

Information about Bug Club Phonics Programme

The Phonics Programme

At St Bede's Catholic Primary School, we have chosen to use Bug Club Phonics, a comprehensive teaching programme and DFE approved systematic synthetic phonics scheme.

The scheme follows a proven progression and research has found that children have made significantly more progress in reading than those not following the scheme. Not only has Bug Club been found to be successful academically for children, but it has also been shown to increase positive attitudes to reading and a great motivator for reluctant readers, boosting children's confidence and enjoyment of reading right at the beginning of their reading journey. The Bug Club Phonics programme follows the teaching sequence of letters and sounds and lessons are structured in the same way each day with an introduction, revisit, teach, practise and apply element to every session, providing the children with consistent routines that they can become familiar with. This helps to secure essential phonic knowledge and skills as well as ensuring the lessons are fun, interactive and engaging.

Bug Club Phonics teaching approach

Daily lessons include revision of the previously learnt sound, and also words that were read the day before providing consolidation. Children quickly move to reading captions and sentences and decodable readers are introduced at the beginning of their phonics journey. Daily lessons are in short, discrete sections.

Where appropriate, we use whole class teaching, advocated by Bug Club Phonics and used in the Clackmannanshire Study showing that whole class teaching gives children a sense of inclusion. However, where teachers' assessments show that children need extensive support to catch-up. They are taught in smaller phonics groups targeted to their specific needs alongside extra intervention sessions and more frequent reading in the classroom.

Decodable Reading Books

It is crucial to allow children the opportunity to practise their blending skills and to consolidate their knowledge learnt in each phonics session. Alongside our phonics teaching, we therefore use the Bug Club Phonics decodable reading books that have been written specifically to match the order in which grapheme-phoneme correspondences are introduced in class. These books are fully decodable, which means that every word in the book can be read using just the children's developing phonics knowledge. For example, when the graphemes s, a, t, p, i, and n are taught at the beginning of phase 2, the children's decodable books would contain words with only these sounds. Not only does this allow children to embed and secure their phonics

knowledge, but it also allows them to experience success. This in turn builds their confidence, motivation and enthusiasm for reading.

Reading at home

Children will experience the most success in reading when school and home work together. Children learn about the importance of reading as they watch family members use reading and writing for everyday purposes. Reading for pleasure, sharing stories at home or using a recipe shows them that reading is a useful skill. Research shows the importance of reading on a daily basis in developing children's use and understanding of vocabulary and reading at home will enable them to practise and solidify their skills learnt at school.

At St Bede's, we therefore aim to create a strong link with parents in order to facilitate and support their reading journey at home. As children begin the structured phonics programme in Early Years, parents are invited to a phonics workshop to explain how their children will be taught to read and how to support them at home. This will also be repeated at the beginning of year 1, in order to outline the next progression steps in their child's phonics journey and also explain the year 1 phonics screening check.

Our school's chosen phonics scheme supports teachers in enabling them to provide children with effective learning at home. There are instructional videos with demonstration lessons and how to pronounce the pure sounds. These are produced by teachers and are available for parents and carers to access.

Teachers will assign specific decodable e-books enabling the children to read books at home matched to their phonics learning. Physical books will also be sent home providing the children with different ways to practise and develop their reading skills. As well as assigning new books, they will encourage the children to re-read books that they have read at school, because we know that repetitive reading strengthens children's understanding of the text and allows them to develop a deeper understanding of phonemic awareness. Each time a child reads without stumbling, the reading process becomes more enjoyable and their success will provide great confidence. Providing additional support where needed is vital, and through the Bug Club online portal teachers are able to personalise home learning with allocated online catch up activities as well as assigning phoneme revision sessions.

Using the printed books

Inside every printed book there are notes to help you make the most of reading with your child.

Inside front cover: for younger children, these notes identify words with which children may need help and give ideas and strategies to help you feel confident that you know how best to help. For older children, the notes are intended to deepen each child's

understanding of the book. They provide background information about the time or place the book was written or sometimes information about the author or illustrator.

Inside back cover: these notes suggest puzzles and challenges that help children think about their reading. These include 'Find it!' activities that encourage children to revisit the text; 'Share it!' tasks that may involve making or writing something, and other ideas that offer ideas for further reading.

Using the online reading world

If you have access to an internet connection, your child can enjoy reading Bug Club books online as well as in print. Each child has a unique homepage and can log into it by following these steps:

Go to www.activelearnprimary.co.uk

Enter the login details (provided by your child's class teacher).

Your child's homepage will appear.

Reading a book online

We allocate most books to your child according to their reading levels. These books will appear in the 'My Stuff' area of their personal homepages. Throughout the books there are quiz questions for your child to complete. To answer a question, just click on the bug icon. Your child does not need to finish all the quiz questions in one sitting and can come back to a book later.

When your child has finished all the quiz questions in a book, he or she will earn 'Active Learn Coins'. By reading more books, your child will earn enough coins to 'buy' a reward in one of the many reward schemes. The answers to the quiz questions will be sent back to our teacher site so that we can see how your child is progressing. We will also be able to assign more books for your child to read if the virtual book bag is running low.

When your child has finished a book, it will move to 'My Library'. Children can read these books again if they want to, or they can choose new books from 'My Stuff'.

Reading with your child

When sharing a book with your child, try to take opportunities to talk about the book - before, during and after reading.

Before reading: look at the book cover and talk about your child's expectations. Is the book likely to be fiction or non-fiction? Have you read other books together about these characters or by this author? What does your child think the book is going to be about?

While reading: support your child when unknown words need tackling: you can sound them out, split them into syllables, or identify suffixes and prefixes. Remind your child to

listen to the words while reading them, to make sure that they make sense. Have a 'meaning check' every now and again to ensure that your child understands the text.

After reading: talk about the book. What was it about? Did it match your child's expectations? Ask questions beginning with the words how and why to check that your child has been able to read between the lines. Ask whether anything seemed puzzling. Then ask your child to explain what the best and worst bits of the book were, and why.