



How we teach reading at Redlands – support for parents

The Read Write Inc Phonics programme

Learning to read is the most important thing your child will learn during their time at primary school, as all other learning depends on it. Therefore, as educators, we put as much energy as we possibly can into making sure that every single child learns to read as quickly as possible.

As reading is such a vital skill, we want your child to enjoy and love reading. We want all children to read for themselves and to read for pleasure. 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 Early Years Foundation Stage classes. 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 the children to learn to spell well. We teach the children simple ways of remembering these sounds and letters. Once the children have mastered their letters and sounds, we teach them to blend the sounds to make words. Following on from this, 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. Through this process, the children are at the early stages of reading, which 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 them with their writing.

How will I know how well my child is doing?

We will always let you know how well your child is doing, through communication via the home-school book, or via parents evening, end of term reports or through direct conversation with your child's class teacher. Through careful assessment of your child during phonics lessons, independent reading or through guided reading sessions, we gather much information about how well your child is progressing with their reading. We use the information to decide what reading group they should be in, or whether they should move up a reading level. Your child will work with children who are at the same reading level as him or her. 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 feel he or she needs some extra help to keep up. We also use a reading assessment, so that we can make sure that all our children are at the level that they should be for their age, in comparison to children from across the country. In the summer term, the government require all schools to complete a phonics screening check on all the Year 1 children and the children in Year 2, who did not pass the screening check in Year 1. That gives us extra information about their progress. We will share your child's phonics screening result with you and inform you if there are 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 his or her age. During Year 2, we focus on word reading; however, we also must teach the children how to understand what they are reading, which carries on throughout their time in primary education. This is called inference and deduction. We teach this through a variety of ways, most notably when the teacher reads to the children during a guided reading session, or whilst listening to your child independently read their own story book.



What can I do to help?

You will be invited to a meeting, so that we can explain how we teach reading at Redlands. Please come and support your child. We would very much like you to know how to help at home. Your child will bring home, many different books from school. It helps if you know whether this is a book that your child can read on their own, or whether this is a book that you should read to them. Your child's class teacher will explain to your child which book is which. Please trust your child's teacher to choose the book(s) that will help your child the most. Help your child to sound out the letters in words and then to 'push' the sounds together to make a whole word - blending. 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:

<http://www.ruthmiskintraining.com/teacher-support/61/index.html> Sometimes your child may bring home a picture book that they know well. We ask that you do not negatively comment on the level of the book by saying such things as, 'This is too easy.' Instead, encourage your child to tell you the story out loud; ask them questions about things that happen or what they think about some of the characters in the story. This will help develop their inference and deduction skills. We know parents and carers are very busy, but if you can find time to read to your child as much as possible (we suggest five times per week as a minimum), it helps your child to learn about books and stories, allowing them to quickly become a more fluent and confident reader. Through regularity reading a variety of books, your child will also learn many new words and what they mean, thus rapidly increasing their vocabulary. Children learn best when adult model appropriate behaviours, by showing that you are interested in reading yourself, you are helping your child to understand the importance and value of reading. You can find out about good stories to read to your child here: <https://www.facebook.com/miskin.education>

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

It matters a lot if your child is absent school. The way we teach the children to read is very well organised, so even one missed lesson means that your child will not have learnt something that they need to know in the next lesson. This can have a detrimental impact on their reading.

What if my child finds it difficult to learn how to read?

We want all of the children to learn how to read - however long it takes us to teach them. We will find out very quickly if your child is finding reading difficult. First, we move children to a different 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 these children. Your child will still be in the same group with the other children and won't miss out on any of the class lessons. 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 how to put sounds together to read a word (e.g. c-a-t to make the word 'cat'). During the phonics information parent 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 your child is trying to say. 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. This helps them to understand how to position their lips and tongue when saying different sounds. Some parents find their child's mis-pronunciations cute; however, these need to be corrected to enable quicker phonics progression, which has a direct impact on reading and understanding what is being read.

If you have any questions or queries, please do not hesitate to contact your child's class teacher or myself - we are all here to help. Attached to this letter, you will find a take home booklet for your perusal.

Kind regards,

Miss Hunt

Phonics Lead and Year 1 Teacher