

PHONICS

This policy is informed by the Christian values which are the basis for all of CDAT's work and any actions taken under this policy will reflect this.

'Blessed are those who act justly, who always do what is right'

Psalm 106:3

Christ Church C of E Primary School, Moreton



September 2023

Our Mission Statement

Our mission is to love all children who are part of our community helping them develop respect, tolerance, self-confidence and to become the best they can be.

We will support our children to develop their God given gifts to the full and encourage a life-long passion for learning which will successfully lead them into secondary school and beyond.

As a church school at the heart of Moreton community, our work is underpinned by the Christian values of *friendship, humility, forgiveness, compassion, justice and service* which Jesus helps us to achieve.

We are a welcoming, caring and inclusive school committed to working in partnership with parents, governors, Christ Church and Chester Diocese Academy Trust.

We strive to provide a rich and varied curriculum which reflects God's concern for the whole child; promoting spiritual, moral, cultural, physical and emotional wellbeing alongside academic excellence and independence.

As a school community, we all work together to provide the very best for our pupils and families; firmly believing that:

Together we can do all things through Christ who strengthens us

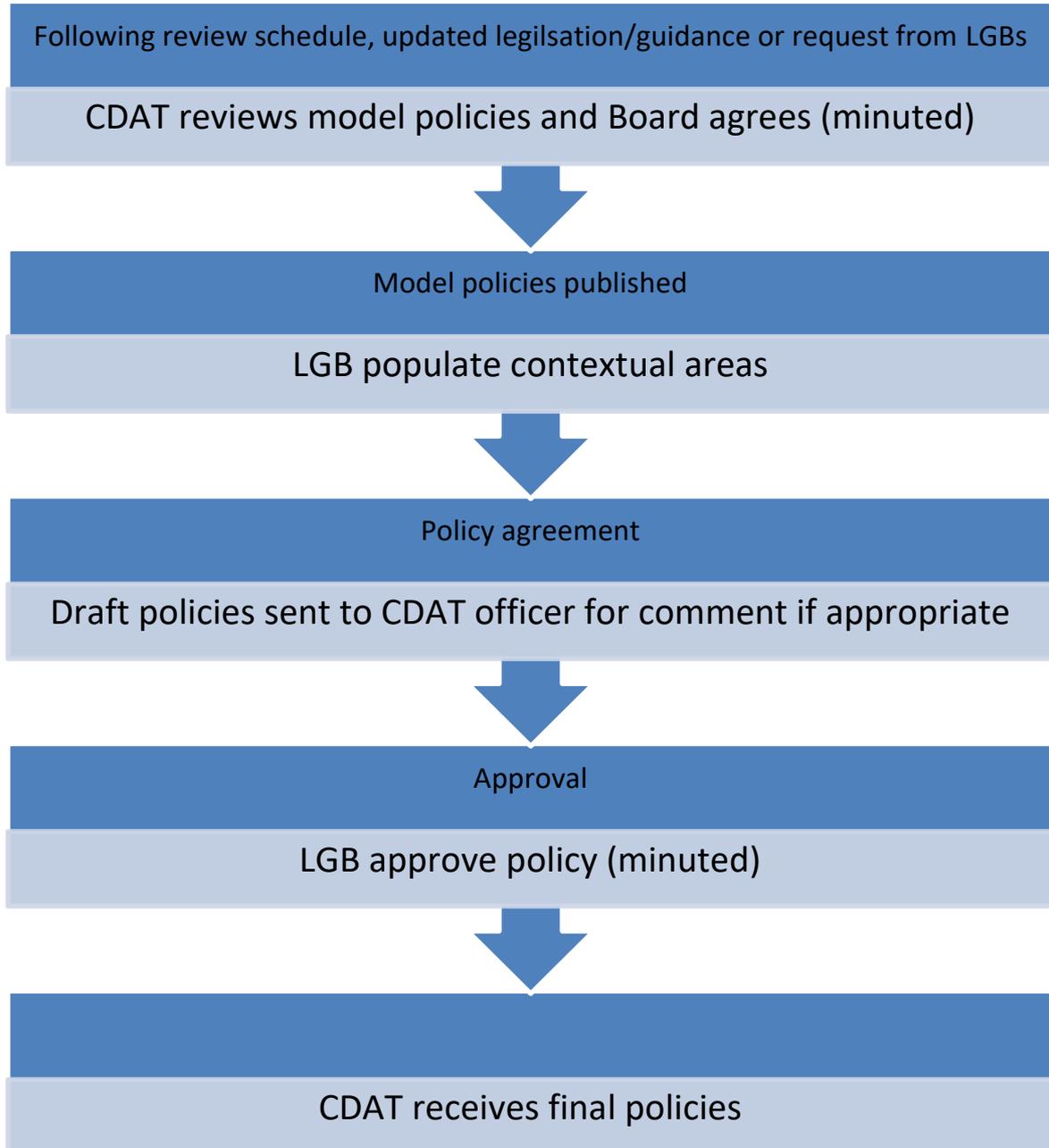
Our School Vision

Contributions from parents, pupils, staff and school Governors have determined the priorities for our school vision

A consistent school vision shared by all based on the following:

"Love must be completely sincere. Hate what is evil, hold on to what is good. Love one another warmly as Christians, and be eager to show respect for one another. Work hard and do not be lazy. Serve the Lord with a heart full of devotion. Let your hope keep you joyful, be patient in your troubles, and pray at all times." Romans 12:9-12

Policy Process



1. Introduction

At Christ Church C of E Primary School, we believe that the teaching of phonics is vital in order for children to become competent readers and writers. Through high quality phonic teaching, following our systematic and synthetic phonics programme *Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised*, crucial skills such as decoding, spelling and reading are mastered.

