

Reading at The King's C of E Primary Academy

At The King's we believe that reading is the cornerstone to all children's learning, particularly as without it, other learning is difficult to access. At The King's Primary Academy, we aim to develop a love of reading as well as ensuring all children are able to read fluently and with great understanding.

Phonics

We begin in Foundation, using the highly successful 'Read Write Inc.' phonics programme. Children learn how to 'read' 44 sounds in words (speed sounds – these are the phonemes not names). The speed sounds are divided into small groups. Once children have learnt all the sounds in one group, they move on to sound blending the letters in that group to read words. For example, once children have learnt to read the first 5 sounds: m a s d t they can then start to read words that include these sounds such as mat, sat, sad, mad, at, etc. The children will then learn the next five sounds and be able to read words with a combination of the ten sounds. When teaching the speed sounds it is very important that an intrusive 'uh' to the end of the consonant sound is not added. It is essential that they are pronounced as pure sounds: 'mmmm' not 'muh', 'ffffff' not 'fuh' and 'lllll' not 'luh'. This can be quite difficult to begin with but by ensuring only the pure sounds are pronounced, children will find it much easier to blend the sounds to read words.

Alongside this, children will learn how to scribe (write) these sounds. This is vital for reading and helps children learn how to spell. The children also practise reading and spelling 'tricky words' which are words you cannot sound out and therefore children have to read these words on sight. Once children can blend sounds together to read words they practise reading 'Ditties' once a week during their phonics sessions that contain the phonics and the 'tricky words' they know. This activity is completed in pairs where they are taught to support, praise each other's reading, and discuss this book over several days (early comprehension). The books are grouped and coloured according to difficulty and the children are assessed every term and re-grouped by ability. As children progress through school, they will continue to access Read Write Inc. if there is a need for further consolidation and development of reading skills.

What can parents/carers do to help?

Parents can help their child to sound out the letters in words (this is called 'Fred Talk') and then to 'blend' the sounds together to make a whole word. Letter names are not referred to. They help their child to focus on the sounds. A useful website for hearing how sounds are formed is found on YouTube - 'Read Write Inc. Phonemes Pronunciation Guide'.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5J2Ddf_0Om8&t=15s

Books are introduced in Foundation Stage as soon as they are settled into the school routines. These books go home for sharing. A reading and phonics evening for Foundation parents is delivered at the start of the academic year and a Phonics leaflet is made available.

Useful websites

<https://www.ruthmiskin.com/en/programmes/phonics/>

<https://www.phonicsplay.co.uk/>

<https://www.bbc.com/bitesize/articles/zt27y4j>

<https://www.ictgames.com/>

Phonics Screening Check

In 2012, a National Phonics Screening Check was introduced. Year 1 children's ability to read and blend sounds is assessed and submitted in the Summer term. Children who do not meet the phonics screening threshold, receive extra 'Read Write Inc.' sessions in Year 2 and are re-assessed termly until screened again in the following summer term.

Reading Development

In school children are taught how to read fluently and are then taught how to comprehend what they have read. This is taught primarily through the 'Read Write Inc.' phonics programme. We also use VIPERS to do this from Year 2 upwards.

VIPERS stands for

Vocabulary

Inference

Prediction

Explanation

Retrieval

Sequence or Summarise

VIPERS is not a reading scheme but rather a method of ensuring that teachers ask, and students are familiar with, a range of questions. They allow the teacher to track the type of questions asked and the children's responses to these which allows for targeted questioning afterwards. This enables us to make sure that children are able to understand what they read and it also encourages them to dig deep into a text to find hidden meanings so that they develop a curiosity about the characters and information that they read about. You can find out more about this at the following website...

<https://www.literacyshedplus.com/en-gb>

All children also read on an individual basis with the adults in their teaching team. We also encourage students and community volunteers to support children by listening to them read.

