Reading is at the heart of everything we do!

Prioritise Reading

Reading is a school priority within our school development plan. All school leaders, staff and governors recognise that reading is a skill that gives children access and confidence to the rest of the curriculum and to lifelong learning.

Each of our classrooms has an inviting reading area where pupils can sit comfortably to read a book of their choice. The books are rotated regularly to focus on authors of the half term. These books are also used to inspire writing.

We endeavour to use books and high-quality texts that enrich learning and provide access to a range of genres.

We get children actively involved in reading right from the start and our school council are the ones who developed and created the design for the school library. All children in Key Stage 1 have also completed a book review to promote reading to others within school.

Love of Reading

Staff and children are passionate about reading and teachers read a range of different genres to their class regularly throughout the week to promote a love and enjoyment of stories and books, immersing them in the world of imagination. Each teacher choses a Reader of the Week and this is celebrated in the weekly class achievement assembly.

We regularly have visitors to school who promote the love of reading and also raise aspirations, such as UMan, who came and shared his recent book – 'The Adventures of UMan and the Covid kids – Kids are heroes too.'

Each year, we celebrate World Book Day, which includes the pupils and staff dressing up and children meeting a visiting author with the opportunity to buy a signed book.

Right from the start, we have a strong link with Kirklees libraries, who have already been in to school and shared stories with our youngest children and talked about the role of a library. Lots of parents joined the sessions and then signed their child up for a library card.

Over the academic year, every class will visit the local library as they take part in a story walk. At the library, they will have the opportunity to sign and choose a book. The Nursery children also have a planned session with the lead librarian, where they will receive a Book Start pack.

Programme and Progress

We have developed and continually enhance our own successful synthetic phonics programme based on the DfE 'Letters and Sounds' framework . This is a phoneme-led approach that enables children to make connections between the phonemes they hear and the graphemes that represent them. Alongside this, they are also taught high-frequency words and irregular words. Our approach has resulted in consistent high phonics results each year, where the school performs well above both local and national data. This has been validated by local authority moderation.

But most importantly, the children are confident fluent readers who enjoy a variety of texts and this enables them to fully access and succeed in other curriculum areas.

Books Match Sounds

Through our phonics programme, children are given books that use the sounds that they have been taught in phonics lessons. Children are then able to read with confidence and independence as they practise these books at home. Pupils in Key Stage 1 are also involved in our spelling games lending library, which also supports reading skills. These are fun, interactive games that the children play at home with parents.

Phonics from the Start

Our children learn phonics from day one. In Nursery, there is a focus on listening games and distinguishing between sounds. We understand that these skills are vital for developing children's abilities to listen to, make, explore and talk about sounds throughout every stage of phonics. Please see our school website for the Phonics Progression Map, which shows the different stages taught throughout the school.

Catch Up Quickly

We strongly believe in providing top-quality first teaching within class. If children are identified as needing extra support, then we enable them to catch up quickly through a combination of precision teaching, small group intervention and extra support within class. We also run a successful, lively and fun 'Active Phonics' programme, which has been developed by the school, and tracking clearly shows the accelerated rate of progress and next steps.

Early Reading Experts

All staff are expert readers, modelling reading skills, discussing texts read with the pupils and sharing their own love of reading. Our phonics lead has led whole school training and further training will continue throughout the academic year.

We share our knowledge with parents through year group 'Help your child sessions' to support families with strategies to promote the success and love of reading. Feedback from these sessions has been really positive – "The session was extremely informative and contained lots of useful links to information to help gain a better understanding of the work the children cover. The new school website is brilliant and easy to use. Thank you for going through some of the material that is on the school website which is really useful to know."

School weekly newsletters, pings home and the school website all are there to support families with all aspects of phonics and early reading.