading and spelling skills.

For example, cat can be sounded out for reading and spelling.

We use Bug Club Phonics scheme to teach phonics in school. Phonics Bug aims to help all children in our school learn to read by the age of six in a fun and accessible way. The scheme follows the order of Letters and Sounds.

Phonics consists of:

- Identifying sounds in spoken words
- Recognising the common spellings of each phoneme.
- Blending phonemes into words for reading.
- Segmenting words into phonemes for spelling.

Definitions

A Phoneme

This is the smallest unit of sound in a word

e.g. In the word cat there are 3 phonemes

A grapheme

These are the letters that represent the phoneme.

Children need to practise recognising the grapheme and saying the phoneme that it represents

The grapheme could be 1 letter, 2 letters or more! We often refer to these as sound buttons:

Eg. t ai igh

Blending

- Recognising the letter sounds in a written word and blending them to read the word, for example:

c – u – p

d – o – g

Segmenting

- Splitting the word to spell it out
- The opposite to blending
- Identifying the individual sounds in a spoken word
e.g. ch- ee- k c- oi – n

Digraphs - 2 letters that make 1 sound

oa as in **boat**

ai as in **train**

Trigraphs - 3 letters that make 1 sound

igh as in **night**

dge as in **fudge**

Tricky words

Words that are not phonically decodable

e.g. was, the, I

Phonics Bug

In school lessons are taught using the Phonics Bug scheme following letters and sounds. Children will be taught daily phonics from Nursery to Year 2. Additional phonics teaching might take place in KS2 for children who require it.

- Letters and Sounds is divided into six phases, with each phase building on the skills and knowledge of previous learning.
- Children have time to practise and rapidly expand their ability to read and spell words.
- Children are also taught to read and spell 'tricky words', which are words with spellings that are unusual.

Lesson Format

In each year group, phonic sessions will follow this format:

- Revise: the children will revise previous learning.
- Teach: new phonemes or high frequency or tricky words will be taught.
- Practice: the children will practise the new learning by reading and/or writing the words.
- Apply: the children will apply their new learning by reading or writing sentences.

Phonics Screening





What is the phonics screening check?

At the end of Year 1, your child will take part in a statutory phonics screening check. The phonics screening check is a quick and easy check of your child's phonics knowledge. It helps school confirm whether your child has made the expected progress.

The phonics check will take place in June*

Children who don't pass the phonic screen check will be retested in Year 2.

* Children who left Year 1 in Summer 2020 (*current Year 2s*) will take the phonic screening check in the Autumn Term of 2020. Children who do not pass will retake the screening in June.

Practice sheet: Real words	Practice sheet: Pseudo words
in	ot 
at	vap 
beg	osk 
sum	ect 

How to help with phonics at home

Games and Activities

Here are some games and activities that you can do at home to promote and help your child in phonics.

- Sing an alphabet song together
- Play 'I spy'
- Use magnetic letters to make words (*Can you segment the word? Can you blend these sounds?*)
- Play pairs with words and pictures
- When out for a walk pick objects and ask your child what sound does it start with?
- Mystery bag - place 3 objects in a bag like a ball, button and book. Have the children feel in the bag and guess the mystery letter
- Monster names - children to create made up monster names
- Treasure hunts - write sounds on pebbles. Children find them and make words

Some useful websites

- <http://www.letters-and-sounds.com/>
- <https://www.phonicsbloom.com/>
- <https://www.phonicsplay.co.uk/>
- <https://www.topmarks.co.uk/english-games/5-7-years/letters-and-sounds>

Some useful apps

- Hooked on Phonics
- Read with Phonics
- Teach your Monster to Read
- ABC Phonics

Reading in school

Once children have started formal phonic teaching in Reception children begin to learn how to read.

How do we teach reading in school?

- Daily phonic sessions (Reception, Year 1 & Year 2)
- Shared reading (adult reads to the child)
- Guided reading (small group reading sessions in Reception
Whole class reading sessions in Year 1 & 2)
- Individual reading (children will be listened to reading twice a week)
- Reading for pleasure (children reading a book of their choice)



Bug Club

In school Bug Club reading scheme is used to teach children to read within Early Years and KS1. Bug Club is a reading programme that school uses to help teach your child to read. It has carefully graded reading books and eBooks which can be accessed at home.



