



Phonics and Early Reading at Redhills



Teaching children to read is a key priority for the school because reading is the gateway to all learning. We want every child to leave us with a high standard of reading and a love of literature.

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 Redhills Primary School, we are using the Read Write Inc (RWI) programme to get children off to a flying start.

Read Write Inc Structure

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')
- Read lively stories, featuring words that contain the sounds they have learnt
- Show that they comprehend the stories by answering 'Find It' and 'Prove It' questions

We assess the children regularly. They are grouped across the school according to their phonics knowledge and learn with a RWI-trained teacher or teaching assistant. In this way we can ensure every child has the fundamental early reading skills.

Writing

When using RWI to write the children will:

- Learn to write the letter/letter group which represents each of the 44 sounds
- Learn to write words by identifying and saying each sound in the word, in order ('Fred fingers'), and writing down the letter or letter group that matches each sound they hear
- Learn to spell 'tricky words' (that is, words in which some of the sounds and letters are unusual).

Talking

When using RWI the children will also work collaboratively:

- To answer questions
- To take turns talking and listening to each other
- To give positive praise to each other

Blending

Please help your child learn to read words by sounding out and blending ('Fred talk'). For example, c-a-t = cat, sh-o-p = shop. Also help your child to say the pure sounds (/m/ not

'muh', /s/ not 'suh' etc.) as quickly as they can, and then to blend the sounds together to say the whole word.

Reading Books Sent Home

Children in Reception who are learning letter-sounds and are not yet blending fluently enough to read will bring home sound sheets to practise their sounds, picture books and a library book for you to read and talk about with them.

Once children can blend fluently, they will bring home RWI Ditty sheets or a red Ditty book, or other well-matched books. We want the children to have plenty of practice in reading words that contain letter/letter groups they already know. This helps them to feel successful as a reader from early on. It also helps them to learn that, if they don't know a word, they can use phonics to work it out.

Using Read Write Inc Books at Home

Please encourage your child to read through the speed sounds page first, then the 'green words' and 'red words' page. Then check your child understands the meaning of the words on the vocabulary check page before they start reading the book.

Your child will already have read the book at least three times in school. This means they should be able to read it with fluency and expression by the time they bring it home to practise with you. They should also understand what the book is about. At the back of the book are 'Find it/prove it' questions for you to ask your child.

1st read: focus on **decoding** (sounding out)

2nd read: read with **fluency** (speed and accuracy)

3rd read: show **comprehension** (read with expression and an understanding of what is being read)

Further support

Ongoing assessment of pupils' phonics progress is sufficiently frequent (every half term) and detailed to identify any pupil who is falling behind the programme's pace. If they do fall behind, targeted support is given immediately.

- All children, who require it, benefit from 1:1 tutoring at least three times a week in EYFS, Year 1 and Year 2.
- There is a catch up programme for children in Year 3 and Year 4 following the RWI structure.
- Children in Year 5 and Year 6 can access the Fresh Start programme, which teaches older struggling readers to read accurately and fluently with good comprehension. It is rooted in phonics and uses age-appropriate decodable texts.
- Children in Key Stage Two who are not at the expected standard in reading benefit from extra 1:1 reading/tutoring on a daily basis.

Phonics Screening Check

In the Summer Term of Year 1, the children sit a Phonics Screening Check. The check is done on a 1:1 basis with the child's class teacher. The children have 20 real words and 20 pseudo (nonsense/alien) words to read. The way that the children learn to read in RWI (spotting any special friends, Fred Talk, say the word) means that they are well-prepared.

Any children who do not pass the phonics screening check in Year 1 continue to be monitored closely and are supported with regular one-to-one tutoring, helping to ensure the vast majority of children leave Key Stage One having achieved a phonics screening pass.

Reading for pleasure

Why do we want children to read? What are the benefits of reading for pleasure?

- Children who say they enjoy reading for pleasure are more likely to score well on reading assessments compared to children who said they enjoyed reading less.
- There is some evidence to show that reading for pleasure is a more important determinant of children's educational success than their family's socio-economic status.
- It can have a positive impact on children's emotional well-being and social behaviour.
- It can have a positive impact on text comprehension and grammar.

What works in improving independent reading?

- An important factor in developing reading for pleasure is providing choice: choice and interest are highly related.
- Parents and the home environment are essential to the early teaching of reading and fostering a love of reading; children are more likely to continue to be readers in homes where books and reading are valued.
- Reading for pleasure is strongly influenced by relationships between teachers and children, and children and families.