

How we teach Reading



Phonics

What is phonics?

Phonics is the explicit teaching of each sound in English and the corresponding letter or group of letters that can make that sound. For example, the sound 'or' as in fork can also be made with 'aw' as in crawl, etc. A good grounding in phonics enables children to decode unfamiliar words by sounding them out and then blending the sounds into words. Eventually, they will be able to recognise most words on sight without the need to sound them out.

Read, Write, Inc.

We are now following a programme called Read, Write, Inc., a widely used and respected way of teaching phonics that helps children to become accurate and fluent readers. Read, Write, Inc. uses pictures and phrases to help the children to remember each sound. Provided with this letter is a sheet with these sounds so that you can support your child as they progress through the programme. Children also learn to read words that do not follow the usual patterns that they have learned. These words are called 'red' or 'tricky' words and children are taught to read these words as they encounter them in texts throughout the programme.



Wychwood CE Primary School

Reading

Learning to read is not simply about being able to decode words on a page. Children also need to be able to understand what they have read. We call this skill reading comprehension. We will continue to teach this to the children throughout their time at school with us.

"The more that you read, the more things you will know. The more that you learn, the more places you'll go." **Dr. Seuss, I Can Read With My Eyes Shut!**

Children following the phonics programme

While the children are still following the Read, Write, Inc. programme, they will also be reading a range of texts which are at an appropriate level for them. These texts will be read during the daily phonics sessions with lessons focussed on increasing accuracy, fluency and comprehension.

Children who have completed the phonics programme

After children have completed the phonics programme, they will have a daily grammar and reading session. During these lessons, children will read and discuss a wide variety of texts. They will learn specific skills such as skimming and scanning, making predictions and inferring meaning from a text.

One to One reading

In addition to the reading sessions described above, some children will continue to read with an adult one-to-one every week. If your child is not heard to read one-to-one each week, please be reassured that they are being heard within the phonics and reading groups that take place daily. The progress of every child will be closely monitored and if we believe a child would benefit from extra support with their reading we will provide this in the form of one-to-one or small group interventions during the afternoons.

Whole class texts

Teachers will also be reading to your children from high-quality texts throughout each week, exposing children to books that would be beyond their ability to access independently. These sessions are a wonderful way to introduce new vocabulary and to model comprehension skills. They also aim to foster a love of reading which is perhaps the most important thing of all.

Early Years Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1	
Phonics teaching, including comprehension skills	Grammar and Reading comprehension teaching
Whole class texts – read by teachers with associated 'book talk' during English lessons	
Topic based texts shared throughout every term with the whole class	
Weekly visits to the library to choose and share books	
Regular opportunities to read for pleasure in the classroom	

Book Bands

We have recently moved to a system of colour banded books in EYFS and KS1. Our books have been organised into coloured bands according to their level of difficulty and children will have the opportunity to select their own books to take home to read with you or another adult.

This system provides children with a broader selection of books to choose from and allows children to move through the coloured bands at their own pace rather than following a reading scheme from start to finish.

The band we have chosen for each child is based on their being able to read approximately 90% of the words easily. This is thought to be the optimal level of challenge to motivate children: not too difficult but not too easy either. Because of this, you may notice that some of the books your child comes home with are ones he or she has already encountered. Please don't worry about this or think it means your child has fallen behind. We believe they are likely to make quicker progress if they are reading books at the right level for them. You may also find that your child just enjoys a particular book and so chooses to read it more than once. This is absolutely fine and provides a great opportunity to build speed and fluency when reading. Although we have already banded many of our books, this is an ongoing task so our collections for each band will grow as the year goes by.

Reading at home

Reading Journals

Children learn to read by practising. Little and often is the key and we would encourage you to hear your child read for ten minutes a day where possible. When you have heard your child read, please make a note of it in their reading journals. Just the date, title and pages read is fine but if you would like to add any comments please feel free. We will check the reading journals weekly and children who have recorded having read five times or more each week will receive a house point to reward their (and your!) efforts.

Reading to your child

Another way to support your children as they learn to read is to read to them. As well as their banded reading book, children will be able to take home another book from our collections in the reading corner or library. This book is for you to share with your child. Children often like to hear the same book read to them many times and this is a great opportunity to discuss the pictures and characters in a story or to talk about interesting facts you have read together. This kind of 'book talk' is extremely helpful in developing children's comprehension skills. We have included some possible questions to help you frame these conversations in the back of your child's reading journal.