Book Band Levels

Reading books are graded by difficulty by reading levels known as Book Bands. Each Book Band has its own colour. The chart below gives an indication of the range of Book Band levels at which most children will be reading as they progress through primary school.

The chart shows the progress of an 'average' band of children - but no individual child is 'average', so no child makes smooth progress precisely in this way. Children tend to learn in fits and starts – periods of growth followed by periods of consolidation when their progress seems to halt for a while. The periods where you don't see rapid progress may be worrying, especially after a 'growth spurt', but they are important as your child develops confidence in using and applying their newly acquired skills.

If you are ever worried about your child's progress, talk to their teacher.

Book Band Colour	Reception	Year 1	Year 2
Lilac			
Pink			
Red			
Yellow			
Blue			
Green			
Orange			
Turquoise			
Purple			
Gold			
White			
Lime			



Although reading isn't explicitly taught within Nursery, children will learn through stories and have stories read to them. Children are taught about books and how to use them (what the front cover is, where the first page is, looking at pictures). In Nursery language and communication is an area of learning and therefore we encourage children to talk about books. Children in Nursery will take home Lilac books (books with only pictures). Please read below the guidance for using Lilac level books.

Lilac Level

Lilac level books are wordless books that tell a story through pictures alone. They help children to develop speaking and listening skills through creating and telling stories.

How to support your child reading Lilac level books?

Your child is just beginning to discover the excitement of books. Although these books have no words, they are an important introduction to reading.

Please encourage your child to:

- Look at the pages in order, and talk about what is happening on the left hand page before the right hand page.
- Talk about what is happening on each page, rather than just talking about what they see in each picture.
- Tell you who or what the book is about.

Pink Level

Pink level is the very first level of reading books which has words. The number of words increases slightly as your child progresses through the reading level. If your child has read the Bug Club Lilac books, he or she will be delighted to find that Pink level books follow many of the same characters. This means that children are motivated to read the book because they are already familiar with the characters and interested in their adventures.

How to support your child reading Pink level books

Your child is beginning to learn to read. As they read, please help them to:

- Read the words carefully. Ask your child to sound out and blend only the words they can't read yet, not every word. Eventually almost all words will become part of your child's 'sight memory', and they won't have to sound out at all.
- On second and third readings of the book, encourage them to read with more pace and with less focus on sounding out the letters in each word.
- Make a story out of a whole book, rather than focusing just on what is happening on each page.
- Tell you about something that happened in the book, or about something they found out in the book.

Red Level

All levels in Bug Club consolidate learning from previous levels. Red level books have a slightly increased number of words, an increase from eight to twelve pages and slightly more complex story lines.

The growing complexity in the story lines is reinforced through the development of inference and prediction using visual literacy. All of the books introduce new sets of characters which are revisited throughout the level. Characters at this level include Angelina Ballerina, the irrepressible Rat and Cat as well as the eco-friendly Eco Apes.

How to support your child reading Red level books:

Your child is beginning to learn how to read. As they read, please help them to:

- Read the words carefully. Most of the words can be recognised or sounded out.

Ask your child to sound out and blend only the words they can't read yet, not every word. Eventually almost all words will become part of your child's 'sight memory', and they won't have to sound out at all.

- On second and third readings of the book, encourage them to read with more pace and with less focus on sounding out the letters in each word.
- Make a story out of a whole book, rather than focusing just on what is happening on each page.
- Tell you about something that happened in the book, or about something they found out in the book.

Yellow Level

Books at this level include the popular character Shaun the Sheep, as well as Zip and Zap and Bug Boy. Non-fiction titles at this level build on children's interests and encourage discussion around the high-quality photographs. New learning in Yellow level books includes a slightly increased number of words and a move away from familiar experiences.

Yellow books require some inferencing skills from the reader, e.g. for humour, and have more variation in sentence structure, including sentences with more than one clause.

How to support your child reading Yellow level books

Your child is now beginning to read with more confidence. As they read aloud, you can help them by:

- Giving them time to sound out words they don't know. If they still struggle, encourage them to try sounding out the whole word first, rather than guessing from the pictures or from the first letter.

- Giving them time to recognise and correct their own mistakes.
- Asking them to talk about what's happening in the book, encouraging them to make links to events on previous pages.

Blue Level

Blue level books have a slightly increased number of words and some variation in sentence beginnings. They may use ellipses and other punctuation. The story lines are more complex, including more than one event, and the stories are less dependent on picture cues.

