**A parents guide to… Early Reading Skills**

Children are encouraged to handle books correctly and practise turning pages independently from an early age. Picture books are used to encourage children to talk about / discuss stories with an adult, increase their vocabulary and to take them on a range of magical adventures to spark imagination. Fostering a love of books, words and stories is essential, providing children with a positive start to their journey towards becoming readers and learners.

We begin our reading journey at Maes yr Haul using our main scheme to teach reading skills which is ‘Read Write Inclusion’ (RWI). Children are taught letter sounds and simple digraphs (two letters making one sound *e.g. sh, th, ch*) to decode words (starting with ‘Consonant Vowel Consonant’ (CVC) words such as ‘cat’). To begin, children are taught single letter sounds and a technique called oral blending (*teacher says m-a-t and child is able to hear and say the word ‘mat’*). Once a child knows all single letter sounds, and is able to orally blend and read CVC words independently, he/she is ready to read books with words.

**Progression of reading strategies**

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| **Strategy** | **Expected Age Range\*** | **Description of Activity** |
| **Phonics** | **Nursery - Year 3 and older where required.** | **Regular sessions using ‘Read, Write, Inc’ with teachers and support staff. We aim for pupils to ‘complete’ the programme during Years 2 & 3.** |
| Individual Reading | All Ages | Reception– Yr1: Individual reading to a member of staffYears 2 – 6: Regular independent reading opportunities. |
| Guided Group Reading (GGR) | Year 1 – Year 6(Introduced when pupils are ready) | Reading in small groups, silently and aloud, discussing reading and meaning with the teacher. Other groups carry out independent follow-up activities. |
| Shared Reading | All Ages | Reading from texts on displays, whiteboard, big-books, text books, group books etc with follow-up activities to practice specific reading skills. |
| *\* Ages are a general guide – approaches are always tailored to the individual needs of pupils, particularly those who are more able or with additional learning needs.* |

RWI is a phonics programme through which children learn to read accurately and fluently, with good comprehension. Reading skills are taught through developing phonic knowledge and decoding skills. Throughout the programme children are taught 150+ graphemes that represent 44 speech sounds. Each sound has its own picture and rhyme to help all children to grasp the letter sound correspondances quickly. RWI strategies consist of phonics activities, flash cards, reading books (accuracy, fluency and comprehension) Lively phonic books are closely matched to children’s increasing knowldege of phonics and tricky words so that early on they experience plenty of success. Repeated readings of the books support their increasingly fluent decoding.

Their website, [**www.oup.com/oxed/primary/rwi**](http://www.oup.com/oxed/primary/rwi/)  has lots of information to help parents support their children with the programme.

**The three aims of RWI**

**Sending books home**

The first reading books your child will bring home will be picture books to share with an adult. Your child will have a reading diary to communicate reading progress made at home and in school. The reading diary should be used to write comments and a signature is needed to let the teacher know your child has read / shared / discussed the book. Re-reading a book is an important part of developing your child’s fluency and comprehension. The second / third read develops confidence and allows your child to enjoy reading the story with fluency.

We use books from a range of schemes and these promote using different skills for example, books with words which are decodable and those which rely on sight vocabulary. These schemes have been banded to collate different books of similar reading level. Pupils will be able to select a reading book from their band which could be from any of the schemes. In doing so we aim to foster independence and reading for pleasure. Further information on book banding will be available on our school website. Your child will generally read with an adult in school at least once a week. When reading with an adult, pupils are regularly assessed. Teachers will move pupils onto the next band when they are ready.

As children progress and become more accomplished with their basic reading skills, we use a strategy called VIPERS (**V**ocabulary, **I**nference, **P**rediction, **E**xplain, **R**etrieve, **S**ummarise / **S**equence) to enhance and develop pupils’ ability to become comprehensive readers. These are strategies that we also encourage the children to use at home.

Once the teacher decides that your child is ready, they will move from reading individually to reading as part of a GGR group. Usually, we would aim to introduce this at some point during Year 2 although some older pupils will need to have further individual support with their individual reading. Regardless of whether pupils are reading individually or in GGR groups, they will continue to take other reading books home, initially from our book banded schemes and progressing to free-reading (‘real books’) in upper juniors.

***Please ensure your child’s reading books and diaries are looked after. Avoid putting them in the same bag as a water bottle.***

**Accuracy – Children learn to:**

* Read new sounds
* Review previously taught sounds
* Sound out the names of characters and unfamiliar words
* Understand the meanings of new words
* Read the story (first read)

**Fluency – Children learn to:**

* Read the words in the story speedily
* Track the story (jumping in when the teacher hesitates)
* Read the story with increased speed (second read)

**Comprehension – children learn to:**

* Predict the outcome after listening to a story introduction
* Discuss and compare key moments in the story
* Read the story with a story tellers voice (third read)
* Answer questions about the story

These strategies gradually become more challenging as pupils’ confidence and skills improve.

**Ask your child about me, F-r-e-d!**

**RWI glossary**

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| **Speed sounds** | There are three sets of progressive speed sounds that children will be taught across the phonics programme. The children will learn how to read these sounds speedily.  |
| **Fred Talking** | Fred the frog helps children read and spell. He can say the sounds in words, but he can’t say the whole word so children have to help him. E.g. Fred says c-a-t. Children say ‘cat’. Play: Simon says ‘put your hands on your h-ea-d/f-oo-t/kn-ee. |
| **Fred in the head** | Once children can sound out a word we teach them to say the sounds in their heads. We show them how to do this by:* Whispering the sounds and say the whole word.
* Mouth the sound silently and say the whole word.
* Say the whole word straight away.
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| **Special friends** | Special friends are a combination of two / three letters representing one sound e.g. ck, ph, ay, igh. Ensure children always say the sound and not the letter names e.g. ck not c and k. |
| **Green words** | Green words are taught alongside speed sounds. They are always phonetic and can be read using ‘Fred Talk’. |
| **Red words** | Red words (tricky words) are common words that cannot be ‘Fred Talked’ e.g. ‘said’ (phonetically sounds like s-e-d); ‘was’ (phonetically sounds like w-o-z).  |
| **Alien / nonsense words** | Alien words are made up words used to assess knowledge of sounds e.g. sif, lurp, shof. Alien words are taught to prepare children for reading longer real words that include some syllables that, on their own, have no meaning e.g. fan-tas-tic, e-nor-mous. |