



Curriculum Information Reception 2023-2024

Together we can make a difference.

Supporting your child in developing their reading knowledge and skills.

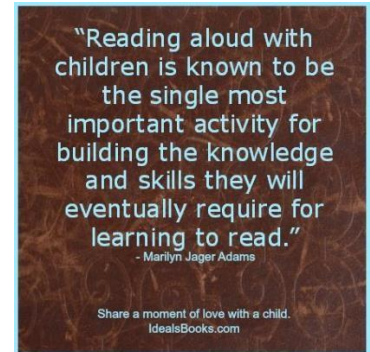
Reading knowledge and skills are taught daily in school and focus on children's comprehension of stories, words read aloud, printed words and pictures. Early reading begins with 'reading' events in pictures. Wordless books often promote more discussion than books with words. This leads to better comprehension and a deeper understanding of the way stories are structured.

Storytelling is also a hugely valuable way of supporting children in becoming involved in stories and developing their enjoyment of stories.

Questions to ask your child when reading:

- **What do you think this book could be about?**
- **Where are they? (point to the characters)**
- **Who are the characters?**
- **What do you think this character (use character name) is saying?**
- **Why do you think that happened?**
- **What do you think might happen next?**

Model thinking by saying why you think something has happened, if your child is not yet ready to answer 'why?' questions.



Phonics

Children begin to learn the alphabetic code in reception. Daily, whole class phonics lessons begin within the first few weeks in September and smaller group lessons and the reception learning environments, support children with learning to say pure sounds. Developing an understanding of written letters, words and simple sentences is a key area of focus. We use Floppy's Phonics to teach phonics through school. Phonics books are used in lessons alongside a multisensory approach to teaching using Floppy's Phonics songs, Floppy's Phonics flashcards and Primrose Hill handwriting rhymes, to support recognition of letters, hearing and saying sounds and writing letters. Once children are secure in their knowledge of the first group of letters during term one, phonics books will be shared between home and school. This supports reading practice at home. Reading challenge is provided in school during phonics lessons, small group teaching and one to one reading with a member of staff.

Before phonics books are provided for use at home, pictures and/or games are provided weekly once phonics lessons have taken place for at least two weeks. This is expected to begin in week 5 of the first half term.

Here is some of the language we use with children during phonics lessons:

- ▶ **Phoneme** – the smallest unit of sound in speech eg s, a, t.
- ▶ **Grapheme** – the smallest unit of written language.
- ▶ **Digraph** – two letters making one sound.
 - ▶ For example sh, ch, th
- ▶ **Trigraph** – three letters making one sound.
 - ▶ For example igh, ear, air
- ▶ **Blending** – stringing together sounds to make words.
 - ▶ h o p -> hop
- ▶ **Segmenting** – breaking words down into individual sounds.
 - ▶ sit – s i t

The Alphabetic Code

The alphabetic code refers to the letter sounds (phonemes) which make up the English language. Children in reception are taught the oral sound and the corresponding written letter(s) for a significant number of sounds. This teaching continues into year one and year two (key stage one) during phonics lessons and spelling pattern work.

Children are taught to blend/synthesise sounds together and segment sounds to work out words. We use the words 'blend' or 'blend the sounds together' and 'sound out' (segment) the sounds.

Please visit your child's reception class page on the school website (Useful Links tab) and select the 'How to pronounce pure sounds' video, to support the correct pronunciation of sounds.

Helpful words:

Some words are more challenging to read than others and are more commonly used. Supporting children in learning how to read and develop speedy recognition of these commonly used words, helps them to develop reading confidence and reading fluency.

Helpful words are taught in school daily and help children to have the knowledge they need to read the carefully chosen phonics books they are reading in school. Reading practice at home is linked to games and phonics books.

Word cards are no longer provided as this method of supporting reading knowledge is no longer recommended.

By the end of reception:

The national early years framework identifies the expected level of knowledge and understanding for children at the end of reception. Reading is divided into Comprehension and Word Reading.

