



How we teach reading: answers for parents

This letter explains to parents how we teach reading using the *Read Write Inc.* 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 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.

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 phonics group they should be in. Your child will have one-to-one support if we think he or she needs some extra help to boost his/her reading.

In the summer term of Year 1, the government asks us to do a phonics check of all the Year 1 children. That gives us extra information about their progress and whether your child has reached the nationally expected level. You will receive the results of this test.

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. In Year 3 we concentrate more on helping children to understand what they are reading, although this work begins very early on. This happens when the teacher reads to the children and also when the children read their own story book.

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

You will be invited to a reading information meeting. We would very much like to explain how we teach reading and explain how you can help.

Your child will bring different sorts of books home from school. Usually, your child will bring their individual reading book home which is colour coded at the same level as their 'phonics' book in school. Occasionally, your child may also bring their phonics book home too. These books are at the correct level for your child to read with you supporting them. Your child may also bring home a library book. This is more often than not, a book that should be read to them.

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 and try to use 'pure' sounds (without a 'uh' on the end). Help your child to focus on the sounds. You can hear how to say the sounds correctly by searching on YouTube for 'Read Write Inc. Phonemes Pronunciation Guide'

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.

Does it matter if my child misses a lesson or two?

It matters a lot if your child misses school. The way we teach children to read is very well organised, so even one missed lesson means that your child has not learnt something that they need to know to be a good reader.

What if he or she finds it difficult to learn to read?

We want every child to learn to read. We will find out very quickly if your child is finding reading difficult. If s/he struggles, we will give them extra time with an adult, on their own. These adults are trained to support reading on a one to one basis. Your child will still be in the same group with the other children and won't miss out on any of the class phonic sessions.

If we have any serious 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'. At our meeting, we will explain how you can help your child to do this.

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. 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 questions.

The Staff at Staverton CE Primary School