

How we teach reading

*Learning **to read is one of the most important skills** your child will learn at our school. Everything else depends on it, so we put as much energy as we possibly can into making sure that every single child learns to read as quickly as possible.*

*We want your child **to love reading** – and to want to read for themselves. This is why we work hard to make sure children develop a love of books as well as simply learning to read.*

Reading is taught through a variety of strategies including

- synthetic phonics,
- individual reading with an adult
- small group guided reading sessions with an adult,
- independent reading,
- whole class texts,
- reading at home
- reading for pleasure.

In Foundation Stage we teach **discrete phonic sessions** daily using Letters and Sounds. Children in the Nursery are mainly focussing on Phase One of Letters and Sounds which concentrates on developing children's speaking and listening skills and lays the foundations for the phonic work which starts in Phase 2. The emphasis during Phase 1 is to get children attuned to the sounds around them and ready to begin developing oral blending and segmenting skills.

Phase 1 is divided into seven aspects. Each aspect contains three strands: Tuning in to sounds (auditory discrimination), Listening and remembering sounds (auditory memory and sequencing) and Talking about sounds (developing vocabulary and language comprehension).

Nursery children are also shown how to handle books carefully, that all print carries meaning and they begin to develop an understanding of story structure and characters through adults sharing and discussing books. They are also introduced to the skill of segmenting and blending orally.

In Reception children build on these skills and develop new phonic skills. They continue with Letters and Sounds phases 2, 3 and 4. In Phase 2, letters and their sounds are introduced one at a time. A set of letters is taught each week. As soon as each set of letters is introduced, children will be encouraged to use their knowledge of the letter sounds to blend and sound out words. By the time they reach Phase 3, children will already be able to blend and segment words containing the 19 letters taught in Phase 2.

Once children can blend sounds together to read words, they **practise reading books that match the phonics** and the 'tricky words' they know. They start to believe they *can* read and this does wonders for their confidence.

Teachers regularly read to the children, too, so the children get to know and love all sorts of stories, poetry and information books. This helps to **extend** children's **vocabulary** and **comprehension**, as well as supporting their writing.

In Key Stage One we ensure systematic, daily, discrete teaching with opportunities to **practice and apply** in the context of reading, individual and guided reading and all areas of writing. We use Letters and Sounds where appropriate.

In the summer term, the government asks us to do a **phonics check of all the Year 1 children**. We will let you know how well your child has done.

Throughout school reading skills are also taught using a wide range of materials. Children develop reading skills through **daily guided reading, shared reading and individual reading** sessions. We also encourage parents to sign up (for free) to use a phonics based reading scheme in KS1 called Oxford Owl, which provides children with online resources and books to support their learning and reading enjoyment.

The children have access to a range of **different genres** and are able to choose their own books to read at home from their colour band. This helps to develop a love of reading both at school and at home. These books include real picture books, fiction, non-fiction, poetry and books from reading schemes such as:

- Oxford Reading Tree
- Rigby Star
- Sunshine Spirals
- Collins Big bat

As children become more confident readers and become more fluent, the focus of reading shifts from decoding to reading comprehension. Through guided reading children are supported to read and question a wide variety of texts and are taught strategies such as phonics, recognising words, reading for meaning and discussing the different texts they read and how to share opinions.

Homework / Home Learning

Reading forms a key part of homework expectations throughout the school. In the Nursery, Reception and KS1, children take home books to read and share with an adult. These home reading books are from a range of books

including reading schemes that reflect our approach to reading and include Oxford Reading Tree, Collins big Cat and Rigby Star. As children progress with their reading and become confident, independent readers, they no longer take home reading scheme books. Instead they have a free choice from the wide range of books in our school library.

What can parents/carers do to help?

At the start of each year, parents are invited to meet with the class teachers where reading arrangements will be discussed. In Year 1, parents are also invited to an additional meeting focussing specifically on how we teach reading in school.

You can help your child to **sound out the letters** in words and then to 'blend' the sounds together to make a whole word. Try not to refer to the letters by their names. Help your child to focus on the sounds.

Sometimes your child might bring home a picture book that they know well. Please don't say, 'This is too easy.' Instead, encourage your child to tell you the story out loud; ask them questions about things that happen or what they think about some of the characters in the story.

Make reading fun! Remember to keep reading to your child. They will come across far more adventurous words than they will in their early reading books. You will be helping them to grow a vast vocabulary and understand the meaning of different stories etc. It will also encourage them to love books and want to read more!

Within school the classrooms all have reading areas, children in KS 2 have the opportunity to visit the school library and all children can be taken to the local library. Different authors are studied to learn more about how books are created, written and illustrated.

All of these strategies together will encourage children to love reading!

What if my child finds it difficult to learn to read?

We want every child to learn to read, however long it takes us to teach them. We will find out very quickly if your child is finding reading difficult. If they struggle, we may give them 1:1 support. If we have any concerns about your child's reading, we will talk to you about this.

Remember, all children are individual so some children take a little longer to learn to put sounds together to read a word, e.g. c-a-t to make the word 'cat'. At our meetings, we will explain how you can help your child to do this. If you have any further queries about how we teach reading, please don't hesitate to talk to your child's class teacher.