

How we teach reading.

Learning to read is one of the most important things your child will learn at our school. Everything else depends on it, so we put as much energy as we possibly can into making sure that every single child learns to read as quickly as possible.

The most important thing is that reading should be a positive, enjoyable experience for both the adult and child, not a chore. Studies show that reading a variety of literature independently by age 15 is the biggest indicator of future success.

We want your child to love reading - and to want to read for themselves. This is why we work hard to make sure children develop a love of books as well as simply learning to read.

We start by teaching phonics in Reception using 'Unlocking Letters and Sounds'. Children 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 children learn to spell well.

The children also practise reading (and spelling) 'Common Exception words', such as 'once,' 'have,' 'said' and 'where'. This is carried out in a variety of ways including flash cards and song.

Once children can blend sounds together to read words, they practise reading books that match the phonics and the 'tricky words' they know. They start to believe they can read and this does wonders for their confidence.

Teachers regularly read to the children, too, so the children get to know and love all sorts of stories, poetry and information books. This helps to extend children's vocabulary and comprehension, as well as supporting their writing.

Up until the end of Year 1, your child will work with children who are at the same reading level. This is so that the teaching can be focussed on their needs. Some older children will continue to access this guided group reading if needed. We check children's reading skills regularly so we that we can ensure they are in the right group. Children will move to a different group if they are making faster progress or may have one-to-one support if we think they need some extra help. In Key Stage 2 (years 3, 4, 5 and 6,) the children undertake regular whole class guided reading sessions with the staff in their class, have a wide selection of reading materials to choose from and projects linked to reading, with rewards systems for encouragement. Although this can begin in Year 2.

How long will it take to learn to read well?

Every child is different and children will learn to read at different speeds. By the end of Year 2, most children will be able to read aloud books that are at the right level for his or her age. In Year 3 and beyond, we concentrate more on helping children to understand what they are reading, although this work begins very early on.

In the summer term of Year 1, the government asks us to do a phonics check of all the children. We will let you know how your child has done at the end of academic year. Children who do not pass the phonics check in Year 1 retake the assessment during Year 2 to ensure that they have made progress. If your child is a candidate for this, then we will let you know in advance and also feedback the results.

What does AKPS offer to give my child reading incentives?

In school we have a variety of reading schemes to encourage your child to access a range of texts suited to their own personal interests while also extending their reading ability and confidence. We use Collins Big Cat and Ransom Reading Stars Phonics.

We have an extensive library which every child is a member of. Library monitors run the library every lunch time which enables all children to visit, explore and read. They also make recommendations and read with the younger children during this time. Each classroom has a reading area allowing children to have access to books throughout their day at school. Children are encouraged to read at least 3 times a week. Children listen to stories read by adults and children during their school day; this is to encourage reading for pleasure.

Classes read shared texts where reading and writing combine, providing children with a deeper understanding of texts. Books are carefully chosen to meet the needs and interests of the cohort and staff develop teaching plans to enthuse the children. They often link into our wider curriculum, with history, geography and social themes particularly popular with our pupils.

What can parents/carers do to help?

Within the first two weeks of your child starting Reception, you will be invited to a meeting so that we can explain how we teach reading and show you the resources we use. During the meeting, there are lots of suggestions on how you can help your child to read. Your support really does get your child off to a flying start and encourages them to make great progress!

You can help your child to sound out the letters in words and then to 'blend' the sounds together to make a whole word. Try not to refer to the letters by their names. Help your child to focus on the sounds.

Sometimes your child might bring home a book that they already know well. Please don't say, 'This is too easy,' as they may have chosen that because they enjoy it! 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.

Make reading fun! Remember to keep reading to your child. They will come across far more adventurous words than they will in their early reading books and you will be helping them to grow a vast vocabulary, develop a deeper understanding of different stories etc. It will also encourage them to love books and want to read more; if a child sees and hears an adult reading, they are inspired by them!

EYFS and KS1 Phonics

Our primary aim is to teach the children the phonetic skills they require to be able to blend words fluently with the expectation that they will develop as fluent readers as they progress through the school.

We use a programme called Unlocking Letters and Sounds as the basis for our phonics teaching and this synthetic phonics programme is taught systematically throughout Key Stage One.

Every day we teach a 20 minute phonics session.

Phonic knowledge and skills are regularly monitored and assessed to ensure rapid and sustained progress.

Reading

EYFS and KS1 use a variety of reading schemes to allow your child to have access to books which closely match their phonic development. Book banded books are used to ensure a wide coverage of vocabulary matched to their growing reading development.

EYFS and Year 1 & 2 begin by reading books organised into phases following Unlocking letters and sounds guidance. Phase 1 up to Phase 6, moving then to book banded books- Turquoise, Purple, Gold, Gold + and Lime. After this your child will be a free reader, this means they will be able to read books from home, school or library. Most children will be a free reader by the end of Year 2 although every child develops at a different rate.

Monitoring of book banded books is done regularly by the class teacher to ensure rapid and sustained progress.

How we promote reading

All pupils have a reading record so that they can record their reading at home and receive encouragement in school

All pupils are encouraged to read at home four or more times a week

Reading merits are awarded during our Time to Shine Worship.

We have special events through the school year with a focus on reading such as World Book Day

All classes have a dedicated reading area

Regular reading challenges are set by Miss Igoe and Miss Harrold

Promote the Library Services Reading challenges

Useful Websites

The following is a list of websites used at school by staff or children. This list is by no means exhaustive, if you know of anymore then please let us know.

<http://www.primaryresources.co.uk>

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/wordsandpictures/phonics>

<http://teacher.scholastic.com/activitis/adventure/grammar4.htm>

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/ks2bitesize>

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/skillswise/english>

<http://www.crickweb.co.uk>

www.lovereadng4kids.co.uk

www.literacytrust.org.uk

www.signedstories.com

www.booktrust.org.uk