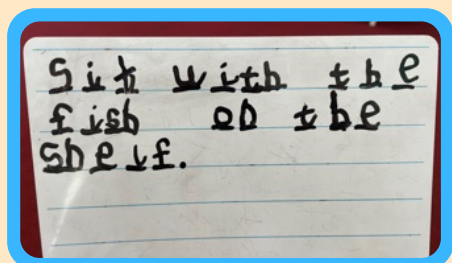


# ‘We see Reception children role-playing their phonics lessons’

Corpus Christi Catholic Primary School, UK, October 2021



We talked to Jade Whiting, Phonics Lead and Reception teacher at Corpus Christi Catholic Primary School, about what the implementation of Sounds-Write has meant for pupils and staff. A very high proportion of children have English as an additional language, including some who start Reception speaking no English.



Reception dictation after Unit 11

- School: **Corpus Christi Catholic Primary School**
- Location: **Bournemouth, Dorset, UK**
- Pupils on roll: **432**
- Age range: **4 - 11**
- Free school meals: **12%**
- English as additional language: **54%**

## Why did you choose Sounds-Write and how did you implement it?

We are a Talk for Writing school and were advised that Sounds-Write phonics complements our teaching approach to writing. We learnt that Sounds-Write provides a clear, structured approach to phonics and, importantly to us, intensive training to ensure excellent subject knowledge and pedagogy for teaching staff. We began implementing Sounds-Write in September 2020 in Reception, Year 1 and Year 6, and from September 2021 in Years 2 and 3. We took our time to understand the programme and to ensure it was being embedded properly, and that teachers and teaching assistants had a clear understanding of the rationale behind Sounds-Write. We will roll it out next to the rest of Key Stage 2.

## What has been the reaction from children to the adoption of Sounds-Write?

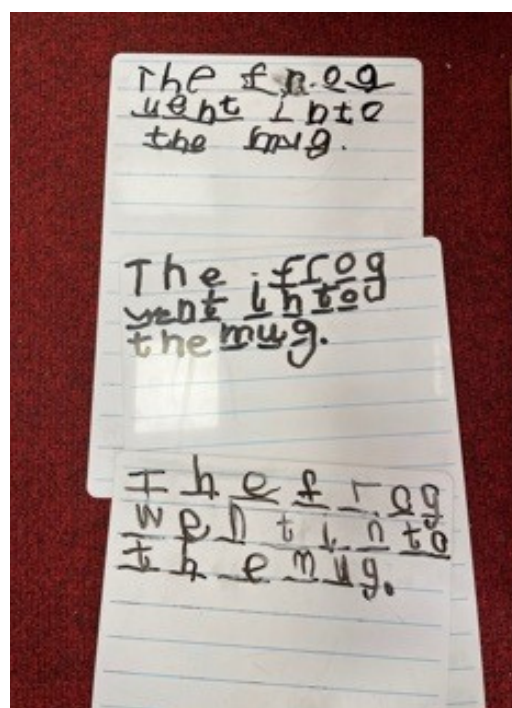
The lessons are clear and well-structured and ensure all children are able to achieve the very best they can, so they come away feeling confident and secure in what they know. In Reception, the joy in seeing children feeling so proud at being able to read their first ‘full book’ is something we know will stay with them and encourage them to apply the best of themselves to their phonics learning. We also see Reception children role-playing their phonics lesson during continuous provision time – they definitely give teachers a run for their money with script accuracy!

## What impact has Sounds-Write had on pupil progress?

Sounds Write has had a huge impact on pupil progress even though it's only our second year of implementation. By July 2021, 90% of our Year 1 pupils passed the Phonics Screening Check [compared to 80-85% in the previous three years] and 82% of our Reception pupils achieved expected or above in word reading. This was also a disrupted year due to COVID, so this achievement is hugely significant and shows a really secure understanding across Reception and Year 1. Year 6 have been using Sounds-Write for their spelling lessons and to support reading, and have become inspired by analysing words and finding their roots and origins during their polysyllabic lessons. This has provided great classroom discussions as well as deepened spelling skills.

## How do you and other teachers in the school feel about Sounds-Write?

One teaching assistant with ten years' experience in Reception has said it has 'revolutionised' the way we support and teach children in their reading, writing and spelling. In Reception, the gap between our higher and lower attainers is marginal now Sounds-Write is used, as all children stay and progress together. Sounds-Write lessons use a multi-sensory approach to phonics, which means those children with dyslexia and other additional educational needs can access and achieve, and children with English as an additional language can learn through a clear linguistic and structured approach and the slow consolidation of new sounds and words. Teachers love that progress is really evident in lessons and most importantly - our children enjoy it!



*Work by EAL Reception children who started with no English.*

## How did you find the training and support, and would you recommend Sounds-Write?

The quality of training is outstanding and it's really designed to support teachers in developing their own pedagogy. There are many free resources, from planning examples, word lists structured into units, timelines of when to teach each unit and free books! Sounds-Write provides free webinars and further opportunities for formal training with the Years 3-6 course, which focuses on the key principles of teaching vocabulary in KS2. We are a huge advocate of Sounds-Write, knowing how much of a positive impact it has had on our children's learning and teachers' pedagogy. I would say to other schools to implement Sounds-Write without hesitation. You won't look back!

