

How we teach reading

Learning to read is one of the most important things 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.

We start by teaching phonics in Reception following the sequence of sounds set out in 'Letters and Sounds'. To begin with, we encourage children to listen out for sounds in the environment and experiment with a range of sounds using their whole body. We believe phonics should be fun, so teach the sounds use actions too.

In daily phonics sessions children learn how to 'read' the sounds in words and how those sounds can be written down. This is essential for reading, but it also helps children learn to spell well.

The children also practise reading (and spelling) 'tricky words', such as 'once,' 'have,' 'said' and 'where'.

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. We want children to experience books about all sorts of topics and have the opportunity to share these with parents and families at home.

In guided reading sessions your child will work with children who are at the same reading level. This is so that the teaching can be focussed on their needs. Some older children will continue to access phonics groups if they need further consolidation and development of reading skills. We check children's reading skills regularly so we that we can ensure they are in the right group. Children will move to a different group if they are making faster progress or may have one-to-one support if we think they need some extra help. We use a range of schemes which are colour banded.

Not all children learn to read using phonics and for some children other approaches are used.

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.

In the Summer Term, Year 2 and Year 6 have statutory tests where their ability to answer questions about a text are measured.

To prepare children for this, we ensure our teaching of reading includes lots of opportunities to discuss characters, settings and events. This reading for meaning is so important and only when a child can decode a text and answer questions about it- do we feel the child is ready to move onto the next colour band.

As the children move into Key Stage 2 we begin to explore how the writer has used language to keep the reader's interest. We look at the features of a range of different fiction and non-fiction texts, discussing the use of different layouts and sentence structures.