

Information about reading in the Early Years 2019

Reading is given a very high priority within Early Years at Corpus Christi. We teach the children to read using a system known as synthetic phonics. To do this at Corpus Christi we follow the Letter and Sounds program. This is a phonics resource which was published by the Department for Education. This is a six stage program which aims to develop children's speaking and listening skills first and then prepares them for learning to read by gradually introducing phonic knowledge and skills.

Phase	Phonic Knowledge and Skills
<i>Phase One</i> (Nursery/start of Reception)	Activities are divided into seven aspects, including environmental sounds, instrumental sounds, body sounds, rhythm and rhyme, alliteration, voice sounds and finally oral blending and segmenting.
<i>Phase Two</i> (Nursery/ Reception)	Learning 19 letters of the alphabet and one sound for each. Blending sounds together to make words. Segmenting words into their separate sounds. Beginning to read simple captions.
<i>Phase Three</i> (Reception)	The remaining 7 letters of the alphabet, one sound for each. Graphemes such as ch, oo, th representing the remaining phonemes not covered by single letters. Reading captions, sentences and questions. On completion of this phase, children will have learnt the "simple code", i.e. one grapheme for each phoneme in the English language.
<i>Phase Four</i> (Reception)	No new grapheme-phoneme correspondences are taught in this phase. Children learn to blend and segment longer words with adjacent consonants, e.g. swim, clap, jump.
<i>Phase Five</i> (Throughout Year 1)	Now we move on to the "complex code". Children learn more graphemes for the phonemes which they already know, plus different ways of pronouncing the graphemes they already know.
<i>Phase Six</i> (Throughout Year 2 and beyond)	Working on spelling, including prefixes and suffixes, doubling and dropping letters etc.

Children access this teaching at their own rate and in their own time. Most children start 'blending sounds together' to read simple words in Reception (usually by Christmas), others start doing this in Nursery and some children are unable to do this until nearer Year 1.

How is reading taught?

Nursery:

In Nursery we share lots of stories, non-fiction books, rhymes and songs. We do lots of activities based on sound discrimination to encourage children to 'tune into' sounds that are around them. We use the program Letterland to introduce all the letter sounds of the alphabet. We discuss the letter names but the focus is very much on the sound that the letter makes in words. If children are ready to begin blending sounds together for simple words (CVC words – consonant, vowel, consonant words) then we begin to do this. For children who catch onto this quickly, then we introduce them to reading books that they can take home at the end of the Nursery year, although only a small minority of children are ready to do this during the Nursery year and it is important to let children graduate to this in their own time.

How you can help in Nursery:

After October half-term we will send homework with your child each week. This often relates to the letter sound that they have learned through Letterland that week. Activities will also be based on speaking and listening or the recall of a particular story.

The single most important thing that you can do with and for your child is to read to them as regularly as you can and chat to them about what they have heard. It is important that your child sees you reading so that they understand reading to be purposeful and enjoyable.

Playing 'I spy' using letter sounds is very useful. As is practicing chopping up simple CVC (consonant, vowel, consonant) words such as 'cat' into its component sounds 'c/a/t'.

It is important that parents/carers try to pronounce sounds cleanly and accurately for children. Here is a link to a video where you can hear the letter sounds pronounced correctly. One example is the letter s which makes the sound 'sssss' rather than 'suh'. If children learn the sounds incorrectly, it can become difficult for them to blend them together later on.

https://www.google.com/search?q=how+to+pronounce+synthetic+phonics&og=how+to+pronounce+synthtic&aqs=chrome.3.69i57j0l3.8855j0j7&sourceid=chrome&ie=UTF-8#kpvallbx=_1d-PXcarMdDdgQb9ib34Bg29

How is reading taught?

Reception:

In Reception the children take part in a discrete daily phonics lesson. In this they learn all of the letter sounds (and then digraphs and trigraphs). They learn to blend sounds together and to segment (chop them up) in order to write simple words.

Many play activities that the children use throughout the day are focused on developing and extending early reading skills.

After many years of trailing different systems, we now read on an individual basis with every child in Reception once a fortnight. This means that we are able to give your child our undivided attention and can focus on where they are in their reading journey and accurately plan for their next steps. We have seen that children make the most progress with reading in Reception when

we operate this system. In addition to this children take part in daily class reading activities during phonics lessons.

How you can help in Reception:

After October half term, children begin bringing home reading books for you to read and share with them at home. They have a Reading Record book which you can record your observations in. Staff will sign this when they have read with your child.

We will send home two books each week with your child that you can also share with them at home.

As children progress with their reading and become more confident, they will begin reading as part of a small reading group if they are ready to do so.

If we have concerns about the progress that your child is making with their reading we will make contact with you and we encourage you to do the same.

Lots of children benefit from a whole word approach to reading, as well as phonics. Using flashcards with your child, or displaying some common words around your home for your child to regularly look at is a useful way of reinforcing difficult/new words.

In the centre pages of the Reading Record book is a checklist of the phonic sounds that your child will learn during their time in Reception and 100 high frequency words. They are useful checklists to have as additional resources that you can work on with your child to extend their reading.

In addition we have a reading booklet available on our school website which outlines the process of reading in greater depth and has some links to useful websites and resources.