- Demonstrate understanding of what has been read to them by retelling stories and narratives using their own words and recently introduced vocabulary.
- Anticipate – where appropriate – key events in stories.
- Use and understand recently introduced vocabulary during discussions about stories, non-fiction, rhymes and poems and during role-play.
- Say a sound for each letter in the alphabet and at least 10 digraphs (two letters which make one sound EG. sh).
- Read words consistent with their phonic knowledge by sound-blending.
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In key stage one (Year 1 and Year 2) and beyond, a reader is deemed to be fluent when they can read 90 words per minute (of an age appropriate text)

Top 10 tips for supporting your child to read.

1. Choose a quiet time

Set aside a quiet time with no distractions. Five to fifteen minutes is usually long enough.

2. Make reading enjoyable

Make reading an enjoyable experience. Sit with your child. Try not to pressurise if he or she is reluctant. If your child loses interest, then do something else and come back to reading another time. Taking it in turns to read a page often works well if your child is reluctant to have a go.

3. Maintain the flow

If your child mispronounces a word do not interrupt immediately. Instead allow opportunity for self-correction. It is better to tell a child some unknown words to maintain the flow rather than insisting on trying to build them all up from the sounds of the letters. If your child does try to 'sound out' words, encourage the use of letter sounds rather than 'alphabet names'.

4. Be positive

If your child says something nearly right to start with that is fine. Avoid saying 'No, that's wrong.' 'Let's read it together' will support your child to develop their skills. Pointing to the words as you say them helps to keep your child focused. Boost your child's confidence with praise for even the smallest achievement.

5. Success is the key

If adults are anxious for a child to progress rapidly they can mistakenly give a child a book that is too difficult. This can have the opposite effect. Remember 'Nothing succeeds like success'. Until your child has built up his or her confidence, it is better to keep to books which support fluency. Struggling with a book with many unknown words limits progress. Flow is lost, text cannot be understood and children can easily become reluctant readers.

6. Visit the Library/borrow books

Encourage your child to use the public library regularly and/or borrow books from other children in the family, or friends.

7. Regular practice

Try to read with your child on most school days. 'Little and often' is best.

8. Communicate

Your child has a reading diary from school. Try to communicate regularly with encouraging comments and any questions you may have about your child's reading. Your child will then know that you are interested in their progress and that you value reading and your child's teacher will be able to respond at school. Uploading information about your child's reading onto Tapestry (see Tapestry letter) will also help staff to celebrate and support your child's achievements in school.

9. Talk about the books

There is more to being a good reader than just being able to read the words accurately. Just as important is being able to understand what has been read. Always talk to your child about the book; about the pictures, the characters, how they think the story will end, and their favourite part. You will then be able to see how well they have understood and you will help them to develop good comprehension skills.

10. Variety is important

Remember children need to experience a variety of reading materials eg. picture books, hard backs, comics, magazines, poems, and information books. Visiting the local library and borrowing books from there will give your child an enjoyable experience, choosing their own reading material from a wide variety.

Reading folders

Children will have a reading folder which contains their reading record (red book) and in the first term the books, reading games or pictures which link to learning in class.

Please ensure your child brings their reading folder to school every day so that teachers are able to make notes when this is appropriate, in the reading record books. Staff can also support your child's use of the resources to aid their involvement, enjoyment and understanding of how to use them. We promote re-playing games and tasks and re-reading phonics books again and again, to support understanding and reading words with fluency.

The purpose of the reading record is for you to write down any comments, questions and successes that your child has had when reading at home. Teachers can then respond to any comments and when appropriate, will write in the book with comments about reading progress and current targets your child is working on.

Reading takes place in school daily. Practising regularly at home, as well as in school, can help children to secure their knowledge and skills. Children often enjoy repeating their learning and this is also a recognised method for helping reading skills to become automatic.

Read Aloud at Home

In the Autumn term we send home a 'read aloud at home' book for you to read to your child. We lend this over a weekend and link learning in the class reading areas to the stories. This encourages our ethos of reading for enjoyment with an adult and promoting language development by talking about characters, events in stories and re-telling stories. Your child will be able to borrow at least six books during their year in reception.

The reception reading homework expectation is for children to practise their reading using the resources provided by school, three times a week if possible. Later in the year there are online resources in the Floppy's Phonics extra practice zone. The details of this online resource will be shared with you once key teaching has taken place in school.