How to support your child reading Blue level books

Your child is now developing into a more confident reader. Encourage them to select from books at the library or bookshop as well as those from school. As they read, you can help by encouraging them to:

- Sound out quickly – and silently – inside their heads, if they need to sound out words.
- Look at the punctuation marks. You may want to model how to read a page of writing, paying attention to punctuation, such as full-stops and question marks.
- Tell you about what the characters in the story are doing and why they are acting in that way.
- Show you how they can find particular things that interest them in non-fiction books.

Green Level

The number of words increases slightly in Green level books. Stories have a wider variety of characters and events which develop over a number of pages. Sentences may include lists of things or actions, and adverbs are used frequently to begin sentences. The books begin to use capital letters to support reading with expression.

The growing complexity in the story lines is reinforced through the development of inference and prediction using visual literacy. All of the books introduce new sets of characters which are revisited throughout the level. Characters at this level include Wallace and Gromit, the clumsy Horribilly and the very silly Silly Jack.

How to support your child reading Green level books

Your child is now developing into a more confident reader. Encourage them to select from books at the library or bookshop as well as those from school. As they read, you can help by encouraging them to:

- Sound out quickly – and silently – inside their heads, if they need to sound out words.

- Look at the punctuation marks. You may want to model how to read a page of writing, paying attention to punctuation, such as full-stops and question marks.
- Tell you about what the characters in the story are doing and why they are acting in that way.
- Show you how they can find particular things that interest them in non-fiction books.

Orange Level

At Orange level, the page count increases from 16 pages to 24 pages to challenge and encourage reading stamina. There is an increased use of dialogue to encourage reading with expression.

Orange Level books introduce some complex sentences (use of 'if', 'so' and 'because') and include italics to show emphasis. Slightly more literary language is used. Children are increasingly encouraged to infer meaning from the text in order to gain full enjoyment from the story.

How to support your child reading Orange level books

Your child is now beginning to read with more independence. They should be feeling more confident and will rarely need to sound out words. You can help them by:

- Listening to them when they read aloud. If they make mistakes, but they keep the sense of the text, don't interrupt. You can revisit that page at the end of the session to check certain words.
- Reminding them of useful strategies if they can't read a word, for example:
 1. Sounding the word out silently, under their breath
 2. Dividing a longer word into syllables, or looking at the word without an -ing or an -ed ending
- Don't allow them to worry about a word. Tell them what it says and revisit the word once you have completed the book.
- Encouraging some use of expression, especially for character-speech in fiction books. You may wish to model reading some pages aloud for your child to copy.
- Talking about how characters are feeling.

Turquoise Level

Turquoise level books include an increasing range of adjectives and more descriptive verbs to replace 'said'. There is an increased proportion of space allocated to print rather than pictures.

Turquoise level books include words chosen for appropriateness and impact rather than decodability, with more extended descriptions. Paragraphs begin to develop and more unusual and challenging vocabulary is included.

How to support your child reading Turquoise level books

Your child is now beginning to read with more independence and their books are getting longer. You can help them by:

- Encouraging them to read some pages silently, inside their heads.
- Listening to some pages read aloud, encouraging the use of expression and paying attention to punctuation marks.
- Talking about how events in the book relate to each other and helping your child to understand how the story builds up in a longer book.
- Asking them to tell you about interesting things they found out and showing you where the information is in the book.

Purple Level

Purple level books include an increased proportion of longer sentences, with a more challenging vocabulary. Some Purple books have short chapters to challenge and encourage reading stamina.

Purple level books include longer and more complex sentences with the inclusion of complex (i.e. 'when') and simple (i.e. 'and') connectives. Story features such as plot, character and setting are developed in more detail, and the text in the non-fiction books is presented in a variety of ways.

How to support your child reading Purple level books

Your child is now beginning to read with more independence and their books are getting longer. You can help them by:

- Encouraging them to read some pages silently, inside their heads.
- Listening to some pages read aloud, encouraging the use of expression and paying attention to punctuation marks.
- Talking about how events in the book relate to each other and helping your child to understand how the story builds up in a longer book.
- Asking them to tell you about interesting things they found out and showing you where the information is in the book.

Gold Level

Gold level books include more sophisticated and challenging vocabulary, including word play and the introduction of figurative language. Some Gold books have longer chapters for more sustained reading.

Children reading at this level are confident independent readers who can tackle increasingly complex language, story structures and text layout. However, Bug Club books have been carefully levelled to ensure success, even at this level, and include motivating texts with just the right level of challenge to encourage children to maintain their progress.

