Dear Parents/Carers

How we teach reading – Answers for parents

The Read Write Inc Phonics Programme

We have started a new reading and writing programme called Read Write Inc which we will be running across the school. We just wanted to provide you with some information.

Read Write Inc:
We want your child to love reading - and to want to read for themselves. This is why we put our efforts into making sure they develop a love of books as well as simply learning to read.

How will my child be taught to read?
We start by teaching phonics to the children in the Reception class. This means that they 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. We teach the children simple ways of remembering these sounds and letters. Ask them to show you what these are.

The children also practise reading (and spelling) what we call ‘tricky words’, such as ‘once,’ ‘have,’ ‘said’ and ‘where’.

The children practise their reading with books that match the phonics and the ‘tricky words’ they know. They start thinking that they can read and this does wonders for their confidence. The teachers read to the children, too, so the children get to know all sorts of stories, poetry and information books. They learn many more words this way and it also helps their writing.

How will I know how well my child is doing?
We will always let you know how well your child is doing. We use various ways to find out how the children are getting on in reading. We use the information to decide what reading group they should be in. Your child will work with children who are at the same reading level as him or her. Children will move to a different group if they are making faster progress than the others. Your child will have one-to-one support if we think he or she needs some extra help to keep up.

In the summer term, the government asks us to do a phonics check of all the Year 1 children. That gives us extra information about their progress. We will talk to you about how well your child has done, and especially if we have any worries at all.

How long will it take to learn to read well?
By the end of Year 2, your child should be able to read aloud books that are at the right level for his or her age.

How do I know the teaching will be good?
All the staff have been trained to teach reading in the way we do it in this school. We believe that it is very important that all the teachers and teaching assistants work in the same way. Senior teachers watch other teachers teaching to make sure that the children are learning in the way we want them to learn.
Does it matter if my child misses a lesson or two?
The way we teach children to read is very well organised. It is really important that your child attends school every day to ensure they become a good reader.

What if he or she finds it difficult to learn to read?
We want children 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. First, we move children to a different group, so that we can make sure that they have learnt what they need to know. If they still struggle, we give them extra time with an adult, on their own. These adults are specially trained to support these children. Your child will still be in the same group with the other children and won’t miss out on any of the class lessons.

If we have any worries about your child’s reading, we will talk to you about this. Some children take a bit longer to learn to put sounds together to read a word, e.g. c-a-t to make the word ‘cat’.

My child has difficulty pronouncing some sounds. Will this stop him learning to read through phonics?
This isn’t a problem for learning to read as long as we know what sound the child is trying to say. This is not something to worry about. Many children have a few sounds that they can hear clearly but find it difficult to say, particularly the l-sound, r-sound, w-sound, th-sound, s-sound, sh-sound and j-sound. Often they say a t-sound for the c-sound; "tttssh" for the s-sound; "w" for the r-sound and "r" for the l-sound. You can help your child by encouraging him or her to look at your mouth when you say the sound. Whatever you do, do not make your child feel a failure. They can easily learn to read, even if they find one or two sounds difficult to say. Don’t hesitate to contact us if you have any concerns. We are here to help.

Weekly Spellings:
Each week your child will be learning new words based on the sounds they are learning. When your child is reading books as part of their Read Write Inc lessons they will be learning new words to help them read their story book. These words will be sent home as weekly spellings. There will be a weekly spelling test.

Reading Books:
Once your child is reading Read Write Inc story books then the book that they are reading that week will be sent home. Your child will have read this book three times during the week and this will support them to build on their fluency, expression and understanding of the book. They will also receive the book that they have read the previous week. On top of this the children will still have the opportunity to choose a book from the Library Bus and if you would like another book then please speak to your class teacher.

Please do not hesitate to come and speak to us if you have any queries/questions about Read Write Inc.

Many thanks

Mrs Stretton and Mrs Graham
Read Write Inc Reading Leaders