

READING, WRITING, SPELLING AND GRAMMAR AT ARCHBISHOP RUNCIE

Learning to read is an essential life skill and we aim to ensure that all children leave our school as able, confident readers. Children who enjoy reading and read a lot tend to be good writers and so a love of books and reading for pleasure should be encouraged from an early age.



Published reading schemes such as ***Oxford Reading Tree***, ***Rigby Star***, ***Alphablocks (Phonics Bug)***, ***Collins Big Cat*** and ***Red Giant*** are used and supplemented with a wide range of quality children's literature. ***Rapid Readers*** is used in KS2 to boost progress for identified children.

Letters and Sounds (adapted to meet the revised National Curriculum requirements) is used as a basis for teaching phonics in Early Years and Key Stage 1.

EARLY YEARS FOUNDATION STAGE

In Nursery children listen to lots of stories and rhymes being read to them and encounter a range of texts, both traditional and contemporary, across different genres. Children are read to during their day in a range of situations from large and small groups to 1:1 with an adult. They join in with repeated language and phrases from the story and learn to retell stories. This helps children to speak in sentences and develop the language of stories. From these experiences children are taught to develop a love of reading modelled by the enjoyment and enthusiasm of the adults. This in turn supports children's understanding of effective reading behaviours.

Alongside this they begin to recognise key words in their lives such as their names, to name and form letters that are familiar to them and to use a wider vocabulary when speaking. They also begin to be taught phonics, discriminating between sounds and hearing the sounds at the beginning and end of words eg 'b' at the beginning of bag.

In Reception the children begin to learn phonics in small groups learning the letter name, the symbol (grapheme) and the sound it makes (phoneme). They progress rapidly through all twenty-six initial sounds then moving on to consonant digraphs (e.g. ch, sh) and vowel digraphs (e.g. oo, ee, ai, oa) until they know all 42 phonemes. They practise correct letter formation which is essential to fluent writing later on. Some words are not spelled phonetically (common exception words) and must be learned by sight. Children build up a vocabulary of these words through repeated practice; your support at home with this is very beneficial. Throughout the Reception year the children read in small groups learning to apply the words and sounds they have learned through phonics lessons. Through the direct teaching of reading strategies children begin to use their phonic knowledge and comprehension skills to read a range of decodable texts; leading to more complex texts including a range of common exception words. They also listen to, retell and discuss stories, practising writing simple sentences, captions and labels.

KEY STAGE ONE

Phonics teaching continues in Years 1 and 2 ensuring children know all the phonemes and learn to spell words using phonic and spelling rules. They continue to read in small groups (Guided Reading), they read as a whole class (Shared Reading) as well as individually. Reading focusses on comprehension, fluency, intonation and expression as well as pleasure. The children are introduced to written comprehension activities of increasing complexity and learn to extract information from texts. Reading skills are applied across the curriculum, reinforcing teaching of different text types including narrative, non-fiction and poetry. A class novel is read to the children on a daily basis, usually linked to the topic the children are studying. This helps the children become absorbed in a story and experience a richness of language which then supports their writing.

KEY STAGE 2

By the time children are in Year 3 most are proficient readers and the focus of reading is on comprehension and explanation of how texts work. This includes how the words are chosen and how the intended audience influences what and how an author writes. The children explore an increasingly wide range of texts using their knowledge of what they read to continue the comprehension work started in Key Stage 1, reading texts of increasing complexity. They are expected to write persuasively, informatively and with increasing detail using evidence from texts they have read and modelling what an author does to engage readers. They learn correct grammatical terminology for word classes and the difference between spoken and written English. As in Key Stage 1 a class novel is read daily helping the children follow increasingly complex themes and concepts.

We aim for all of our children to read fluently and expressively and to enjoy what reading has to offer them. Please read with your child regularly. Exposure to a wide range of text types helps broaden their horizons and build in them an appetite for more. Reading to and sharing books with your child is every bit as important as reading their school reading book and your help with this is very valuable.