How to support your child reading Gold level books

Your child is now reading longer books with fewer illustrations, so they continue to need your help to ensure they are getting the full meaning and enjoyment from the text. They may prefer to read one chapter or section at a time, rather than reading the whole book in one session. You can support them by:

- Asking them to read some pages of the book aloud to you so that you can enjoy hearing them reading with expression and pace.
- Asking them to find parts of the text which describe a character or place and talking about the words used in the description.
- Asking for regular updates as to what is happening in the book, so that you know how the different chapters or sections link.
- Talking about how much they enjoy a book, or a type of book. Encourage them to look for more books of the type they enjoy

White Level

In White level books there is a more sophisticated use of narrative voice. Clauses in longer sentences are separated by commas to encourage developing intonation. Some books have longer chapters for more sustained reading. The stories included at White level encourage children to empathise with the characters and consider why they behave as they do, and how they change during the course of the story. The non-fiction books are divided into sections that require more sustained reading and there is increased challenge in the layout of the information.

How to support your child reading White level books

Your child is now reading longer books with fewer illustrations, so they continue to need your help to ensure they are getting the full meaning and enjoyment from the text. They may prefer to read one chapter or section at a time, rather than reading the whole book in one session. You can support them by:

- Asking them to read some pages of the book aloud to you so that you can enjoy hearing them reading with expression and pace.
- Asking them to find parts of the text which describe a character or place and talking about the words used in the description.
- Asking for regular updates as to what is happening in the book, so that you know how the different chapters or sections link.
- Talking about how much they enjoy a book, or a type of book. Encourage them to look for more books of the type they enjoy

Lime Level

Lime level books include a widening range of writing styles and an increased variation in sentence structure, including –ing clauses and longer sentences with more than two clauses

Children reading at Lime level are able to interpret more sophisticated word plays and puns. The narrator's voice in a fiction story may be distinguished from the characters' voice through figurative, idiomatic and literary language. The story is often told through dialogue and action to 'show' instead of 'tell' as the plot develops.

How to support your child reading Lime level books

Although your child is now taking off as a reader, it is still important that you read with them and talk to them about their reading. This reassures them that their reading is still important to you, as well as giving you an opportunity to share an enjoyment of books. You can still help them by:

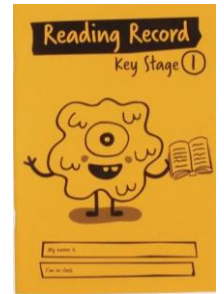
- Asking them to read aloud some parts of the text which they particularly enjoy. This may include action or description. Talk about how the writer made those parts so enjoyable.
- Talking about how characters develop or how they react to different people, places or events.
- Reading the book yourself so that you can talk together about the smaller details of the book.

How to help your child with reading at home?

Before they come to school, your child will have begun to explore the world of reading through sharing and exploring books with you. Once they have started to learn the skills required to read for themselves they need to practise frequently. Helping your child to master the lifelong skills of reading and become fluent, independent reader who develops a love for reading is one of the most important ways you can support your child's learning at home.

Reading Records

It is essential to your child's development that they're reading at home daily. We ask parents to read daily with their children and write a comment in their reading record. These will be checked daily by an adult and used to record individual reading in school as well.



What you can do at home

- Find a quiet place away from other interruptions.
- Spend a few minutes discussing the blurb (back of the book) and front cover before you even open the book – What do you think this book is about?
- Help and support your child if they get stuck on any words. DO NOT simply tell them words, encourage them to work it out by:
 - Sounding out the sounds
 - Using any picture clues
 - Using the context of the sentence to work out
 - What would sensibly fit?
 - Re-reading to check for meaning.
- Ask your child questions to check their understanding of the text e.g. What was your favourite part? How did you feel about the main character? Which words show you that the character is happy? What might happen?
- Give your child lots of praise and encouragement.



Reading to, and with your child is an enjoyable and positive experience. Talking about the things you read – books, newspapers, instructions, recipes, shopping lists etc demonstrates that reading is a useful meaningful activity. Ensure your child knows you value reading – let them see you reading too!