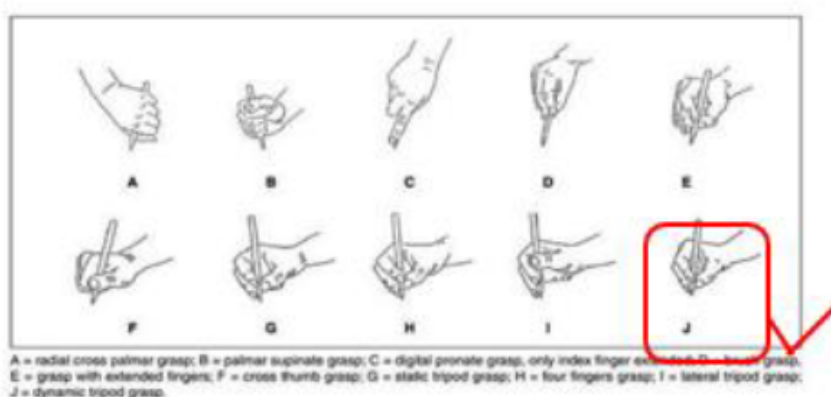
Supporting your child in developing their writing knowledge and skills.

Holding a pencil, pen, or any writing tool.

Children will decide themselves which hand they prefer to write with. They will experiment with both hands and occasionally you may see them swap hands. As children are at different stages of the developmental process, choosing a preferred, dominant hand is all part of this. When your child picks up a pencil, it is important to support them and show them how to hold their pencil correctly.

Below are the developmental stages of grip. Children may go through all stages before getting to the final 'Tripod' grip (picture J) which is where children need to get to, in order to have an effective pencil grip. During their time in reception, children are encouraged every time they pick up a pencil, to hold it correctly. This will support them with forming letters correctly. It is important to demonstrate to your child the correct way to hold a pencil and also to correct your child's grip, should you see this at home. Encouraging your child to grip their pencil between two fingers and their thumb will support them in holding their pencil correctly.

The building blocks to an efficient pencil grasp



Handwriting

We have a handwriting scheme throughout school. Children are taught to form letters correctly from the very beginning. Many letters are made in anti-clockwise, circle movements so that all letters can be formed correctly. Here is a copy of our handwriting style so you can see the shapes and the starting point for each letter. Naturally children do not move their pencil in an anticlockwise direction so practice is needed in school and at home. We support the development of gross motor and fine motor activities to build strength in our hand muscles. We use rhymes to support children in remembering what letters look like and how to form them correctly. The rhymes are available to view on your child's class page in the 'Useful Links' tab.

Aa Bb Cc Dd Ee Ff Gg Hh Ii Jj Kk Ll Mm Nn Oo Pp Qq
Rr Ss Tt Uu Vv Ww Xx Yy Zz|

Gross motor activities.

Gross motor skills are movements which involve using the large muscles of the body. The development of gross motor skills starts as soon as a child is born. As children age, their gross motor abilities continue to develop and improve. Boys usually develop gross motor skills much sooner than girls, with the exception of skills that involve balance and precise movements (i.e., skipping and hopping). Children rely on gross motor skills to engage in physical play. For example, playing a game of tag requires running after friends and reaching out and touching someone (gross motor skills). Children also rely on gross motor skills for everyday activities, such as walking in and out of a room, negotiating space, throwing, catching and climbing. Developing these muscles and skills, supports children's pencil grip and control when writing.

Fine motor activities.

Fine motor skills are achieved when children learn to use their smaller muscles; muscles in the hands, fingers, and wrists. Children use their fine motor skills when writing, holding small items, buttoning clothing, turning pages, eating, cutting with scissors, and using computer keyboards. Mastery of fine motor skills requires precision and coordination. Fine motor skills develop after gross motor skills, which control actions like throwing and kicking balls, as well as walking and jumping. Gross motor skills utilise larger muscle groups and require less precision.

Children develop these skills through lots of practice. Some ways to develop these skills:

- Pop bubbles on bubble wrap with just the index finger and thumb;
- Use an eyedropper to add food colouring/paint to liquid using just the index finger and thumb;
- Using tweezers or pincers;
- Finger painting;
- Puzzles;
- Trace shapes or letters;
- Building with Lego or building blocks.

