

HOW WE TEACH READING AT WEELSBY ACADEMY

At Weelsby Academy we aim to immerse children in a rich reading environment and to give them the opportunity to explore a wide range of quality texts. This provision supports phonics, word recognition, comprehension and vocabulary development.

Alongside the teaching of phonics, there is also an important focus on comprehension and reading for enjoyment in our school. To encourage this, a variety of books are available to pupils of all ages. Other methods we use to support children in learning to read include e.g. looking at pictures, considering the context, reading ahead, and looking at word shape.

What is phonics?

Phonics is a way of teaching children to read quickly and skillfully. At Weelsby Academy we use the Read, Write, Inc. phonics programme and children will work daily to developing their phonic skills in both Foundation Stage and KS1. Children are taught how to:

- Recognise the sounds that each individual letter makes
- identify the sounds that different combinations of letters make - such as 'sh' or 'oo'
- blend these sounds together from left to right to make a word

Children can use this knowledge to 'de-code' new words that they hear or see. This is the first important step in learning to read.

Although some words do not lend themselves to this method of teaching, it has been found that children who have been taught phonics tend to read more accurately than those taught using other methods such as 'look and say'. This includes children who find learning to read difficult - for example, those who have dyslexia. Tricky words are taught in a visual way through repetition.

Helping your child with phonics

Phonics works best when children are given plenty of encouragement and learn to enjoy reading and books. Parents play a very important part in helping with this.

Some simple steps to help your child learn to read:

- Ask your child's class teacher about our approach to phonics and how you can reinforce this at home. For example, the teacher will be able to tell you which letters and sounds the class is covering in lessons each week.
- You can then highlight these sounds when you read with your

child. Teaching how sounds match with letters is likely to start with individual letters such as 's', 'a' and 't' and will move on to two-letter sounds (digraphs) such as 'ee', 'ch' and 'ck'.

- With all books, encourage your child to look at the pictures first and discuss which words the child might see. Your child can then 'sound out' unfamiliar words and start to blend the sounds together from left to right. Once your child has read an unfamiliar word you can discuss what it means and help him/her to follow and discuss the story.
- Your child's teacher will also provide you with the right level of phonics for your child. These books are often called 'decodable readers' because the story is written with words made up of the letters your child has learnt. He/she will be able to work out the words using their phonics knowledge.
- Try to make time to read with your child for 5-10 minutes every day – this is more effective than half an hour twice a week. . Grandparents and older brothers or sisters can help too. Encourage your child to blend the sounds all the way through a word.
- Word games like 'I-spy' can be an enjoyable way of teaching children about sounds and letters. You can also encourage your child to read words from your shopping list or from road signs to practice phonics.
- Look at websites such as <http://www.phonicsplay.com> .

Reading at Home

Our school uses 'book bags' and a reading record, which is a great way for teachers and parents to communicate about what children have read. The reading record can tell you whether your child has enjoyed a particular book and also highlights problems or successes he/she has had, either at home or at school. We make sure that children are rewarded for reading at home with points to spend in our school shop and from regular reading award assemblies. We would like to suggest that children of all ages read at home five times a week as this gives them the best chance of success and rapid progression.

Other activities to support learning to read at all levels in our school include:

- Once children have mastered the basics of reading and are competent decoders teachers will use a combination or all of

the following methods to develop reading; depending on the child's age and ability.

- Spelling Activities, based on the spelling patterns taught that week in class. The school uses the No-Nonsense spelling programme for Years 2-6.
- Speed reading: children will be given a text to practice and over 2 weeks they will be challenged to see how many words they can read within one minute. They are then given an opportunity to challenge themselves to beat their own score. The children enjoy this challenge immensely and it has been found to rapidly improve the speed that children read.
- Reading texts from a wide range of different genres, identifying the features and key language.
- Comprehension: reading a text and answering questions on it. This includes 'RIC' reading where children are given opportunity to discuss both images and texts and orally rehearse answers to questions based on **R**etrieval, **I**nference and **C**omprehension before attempting written answers.
- Silent Reading: the children read books/comics/newspapers or stories/poems they have written themselves or class books which are of both age and stage abilities.
- Paired reading with partners
- Simultaneous reading- whole class reading of the same text
- Guided reading- Using four strategies: summarising, question generating, clarifying, and predicting.
- Follow-up Tasks, linked to a guided reading session.
- Teachers reading to children on a regular basis
- Use of our school library and reading corners
- Reading Challenges and games Reading texts across the curriculum
- Reading online such as kindles.

What else can you do?

- Continue to read to/with them for as long as they wish to continue
- Read aloud together, allowing the child to 'take over', especially in well-known stories
- Use the strategies listed above to help your child when he/she seems to need/want it
- Simply encourage reading without turning it into a chore
- Give books as presents
- Buy the child a bedside lamp

- Join your local library: making the library a source of reading material helps to make it possible for children to have a constant supply of books, magazines and other publications.

Our whole school community supports and encourages reading in all its forms and children are encouraged to share their reading experiences at all levels. As well as encouraging our pupils in their initial skills development, we look to foster a real love of reading that will remain with them throughout their lives and be a source of pleasure that they will constantly return to.