

Reading at Home

A Booklet for Parents



"The more that you read,
the more things you will
know. The more that you
learn, the more places
you'll go."

Dr Seuss

One of the greatest gifts that you can give your child is to read with them from an early age. You don't have to be an expert. There's no magic in supporting children's reading, just patience, time, plus a little skill.

It's important to remember that learning to read is not a race! For some children, learning to read will seem to happen easily and quickly. For others, more time and support will be needed. If you have any questions or concerns about your child's reading, please come in and talk to your child's class teacher.

Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1

Read Write Inc – Our Phonics Scheme

Read Write Inc., developed by Ruth Miskin, provides a structured and systematic approach to teaching literacy. It is designed to create fluent readers, confident speakers and willing writers.

The government strongly recommend the use of synthetic phonics when teaching early literacy skills to children. Synthetic phonics is simply the ability to convert a letter or letter group into sounds that are then blended together into a word.

Here at The Stoke Poges School, we are using the Read Write Inc (RWI) programme to get children off to a flying start with their English. RWI is a method of learning based upon letter sounds and phonics, and we use it to aid children in their reading and writing.

Reading opens the door to learning. A child who reads a lot will become a good reader. A good reader will be able to read more challenging material. A child who can read more challenging material is a child who will learn. The more a child learns, the more he or she will want to find out.

The children are assessed regularly and grouped according to their ability. They will work with a RWI trained teacher or learning support assistant on a daily basis.

Reading

When using RWI to read the children will:

- Learn 44 sounds and the corresponding letter/letter groups using simple prompts.
- Learn to read words using sound blending (Fred talk).
- Show that they comprehend the stories by answering 'Find It' and 'Prove It'.

Blending

Help your child learn to read words by sounding-blending (Fred talk) e.g. c-a-t = cat, sh-o-p = shop. Children learn to read words by blending the letter-sounds that are in the Speed Sounds set.

Help your child to say the pure sounds ('mmm' not 'muh', 'ssss' not 'suh' etc) as quickly as they can and then blend the sounds together to say the whole word.

Further information on how to blend and the Speed Sounds can be found:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EYx1CyDMZSc&safe=active>

Reading in school

As well as taking part in a daily RWI or language and literacy session (for those who have completed the scheme), your child will be heard to read a minimum of twice a week through a guided reading session. This will be once by the teacher and once by the learning support assistant. The member of staff will stamp the Reading Record to show when they have read.

Reading books sent home

Children in Foundation Stage will begin their reading journey by learning the first 44 letter sounds. While they learn how to blend fluently, they will bring home sound sheets, a RWI Sound book and a picture book to share.

Once children can blend fluently and know the first 44 sounds, they will progress to Ditty sheets, followed by Red Ditty books.

Throughout Key Stage 1, the children will then continue on the RWI stages. They will bring home their class RWI book, plus an additional RWI Book Bag Book for them to enjoy.

Set 7, the Grey storybooks, is the final stage of the scheme. At this point the children will also bring home an additional Oxford Reading Tree book to encourage more fluent reading.

Once the RWI journey is complete, the children will continue on the Oxford Reading Tree Scheme, starting at Stage 8.

All children will bring home an additional book for enjoyment either from our class library or school library to share with you.

All books will be changed regularly and monitored by staff. Parents are asked to comment in the children's Reading Record when they hear their child read.

How to use the Read Write Inc Books and Book Bag Books

Please encourage your child to read through the Speed Sounds page first, then the Green and Red words page and then check your child understands the meaning of words on the vocabulary check page, before they start reading the book. Your child will also read this book in school, so should be able to read this book with fluency and expression by the end of the 3 / 5 day cycle. At the back of the book are 'find it/prove it' questions to do with your child.

Key Stage 2 Reading

Reading in school

All children in Key Stage 2 take part in a daily carousel of literacy activities for 30 minutes every morning. These activities include guided reading with the teacher and the opportunity to answer questions on the guided reading book to develop their comprehension skills.

Each class also has a 'Take One' book that the teacher reads to the whole class. These lessons:

- Are built around the teacher reading high quality and challenging texts, which are dissected by the class through high-level questioning and discussion.
- Include a range of activities – not all of which have to have a written outcome – that enable pupils to develop their vocabulary and comprehension skills.
- Do not require you to group pupils by ability. Are accessible to children of all reading abilities.