These activities focus on smaller muscle groups. Using the same muscles can help children develop muscle memory, which is when repetition of one action allows that action to be performed almost automatically, without much effort. For example, pressing the correct buttons on video game controllers can be difficult the first few tries. But after playing the game a few times, we tend to master the buttons on the controller.

Writing words.

When children learn about letters, they do so through their daily phonics lessons. These lessons focus on learning a new phoneme (individual sounds in words) and grapheme (written letter) each day. During these sessions children are given the opportunity to read and write letters in words. When writing words children are encouraged to say the word they want to write out loud, and listen to the sounds in the word they want to write.

First children are encouraged to hear and write the initial, or dominant sounds in the word. These are often the loudest sounds the child can hear. They are then encouraged to hear the final sounds in the words and then any other sounds they can hear in the middle. As children become more confident in writing and

develop this skill more, sounds will become apparent in words they write and children will find writing becomes clearer.

As children begin to write, especially longer words, they will only write the words they can hear.

For example, if they wanted to write the word 'dinosaur' a child may write:

Initial sound – d. Initial and end – dr. More sounds – dinsr. More complex sounds – dienosor.

Giving children as many opportunities to write, both in school and at home will encourage your child to listen to words and how they are made. Including your child in writing cards, shopping lists, and notes to remind yourself to do things, letters etc. will enable them to understand real purposes for writing. Your child could help you in the building of the words and writing them down. Talking out loud as you write will encourage your child to join in with you.

National age related expectations in writing by the end of reception:

- Write recognisable letters, most of which are correctly formed
- Spell words by identifying sounds in them and representing the sounds with a letter or letters
- Write simple phrases and sentences that can be read by others
- Hold a pencil effectively in preparation for fluent writing – using the tripod grip in almost all cases
- Begin to show accuracy and care when drawing

Supporting your child with Maths.

Maths in the early years is split into two areas; Number and Numerical Patterns.

- Number - children learn to count and learn the value of numbers. These skills support them to solve problems, use money and calculate more or less.
- Numerical patterns – children learn to recognise the pattern of the counting system and how to represent patterns within numbers up to 10.

Children learn to use their Maths knowledge to solve problems during every day play and learning challenges.

National age related expectation in number by the end of Reception:

- Have a deep understanding of number to 10, including the composition of each number
- Subitise (recognise quantities without counting) up to 5
- Automatically recall (without reference to rhymes, counting or other aids) number bonds up to 5 (including subtraction facts) and some number bonds to 10, including double facts.
- Verbally count beyond 20, recognising the pattern of the counting system
- Compare quantities up to 10 in different contexts, recognising when one quantity is greater than, less than or the same as the other quantity
- Explore and represent patterns within numbers up to 10, including even and odd, double facts and how quantities can be distributed equally.

Looking at numbers and counting at home.

Counting is a child's first experience of number and maths; it supports children in learning to count and recognise the total amount. Children should practise counting every day using objects or images both at home and in school and learn the value of each number. Children also need to know that numbers can be represented in words (i.e. one, two, three) and in patterns (e.g. dominoes 10.s frames, Numicon). It is crucial that we support children's interest in numbers, representations of numbers and promote their learning in a positive environment.

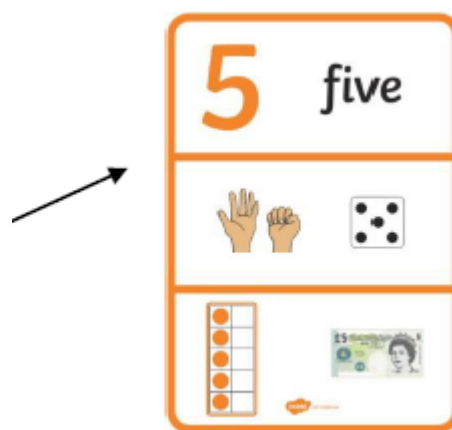
Numbers are everywhere in the environment. Talking about numbers you can see when you are out and about will support children in their number recognition. Spotting numbers in the supermarket, on buses, houses, cars etc. will help children understand how numbers are used in the world around us.