By the end of Key Stage One at Christ Church, we want every child to be a successful, fluent reader and writer. We believe that this is achievable through a combination of strong, high quality, discrete phonics teaching combined with regular, daily opportunities to apply their phonic skills whilst developing their writing and reading skills. The teaching of phonics is a key strategy that is used to help all of our children to read, write and spell, regardless of their background.

2. What is Phonics?

Phonics is recommended as the first strategy children should be taught to help them learn to read. Children begin their phonics journey in F1 by listening for key sounds, exploring books and listening to stories being read. We begin our discrete phonics teaching within the second week of the children starting in F2 by following the Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised programme.

Through this children build on their growing knowledge of the alphabetic code, mastering phonics to read and spell as they move through school. As a result, our children are equipped with the skills to tackle any unfamiliar words as they read. Alongside our discrete phonics lessons, we model the application of the alphabetic code through our reading sessions, English lessons and across the curriculum, which enhances the reciprocity between reading, writing and phonics.

3. Our Aims

- To use a systematic and synthetic phonics programme to ensure progression and continuity in the teaching and learning of phonics across the school.
- To enable children to start learning and developing phonics skills and knowledge, with the expectation that they will become fluent readers, having secured word building and recognition skills.

- To give children strategies that will enable them to become fluent readers and confident writers including sound talking, blending and decoding to support their reading and spelling.
- To use phonetically decodable books linked to the Little Wandle Letters and Sounds revised progression which encourage children to be reading at 90% fluency.
- As the subject lead, the Phonics lead is the individual to drive our phonics programme. They will monitor and support the teaching staff and wider team delivering the phonics and reading sessions, so everyone teaches with fidelity to the Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised programme.

4. Implementation

Daily phonics lessons in FS2 and Year 1

- We teach phonics lessons for 30 minutes a day. In FS2, 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 FS2: teaching begins in Week 2 of the Autumn term.
- We follow the Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised expectations of progress:
 - Children in FS2 are taught to read and spell words using Phase 2 and 3 GPC's, and words with adjacent consonants (Phase 4) with fluency and accuracy.
 - Children in Year 1 review Phase 3 and 4 and are taught to read and spell words using Phase 5 GPC's 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 or 3 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 the Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised assessments to identify the gaps in their phonic knowledge and teach to these using the keep-up resources – at pace.

- If any child in Year 3 to 6 has gaps in their phonic knowledge when reading or writing, we plan phonics 'catch up' lessons to address specific reading/writing gaps. These short, sharp lessons last 10 minutes and take place at least three times a week.

Teaching reading: Reading practice sessions three times a week

- We teach children to read through reading practice sessions three times 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 using the *Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised* assessments and book matching grids on pages 11–20 of '[Application of phonics to reading](#)'
 - 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 have been designed to focus on three key reading skills:
 - decoding
 - prosody: teaching children to read with understanding and expression
 - comprehension: teaching children to understand the text.
- In FS2, 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 Year 2 and 3, we continue to teach reading in this way for any children who still need to practise reading with decodable books.
- Children in Reception and Year 1 who are receiving additional phonics Keep-up sessions read their reading practice book to an adult daily.

Home Reading

- The decodable reading practice book is taken home to ensure success is shared with the family.
- TeamRead books also go home for parents to share and read to children.
- 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.

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 content grids map each element of new learning to each day, week and term for the duration of the programme.
- Lesson templates, Prompt cards and How to videos ensure teachers all have a consistent approach and structure for each lesson.
- The Reading Leader and SLT use the Audit and Prompt cards to regularly monitor and observe teaching; they use the summative data to identify children who need additional support and gaps in learning.

Assessment

Assessment is used to monitor progress and identify any child needing additional support as soon as they need it:

- **Assessment for learning** is used:
 - daily within class to identify children needing Keep-up support
 - weekly in the Review lesson to assess gaps, address these immediately and secure fluency of GPCs, words and spellings.
- **Summative assessment** is used:
 - every six weeks to assess progress, to identify gaps in learning that need to be addressed, to identify any children needing additional support and to plan the Keep-up support that they need.
 - by SLT and scrutinised to narrow attainment gaps between different groups of children and so that any additional support for teachers can be put into place.
- The **Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised placement assessment** is used:

- with any child new to the school to quickly identify any gaps in their phonic knowledge and used to provide appropriate extra teaching.

Statutory assessment

Children in Year 1 sit the Phonics screening check.

Any child not passing the Phonics screening check re-sits it in Year 2.

This is completed by a familiar adult to the children.

Ongoing assessment for catch up

Children in Year 2 to 6 are assessed through:

- their teacher's ongoing formative assessment
- the *Little Wandle Letters and Sounds* placement assessment
- the appropriate half-termly assessments.

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 during 'TeamRead' time. We choose these books carefully as we want children to experience a wide range of books, including books that reflect the children at Christ Church and our local community as well as books that open windows into other worlds and cultures.
- At Christ Church, core high quality texts are at the heart of our English lessons. These hook the children in and give purpose to their reading and writing.
- Every classroom has an inviting book corner that encourages a love for reading. We curate these books and talk about them to entice children to read a wide range of books.
- In the Early years, children have access to the reading corner every day in their continuous provision time and the books are continually refreshed.

- Children from FS2 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.
- The children can access our outdoor reading garden independently during play times and lunch times. Children will have access to different books and cosy, calm areas to read these in.

5. Impact

Through following our systematic and synthetic programme – Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised, children will become confident, happy readers and writers. Phonics will be at the heart of their learning as the children grow and allow them to become resilient individuals with a passion for reading and writing. Alongside their English teaching, reading sessions and the other curriculum areas, our children will become well-rounded individuals utilising these skills inside the classroom and outside in the real world.