Reading at home

Once your child can demonstrate fluency and understanding of a variety of texts independently, they will become a 'free reader'. The class teacher will use their professional judgement, based on a variety of evidence, to decide this.

As a free reader, the children will have one book that they can choose from the class, school library, or a book from home. The teacher will monitor their choice, ensuring that they are encouraged to read a range of genres and authors.

The children are expected to read every night and record the date and page on the bookmark that will be placed in their current book.

R.E.A.D

Experts in the field of Primary English teaching have concluded that reading skills are five-fold: The ability to decode (attributing sounds to a group of letters), as well as the skills of retrieval, exploration, analysing and deduction. For simplicity, we are using the acronym R.E.A.D. to refer to the last 4 skills.

At the Stoke Poges School, we have been using the Big Reading R.E.A.D. question stems to monitor and check your child's ability to read and understand the text for the past three years. We have found this strategy to be very successful. Using these question stems, the adult listening to the child can formulate questions. These questions can give you an immediate snapshot of your child's ability to comprehend texts.

We ask that you question your child using the R.E.A.D. question stems **three times a week** as well as listen to them read as much as you can. The questioning will need to be evidenced in their reading log for FS and KS1, and on their bookmarks for KS2. Asking 2-4 questions per session is enough; any more may

become tiresome for you and your child! We ask parents to record the questioning of your child in the following way:

Example:

R E A D
✓ ✓ ● X

The example above shows that the child was questioned on all four reading skills. The child answered the 'retrieval' and 'explore' questions clearly, but needed prompting with an analyse question. Finally, the child did not successfully answer the 'deductive' question.

If you have shown evidence of having questioned your child, it will be recorded on a chart which is kept by the class teacher. Completed class charts will result in the child earning a raffle ticket towards a termly prize draw within the phase.

Parents of children in EYFS and KS1 may refer to the attached sample question stems. For more detailed questioning for KS2 parents, please ask for a copy of the R.E.A.D. questions at reception. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to speak to your child's class teacher.

Sample Question Stems for READ – Foundation and KS1

The READ skill (decoding)

Was your child willing to read the book?

Did your child have difficulty reading a word on the first page, but then read it successfully on a subsequent page?

Did your child attempt to sound out words? Did they use any diagraphs (pairs of letters) when doing this?

Did your child attempt to read new words on their own before looking for help?

Which words did your child need help with in reading?

Did your child tackle new words with confidence?

Did your child go back and read the sentence again if they got stuck on a word?

Did your child realise if their reading didn't make sense and go back and correct themselves?

Did your child read with expression?

When reading non-fiction, was your child able to use the content/index page to find information?

R – Retrieve

Was your child able to describe what was happening in the pictures?

Did your child have difficulty understanding what they were reading?

Was your child able to guess the meaning of a word from its context?

Did your child ask you if there were any words they didn't understand?

Did your child need to have the meanings of any words or phrases explained to them?

E – Explore

Did your child ask any questions whilst reading?

Did your child notice any rhyming words?

Was your child able to notice words or phrases that were being repeated throughout the story?

A – Analyse

Did your child flick back through the pages at any point to check for something in the pictures or writing?

Did your child comment on how the text 'looks' on the page, if it had an unusual layout?

Did your child notice and comment on/ask about any structural elements of the text, e.g. paragraphs, subheadings or verses for poems?

D – Deduce

Was your child able to use the blurb on the back of the book to predict what might happen (even if you had to read this to them)?

Was your child able to predict what might happen next in the story?

Was your child able to suggest possible reasons for a character's actions?

Was your child able to find evidence in the text to support their views?

Did your child relate the story to their own experiences?

Did your child comment appropriately on what they had read?

Question and Answer Section

Is reading just about knowing what words say?

Being able to read the words on a page is important, but so is understanding.

A good reader:

- Understands what they have read.
- Can summarise what they have read.
- Can read aloud with expression.
- Can choose what they'd like to read for themselves.
- Is able to talk about what they like to read.
- Can explain their views on what they have read.

How can I help my child to enjoy reading?

