



"We are called to be the hands and face of Jesus as we learn, love and grow together"

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Phonics and Early Reading

Dear parents and carers,

I am writing to inform you of a very exciting change in our already good teaching of phonics and reading at St Vincent de Paul school. As you are aware, the skill of being able to read from an early age vastly improves your child's life chances and is a key indicator of future success.

We have researched into the best ways of teaching phonics and early reading and will now be delivering a new phonics programme called 'Little Wandle Letters and Sounds Revised'. This program draws on the latest research into how children learn best; how to ensure learning stays in children's long term memory and how best to enable children to apply their learning to become highly competent readers.

What can parents expect from the school?

Through a well planned Early Years curriculum we provide a language rich environment from your child's first day at school, encouraging them to explore new words and their meanings. Children in Nursery start by listening to, recognising and making sounds. They will begin to hear letter sounds and orally blend words. More formal phonics lessons commence in Early Years 2 (Reception) during the first full week of the Autumn Term. Through daily lessons and frequent practise, your child will progress through the six phonic phases by the end of Year 1. Once your child can identify early sounds they will bring home:

- **A reading practice ebook or book** matched to your child's phonic stage.
- **A sharing book** which we invite you to enjoy together. This book is self selected by your child so is of interest to them. Enjoying the book together provides opportunities for you to read to them and a wealth of opportunities for you to talk about and enjoy together. These books are picked for pleasure and are for you to read to them.

What is expected of parents?

Once children have been taught a new phoneme (sound), they will be given a **reading practice book** that will reflect their learning. This is important as we must avoid the frustration that comes with books that your child is unable to decode (sound out). To ensure the reading at home is an enjoyable experience for all, we will be sending home reading



practice books only when your child can read 95% of the words. Please do not think that these books are too easy for your child. The idea behind these books is that your child should be able to read these books without any significant help so they can develop confidence, enjoyment and fluency.

How often will these books be sent home?

- Your child will bring their reading practise book / ebook link home once they have shared it in school and when your child is able to read it with at least 95% accuracy. This is likely to be once a week.
- There will be opportunities to change their sharing book 2 /3 times a week
- Once the phonics programme has been achieved (generally in Year 2) your child may begin to take home additional reading practice books. However, this is at the discretion of the teacher.

How should the Reading Record be used?

We ask you to record your child's reading experiences. You may wish to comment about their response to the reading practice book, their sharing book or a book that they are reading/ sharing at home or from the library. Remember to share your positive comments with your child. Teachers will monitor and may respond to these comments.

Additional information on how to support your child's learning can be found on our school website. Please contact your child's class teacher if you have any further questions.

Yours sincerely

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Alexandra Whitty
Deputy Headteacher