Talk Through stories

We encourage children to develop a real love of reading from an early age. In Nursery, reception and Years 1 and 2 we follow the Read, Write, Inc 'Talk Through Stories' Programme. We help children love the story first and, when they know it well, we teach them to use the 'Tier Two' words from the story in everyday contexts. (Tier Two words are words that children are unlikely to hear in everyday conversation, but will encounter in stories and teaching as they progress through school.)

Class Novels

As children move into Year 3 they are introduced to longer books, class novels. These are books that are shared as a class and are chosen for these four reasons:

1. They foster an enjoyment of reading
2. They widen the child's experiences by taking them on adventures
3. They often link to the wider curriculum to encourage a deeper understanding and discussion around various topics
4. They deepen and enrich the child's vocabulary

When parents share a book like this with a child at bedtime, it supports the child's development in a powerful way.

Reading Areas

All class areas have a fiction reading area that children can select books to read for pleasure, alongside their reading scheme book if they have one. These reading areas are well-ordered and inviting to encourage children to read for pleasure.

Each class area also has a Curiosity area. This area has non-fiction reading material such as books, leaflets, knowledge organisers, maps, a globe, etc. These resources are there to reinforce prior learning and to develop a sense of inquisitiveness. We want children to be curious learners. We want them to be thirsty for knowledge and our reading areas reflect this.

Culture of sharing a book

At The King's, we firmly believe in the value of sharing books. There is an expectation that when children are in Foundation and Key Stage 1 and 2, parents are encouraged to listen to their children read their book and sign their reading journal. Comments are preferable but are not insisted upon. Every class has a timetabled library slot which allows children access to a broader range of fiction or non-fiction reading material, for reading independently or sharing at home.

In school, we have daily sessions that we call DEAR. This stands for 'Drop everything and Read' this time is purely in place to enable children to read from a wide selection of materials that they find interesting or fun to read. The culture of sharing a book with a family member is encouraged of course, but we are fully aware that it is our responsibility, as class teachers, to teach reading. If parents require tips for supporting their children, please ask the class teacher for support and tips.

Reading assessment

The teaching team assess children constantly on their reading development. It is a personal journey for all children and so all children need personal targets that will help them know what areas to practice. With younger children, this is often learning how to recognise certain 'Tricky words' quickly. They then learn how to use expression in their reading or pay attention to the punctuation so that they pause well in the right places. These targets are shared with the child and discussed during 1:1 reading sessions. All children in school have access to a vast array of online books as well through a subscription to Bug Club. This allows the class teacher to match specific texts to support your child's reading journey. There are questions at the end of each book that will allow you to check how well your child has understood the text that they have read.

Class teachers have the responsibility to monitor the suitability of what is being read and how often. When a child becomes a 'freechoice reader', they are still encouraged to read in school and at home as often as possible. Teaching skills are still taught continually to further enhance the child's reading capabilities.

Progression

If a child is making little or no progress after an assessment window (this can be in any term), the teachers seek advice from the English Lead, the SENDCO, and other professionals in or out of the school. In addition, a child might be making progress in reading, but in a teacher's professional judgement, they believe the child may have specific learning difficulties, for example dyslexia. In such cases, teachers seek advice from the above professionals.

Celebration of Reading Achievements

We believe that it is important to celebrate the successes that children have made in their reading. We do this through fun and exciting ways such as holding Reading Reward evenings. By raising the profile of reading in this way, we demonstrate that we value this area of the curriculum so greatly.

Working in Partnership

We encourage a strong partnership with the parents and carers of our children. Teaching children to read and instilling a deep love of reading is achieved best when we work in partnership with the child's family.

All children are given a school organiser. This is used for children to keep a record of their reading at home and for the teaching team to communicate the next step targets for the child. Parents find this a useful way to collaborate with school. Whilst children are developing their phonics skills they will have a Read, Write, Inc. book to bring home to practise. All children will have a book matched to their reading ability that they should read at home as often as possible, once a day if possible. They will also have a book that they have chosen to share with their parent for fun.

As in all areas, we encourage parents to ask us if they have a question about how they can best support their child in this area.