Useful questions for reading times

Fiction Books

Questions about characters

- What does look like? Use parts of the story to explain how you know this.
- What sort of things does get up to?
- Why do you think that behaves in the way that he/she does?
- What have you learned about? Where did you get this from?
- Would you like to have as a friend? Why/why not?
- How did feel at the beginning/middle/end of the story? How do you know this?
- Do you feel that you are in any way similar to? In what way?
- Do you think that changed in any way during the story? How and why did these changes happen?
- Why do you think said “.....”?



Questions about settings

- Where do the main events take place?
- What effect does the setting have on the story?
- When do the main events take place?
- Does the timing of these events have an effect on the story?
- Why do you think the author chose the settings that he/she has?
- Do you think that the settings are well described? Why?
- Can you select some good description and say why you think it is so effective?

General questions

- Does what you have read in your book today make you want to carry on reading? Why/why not?
- What main events have taken place in your book?
- What caused these events to happen?
- What was the result of these events?
- What do you think may happen next & why?
- What part of the story do you think is the funniest/saddest/most interesting?
- How do you think the story will end?
- Why do you think the book is called?



- Did anything in the book make you think about something that once happened to you?
- Do you think that the pictures help you to understand the book better?
- Do the pictures make the book more enjoyable? How?
- What questions would you like to ask the author?
- Would you recommend this book to other children?
- Would it appeal to all children? What sort of children do you think would like it?

Non-fiction Books

- What have you learnt from your reading today?
- Who do you think would find this book most interesting and useful?
- How is the information arranged on each page?
- How does the way that the information is set out help you to understand it?
- Here it says (point to the contents page) is on page ... What do you think that page will be about?
- How would you use the index to find something out?
- Could you suggest any ways in which your book could be improved?

Poetry

- Can you find out who wrote this poem and when it was written?
- What pictures did it make you think of as you read the poem?
- What is the poem about?
- What is the poet trying to do or say?
- What is it about the poem that you liked?
- How do you think the poet is feeling about what they are writing about?
- What 'poetic features' can you identify? (rhyme, rhythm, alliteration etc)
- Did the poem remind you of anything else that you have read?
- Does the shape the poem makes on the page, or the sounds it makes when you read it, add to the message?

Reading for pleasure

Sharing a book together with your child is bonding, relaxing and gives you the opportunity to escape into another world with your child. Reading for pleasure will help develop your child's vocabulary, communication, concentration, empathy and imagination. Whether this is sharing books by reading together (when children are in Nursery, Reception, Year 1 and 2 this is crucial) or beginning to read more independently, we advise that all children read for at least 10 minutes a day.

This is separate to your child's reading book from school. We encourage parents and carers to promote a love of reading by reading stories books. There are plenty of books available to home loan from school.

Here are some things you can try:

Make books part of your family life - Always have books around so that you and your children are ready to read whenever there is a chance.

Join your local library - Get your child a library card!

Match their interests - Help them find the right book - it doesn't matter if it's fiction, poetry, comic books or non-fiction.

All reading is good - Don't discount non-fiction, comics, graphic novels, magazines and leaflets. Reading is reading and it is all good.

Get comfortable! - Snuggle up somewhere warm and cosy with your child, either in bed, on a beanbag or on the sofa.

Ask questions - To keep them interested in the story, ask your child questions as you read such as, "What do you think will happen next?" or "Where did we get to last night? Can you remember what has happened already?"

Read whenever you get the chance - Bring along a book or magazine for any time your child has to wait, such as at a doctor's surgery.

Read again and again - Encourage your child to re-read favourite books and poems. Re-reading helps to build up fluency and confidence.

Bedtime stories - Regularly read with your child or children at bedtime. It's a great way to end the day and to spend valuable time with your child.

Rhyme and repetition - Books are great for encouraging your child and children to join in and remember the words.



Useful websites

- <https://www.activelearnprimary.co.uk/login?c=0>
- <https://schoolreadinglist.co.uk/>
- <https://www.booktrust.org.uk/>
- <https://www.oxfordowl.co.uk/for-home/reading/starting-to-read-ages-4-5/>
- <https://www.oxfordowl.co.uk/for-home/reading/building-on-reading-skills-ages-5-6/>
- <https://www.oxfordowl.co.uk/for-home/reading/developing-confidence-as-a-reader-ages-6-7/>
- <https://www.booktrust.org.uk/books-and-reading/our-recommendations/100-best-books/>

Useful apps

- Teach your Monster to read
- Epic!
- ABC Mouse
- VocabularySpellingCity
- Homer
- Starfall
- Amazon Kindle