1. Make it a special time:
 - No distractions (e.g. TV).
 - Use humour at difficult moments.
 - Aim to have a 'reading routine', perhaps at the same time every day.
 - A little reading goes a long way! Just 15 minutes a day can make a big difference to your child's reading ability.
2. Plenty of praise and encouragement.
 - Say how much you enjoy listening to them read.
 - Make sure that children know that you are happy as long as they try their best.
 - Try to encourage enjoyment and fluency without concentrating too much on errors.
 - Always end of a 'high' note.
3. Be a reading role-model!
 - Seeing you read will inspire your child to read too!
4. Give your child a wide array of reading material.
 - E.g. magazines, newspapers, comics and fiction/non-fiction books.
 - Put these in cars, bedrooms, family rooms, and even by the TV.
 - Take trips to the library every few weeks to choose new books.
5. It is ok to read the same book several times?
 - If your child enjoys a book, it is great to let them read it again as they will be more likely to remember great words and ideas (as well as spotting things they missed the first time they read it!).

How do I help my child to choose a new book?

1. Go for what they are interested in!
 - Sports? Music? Dinosaurs? Choose books that relate to an interest your child has. Your child won't want to read the book otherwise.
2. Don't just encourage your child to read fiction books.
 - It is important that your child reads other types of writing from 'real life' as well, for example, newspapers, recipes, encyclopedias and adverts. Some children prefer non-fiction books, although they should also be encouraged to read fiction.
3. If your child has to stop a number of times in a sentence to work out what words say, the book may be too difficult for them.
 - However, don't discount the book completely – you can always read it to them!
4. Always go for interest and enjoyment over level.
 - You can always read the book to them if they get stuck!

5. If they genuinely do not enjoy the book, change it.
 - There is no need to labour to the end! Discuss why they didn't enjoy the book.

How do I introduce the book?

1. Start with the title and look at the cover. What might the book be about?
2. Go through words they might find tricky in the book to boost their confidence.
3. At the bottom of each page, encourage your child to predict what will happen next.

What if my child makes a mistake?

1. If what he or she reads still makes sense:
 - Let him or her continue on until there is a sensible break (e.g. end of sentence, paragraph or page).
 - Say something like, "You read that really well and it made sense, but let's look at that word again. You said ***. Check it again."
2. If it made no sense:
 - Stop.
 - Say: "You're doing well, but that doesn't make sense. What sort of clues will help us work out the word?"

What shall I do if my child gets stuck on a word?

- Break down the word into chunks (syllables) – chimp-an-zee.
- Read to the end of the sentence: this way, they will not lose the flow of what they are reading. Then, go back and look at the word again.
- Think about other words which look similar.
- Use illustrations as clues.
- Explain what the word means.
- After a reading session, go back to the tricky word. Can your child remember what the word said?
- In some cases, it may be necessary to tell your child the word so that they don't lose the flow of what they are reading.

Can I read to my child?

1. Yes! Reading aloud to children is important, no matter their age!
 - Listening to a story allows children to concentrate on the 'message' rather than purely what the words 'say'.
2. 'Shadow read' – sometimes you could read quietly alongside your child, so that if they stumble over a word, they can fall back on you.

We seem to spend more time battling over what the words say. Reading has stopped being fun!

1. Check with your child's teacher. They will be able to tell you if the book is little hard for them.
2. It is important that children 'hear' stories being read to them as well.
 - This could be you reading to them, or listening to a story CD. You can then discuss what you have heard.
3. Picture books
 - Picture books aren't just for early readers! These can be useful to discuss how a character is feeling. Look for clues in the picture that tell you how the character is feeling.

When I ask my child about what they have read, they use the illustrations to help them. Should I cover up the illustration?

1. Looking at pictures can help enrich a child's understanding of a book. Rather than cover up the illustrations, use them to discuss what they think will happen next.

What if my friend's child seems to be reading a harder book than mine?

Learning to read is not a competition.

1. For some children, learning to read will happen quickly and easily, but for others, it will take more time. Books on the reading scheme help us to select reading material that is roughly appropriate to our child's reading ability, but the levels are only a guide. 'Racing' through books levels to get to the next can take the enjoyment out of reading. Feel free to read other books outside of the reading scheme at home with your child as well!