



Stamford Green

Primary School and Nursery



How we teach reading – Frequently Asked Questions about Read Write Inc.

The Read Write Inc. Phonics programme

Learning to read is the most important thing 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 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 Reception. 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.

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 let you know how well your child is doing at our Parents/Carers and Teachers Consultation Meetings each term. 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 them. 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 they need 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 share how your child has done, and talk with you if we have any concerns 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 their age. In Year 3, we concentrate more on helping children to further understand what they are reading,

although this work begins very early on in school. This happens when the teacher reads to the children, and also when the children read their own story book.

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 ensure that the children are learning in the way we want them to learn. If you have any questions, or concerns, please come to school and talk to us.

What my child finds it difficult to learn to read?

We want children to learn to read. We will find out very quickly if your child is finding reading difficult. First, we move children to a suitable 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 those children. Your child will still be in a group with the other children and won't miss out on any of the class phonics lessons.

If we have any serious concerns 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'. We will work with you so that you can help your child to do this.

What if my child turns out to be dyslexic?

The way we teach reading is especially helpful for children who might be dyslexic. This is because we use a very well-organised programme that has a strong focus on phonics. This is very important for children who find learning to read more challenging.

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.

Reading at home

What will my child bring home to read?

Once a week your child will bring home a zipped wallet of books containing the books listed below. Please ensure that the zipped wallet lives in your child's book bag and comes back in to school each day. New books will be handed out to the children on the following week.

- **'Last and past' storybooks:** contain sounds and words the children know. This is the Storybook they have just read at school and maybe some they have read before, for extra practice. Please don't worry that books are too easy. Children enjoy re-reading stories they know well and this gives them confidence. Their speed and understanding improves on every read.

- **Book Bag Books:** matched to the Storybooks children read in school and used for extra practice. They include many of the same reading activities that we use in class and include parent guidance.
- **More Storybooks** and **Non-fiction books:** matched to the sounds and words your child knows well.
- **Book Band books** – additional stories to read at home to ensure that your child has a varied reading diet. These are not part of the Read Write Inc scheme and your child may need a little extra help with these.
- **Picture story books** and **Library books** to share with you: read these stories to children or encourage them to retell the story by looking at the pictures. They are not expected to read the story themselves.
- **Red Words book pages:** challenge your child to read the Red Words speedily across the rows and down the columns. Set a timer – can they beat yesterday's time?

What can I do to help? Is there anything that I shouldn't do?

Help your child to sound out the letters in words and then to 'push' 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. You can hear how to say the sounds correctly at this link:

<https://ruthmiskin.com/en/find-out-more/parents/#lg=1&slide=2>

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 read you the story out loud in their 'storyteller's voice'; ask them questions about things that happen or what they think about some of the characters in the story. Enjoy and praise their growing expertise!

We know parents and carers are very busy people. But if you can find time to read to your child as much as possible, it helps him or her to learn about books and stories. They also learn new words and what they mean. Show that you are interested in reading yourself and talk about reading as a family.

You can find out good stories to read to your child here: <https://www.facebook.com/miskin.education>

How do I listen to my child read?

Your child has a Storybook matched to the sounds and words they know – a decodable book – so they should be able to read all the words.

Please avoid saying, "This book is too easy for you!" - reading at home is an opportunity to practise skills that they have already learnt but instead say "I love how well you can read this book – you must be working hard on your reading!"

'Special Friends', 'Fred Talk', read the word

Remind your child to read words using 'Special Friends, Fred Talk, read the word' (see glossary). For example 'ship': spot the 'sh', then Fred Talk and blend to read the word e.g. sh, sh-i-p, ship.

Red Words

Red Words are also known as common exception or tricky words. They occur in stories regularly (said, what, where) but have unusual letter combinations ('ai' in the word 'said' makes the sound 'e').

Remind your child not to use Fred Talk to read Red Words but instead to 'stop and think'.

Tell them the word if you need to.

Read the same book again and again

Children love reading the same book again and again. Their reading becomes speedier and they understand what they are reading.

- Encourage your child to read words using 'Fred in your head' (see glossary).
- Show your child how to read the story in a storyteller voice.
- Share your enjoyment of the story when they read it again and again.

What do I do with the picture books?

One of the most important things you can do as a parent at home is read to your child often and with enjoyment. Loving stories is important because children who love stories want to read stories for themselves. Children who are read a lot of stories become better readers.

Here are some top tips for storytime:

1. Make it a treat – introduce each new book with excitement!
2. Make it a special quiet time – cuddle up!
3. Show curiosity in what you're going to read.
4. Read the story once without stopping so they can enjoy the whole story. If you think your child might not understand something say something like 'Oh I think what's happening here is that...'
5. Chat about the story e.g. "I wonder why he did that?" "Oh no, I hope she's not going to..."
6. Avoid asking questions to check what they remember.
7. Link to other stories and experiences you have shared e.g. "This reminds me of..."
8. Read favourite stories over and over again – encourage your child to join with the bits they know. Avoid saying 'not that story again!'
9. Use different voices – be enthusiastic!
10. Love the book – read with enjoyment.

Glossary

'Special Friends'

Special friends are a combination of two or three letters representing one sound, e.g. ck, ay, igh, oa.

Fred Talk

Fred the Frog helps children read and spell. He can say the sounds in words, but he can't say the whole word, so children have to help him.

To help children read, Fred (the teacher) says the sounds and then children say the word.

For example, Fred says c-a-t, children say cat, Fred says l-igh-t, children say light.

'Fred in your head'

Once children can sound out a word, we teach them to say the sounds silently in their heads.

We show them how to do this by:

1. Whispering the sounds and then saying the whole word;
2. Mouthing the sounds silently and then saying the whole word;
3. Saying the whole word straight away.