Counting objects at home will also support children's one to one correspondence skills (only counting one object, once). Asking children to count the toys as they put them away, count the shopping as they help put things away, counting the stairs as you are out and about, counting out loud to time how long it takes to walk from one point to another, will all give children the opportunity to count objects and movements out loud.

Playing games such as hide and seek helps children count out loud. Asking them to start on a different number, or to count backwards will add extra challenge to the game.

Baking and cooking at home with your child is another way in which you can support maths. Counting, measuring and weighing ingredients and getting children to take part in mixing and distributing into different containers are maths activities. Sharing mixture into bun cases and looking at numbers in a recipe will support children in their number knowledge and concepts of maths. Shapes can also play a role in cooking, by getting children to identify shapes of containers or utensils (bun or cake tins).

An example of different representations of numbers children will look at in school.



Contributing to your child's profile.

One of the ways of documenting children's learning and progress in the early years is through a journal of captured learning. We have folders for some of the wonderful learning your child may record on paper, writing and maths books and online journals using a package called Tapestry.

Please refer to the information emailed to you in September about Tapestry.

Adults at home are encouraged to contribute to the profile. Children are learning all of the time at home and school. By recording what we notice (notes, photographs, film clips) we can build a collective view of your child's learning and interests. Contributions to the profile support assessment judgements made about the development of your child and so these observations and pictures are highly valued.

When making notes about your child's learning here are some tips for things to include:

- An account of what your child is doing;
- Write the exact words your child says to capture their understanding and language development;
- Photograph of learning, or film clip of their play.

Physical Education

Children will take part in weekly PE lessons where they are required to come to school in their PE kit.

PE days from the first half term onwards are Wednesday for Rec F and Thursday for Rec W. If there are any changes to these days you will receive an email from school.

Visits and Visitors

Each half term we plan memorable learning experiences linked to our key learning themes. Some of these memorable experiences are created by us through enhancements to learning environments, photographs and videos of familiar resources and places in the local area. Also visiting the wide range of learning environments we have around the school site. We work with visitors to school and plan small group visits and class visits to support children's understanding of the world. Information about visits out of school will be provided in advance of any events. We work hard to keep costs to a minimum. For small group visits we may ask for a voluntary contribution of £1-£3. In addition to small group visits we plan for children to visit Leeds City Train Station. We heavily subsidise the cost of this trip; we request a contribution of approximately £3. In the Summer term we visit Hesketh Farm; the cost of this hugely memorable visit is usually approximately £12.

Please be aware that prices may vary and whilst we subsidise trips wherever possible, to keep costs to a minimum, we do rely on payments in order for visits to go ahead. We always provide lots of notice of dates for visits which incur a larger cost, in order to help families to budget for this.

Summary:

- Fresh fruit is provided daily for children to have a snack. If you wish to provide a particular type of fruit for your child, please ensure your child knows to collect this from their book bag.

- Milk can be ordered for your child to drink in school; the admin team in the school office will email a form for you to confirm your request and to make a payment for children over the age of 5 years.

- Your child must bring a water bottle to school with them every day. Please ensure it is clearly labelled and only contains plain water, unless there is a medical reason for an alternative; please speak to your child's teacher if this applies.

If your child does not have a water bottle, there are cups and water at school for children to help themselves to. Juice is not permitted; staff in school can support your child in getting used to drinking water by encouraging them. Please just let your child's teacher know if they don't usually drink water so additional support can be provided.

- Please always return home/school reading challenges every day and support your child with their reading practice three times a week.

- Children come to school in their PE kit on their PE day.

- A knowledge organiser is shared on the reception class pages each half term, to provide information about some of your child's learning in school. This includes new vocabulary and information about stories you may wish to read with your child at home. A home learning challenge will be provided during the half term, linked to the learning themes. Please ask if you would like to discuss the home learning challenge.

- The weekly school newsletter contains lots of information about events in school. Please refer to this each week, in order to keep up to date with what is taking place in school and events which are taking place soon.

If you have any questions, or wish to clarify anything, please do speak to a member of the reception team before school, at the end of the school day, by telephoning the school office and requesting a call back, or by email to request a time to have a chat.

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