

The Blake CE Primary School

Reading in Reception

**An insight into supporting your child with
reading and phonics**



Reading in Reception; how to support your child.

What makes a successful reader?

Our aim is to ensure all children receive the best opportunities to be a successful reader. There are some key elements that help children become successful readers:

- Phonic knowledge
- Word recognition
- Making sense of what they read
- Understanding how texts work
- Memorising stories, story-telling and using picture clues
- And a LOVE of books and reading

How is phonics taught at the Blake School?

In The Blake School, we teach phonics using the Read Write Inc. principles. At home, parents may hear their children talking about 'Fred'. Fred is a frog puppet that we use for teaching phonics. Fred only speaks in sounds, not letter names and does not say whole words (Fred would say 'j-u-m-p' not 'jay-you-em-pee' or 'jump'.) We use the phrase, 'Fred in your head' - this is where children do what we previously referred to as 'sounding out'. For example, seeing the word 'cat' in a book and saying the letter sounds 'c-a-t'. Children initially say the sounds 'out loud' but progress to saying the sounds in their head, or 'Fredding in their head'.

One progressive step that is not taught, but is one that some children naturally take, is that they begin to see chunks of words and will read for example 'w-en-t' for 'went'; followed by 'running' sounds together using all of their graduated decoding/reading skills.

When children are beginning to learn how to 'Fred' they use short letter sounds, or 'pure' sounds. This means that the letter 'm' is not said as a 'muh' but makes a short 'mm'; the letter 'h' is not said as a 'huh' sound but makes a short 'hhh'. (Children will be willing demonstrators if you show them an individual letter).

The OUP-Oxford University Press - Ruth Miskin online site gives excellent support to aid correct pronunciation:

<http://www.oup.com/oxed/primary/rwi/forparents>

The first words the children will read at school are 'cvc' words. These are words with a consonant - vowel - consonant e.g. cat, tap, jam. We also call these 'green word' words because they have letters that make the right sounds (no grotty graphemes!) so they can be easily sounded out by the children.

What is a phoneme, a grapheme, digraph and a trigraph?

A phoneme is a sound made by an individual letter. A grapheme is a written representative of the sound i.e. a letter written down.

When we are teaching children to read, we teach them what a 'digraph' and 'trigraph' is. A digraph refers to sounds that are made by two letters making one sound, e.g. the sound 'ea' in clean. A trigraph refers to sounds that are made by three letters making one sound, e.g. the sound 'air' in 'chair'. We always use the letter names when we are talking about digraphs and trigraphs to the children.

What do I do with sight words?

Your children all bring sight words home in their book bags. Children should not try and sound out, or 'Fred' sight words. They need to learn the whole word; just as they learn to recognise their own name. To help your child learn them you could flash them, play pairs or snap or you could spot how many times you can see 'the' in the story that Mummy or Daddy is reading.

Because of the way in which children learn, until they 'chunk' sounds, or see letters as making a 'whole sound'; it can be difficult for them to use their decoding skills in sight words. A good example of this is where the word 'all' is read in 'ball', 'call' etc. Children need to see 'all' as a whole sound in order to recognise it quickly in a word.

When we look at the sight words with the children we revisit all sight words and mix them up in order to consolidate, so please do not be disheartened if they knew them at home and do not get new sight words. It simply means that we feel that they have not consolidated their new learning and need time to firm up their recognition before progressing further. There is no point in children learning the sight words in order to receive a new set if they forget them after. They need to recognise the words wherever they see them:- in newspapers, on posters, in books etc.

What is a 'Grotty Grapheme'?

We teach them the phrase 'Grotty Graphemes' where a letter makes the 'wrong' sound. For example, 'of' sounds like 'ov' so the 'f' is a 'grotty grapheme'; or 'Charlotte' the 'e' is not making a sound at all, so the 'e' is being a grotty grapheme. Another example would be 'wh' as in white, we do not sound out the 'h'.

Understanding how texts work

To be a successful reader children need to understand how texts work. That:

- Print carries meaning
- How to hold the book correctly
- That the title provide information about content
- Direction of text (that English language is written and read left to right and down the page)
- How to see and use punctuation marks on the page
- Illustrations as another source of information
- Different layouts (speech bubbles etc.)

Developing reading comprehension

To be a successful reader, children need to develop their comprehension skills. We encourage children to read a text more than once, not only to improve their fluency and fluidity but also to improve their understanding of the story and the feelings and motives of the characters. Reading the text a number of times also gives the children a chance to develop their 'story telling' voice or character voices. Adults can help a child's reading comprehension by thinking out loud when talking through their ideas e.g. "I think he is cross because his face is grumpy, he is clenching his hand in a fist and the author has used the word 'shouted', so I am going to use a cross voice for this character."

When do children read at school?

Each week our aim is that each child will read with an adult. The adult may be a member of staff, or may be one of our wonderful army of parent helpers. We aim that each child is heard by a teacher every third week. Children may be heard individually or may read in a group, which is called a 'guided read'. Hearing children read needs to be quality time, and not something that is rushed.

How do you assess reading?

There are 4 key areas we are working towards for the Early Learning Goal:

- Children can read and understand simple sentences.
- They use phonic knowledge to decode regular words and read them aloud accurately.
- They read common irregular words.
- They demonstrate understanding when talking with others about what they have read.

What's the best way to read with my child at home?

Reading at home needs to be a relaxed experience for both you and your child. Do not insist your child reads or 'force' the situation; share when they are happy to. We want them to become passionate about reading; therefore they need to meet reading experiences as relaxed and happy, and something to look forward to. It is better to read two pages and enjoy it, than to read a whole book and end it in tears.....

Use a variety of books and point to words you know they have in their sight words or are able to 'Fred in their Head'.

When will my child learn to read?

Children all learn to read at their own pace. Some learn really quickly, whilst others learn at a slower rate - the key is that they are enjoying learning to read and discovering a love of books. We find we get the best out of the children by following their pace and their passions.

What can I do to help?

Read, Read, Read !

- Read to your child as often as you can
- Reading for pleasure - model the habits of a good reader
- Before reading talk about what the book is about
- Talk about reading and why you like reading
- Share a book together - take turns reading a section or finding a word
- Hear them read or read to them as often as you can and as often as they want to!

Talk about meaning

- What do you like/dislike about a character?
- Talk about a characters feelings, actions or motives.
- What do you think will happen next?
- Is there an unexpected ending or event?
- Is this book similar to anything you have read before?
- How does this story make you feel?

Read anything!

- Read books, comics, magazines, labels, signs, leaflets, poems, magazines, recipes, shopping lists, library books, ipad books, instructions on games etc.

Useful Websites:

[starfall](#)

[ict games](#)

[alphablocks](#) on cbeebies

We do not look in every child's book bag every single day; so if there is something we need to see/know, please hand it to a member of staff rather than putting it in your child's book bag.

If there is anything you would like to discuss further, please do not hesitate in speaking to a member of the Reception Team.