

Friday 7th January 2022

Reading Books

Dear Parents/Carers,

We'd like to take this opportunity to remind you about changes to the reading books your child will have brought home this week.

Why will there be a change to my child's reading books?

Following extensive research and with our children's best interest in mind, we are shifting the way in which we are allowing children to access reading books. We will be moving away from using a reading scheme, where children currently select books from a colour banded system and allowing children to self-select age-appropriate texts to share at home as well as decodable texts that are closely matched to their phonics learning. Our staff have carefully reorganised the books and selected a wider variety of new, age-appropriate texts for your children to access. These age-appropriate texts include fiction, non-fiction and poetry titles from a range of popular children's authors and from a variety of cultures.

As a school, we are very passionate about encouraging our children to develop a real deep-rooted love of reading and we strongly believe that by broadening the range of age-appropriate text types we are exposing children to, we will achieve this. Making sure that all children become engaged with reading from a young age is one of the most important ways to make a positive difference to their life chances. For this to happen, children need to learn to read as fluently as possible and be motivated to read.

What reading books will my child be bringing home?

All children who are still accessing our phonics program, Read Write Inc (RWI), will bring home a **decodable RWI book** and a **reading for pleasure book**. If your child is longer accessing our RWI program, they will bring home a **reading for pleasure book**.

What is a decodable book?

A decodable book is one which your child should be able to decode (read the words) independently. It is perfectly matched to your child's phonics knowledge and the sounds they have been taught in their phonics lessons. In school, class teachers and support staff will read this book with your child and we ask that you **read this with your child at home** also. You may notice that your child can read this book confidently and with ease and this should absolutely be the case. These books are helpful tools in assisting your child to build up their confidence when reading and their fluency (the speed at which they read). Reading decodable books are vital in your child's early reading development as they help to speed up the time your child needs to gain sufficient accuracy to read a wide range of children's literature.

Why are decodable books so important?

Understanding that the letters on the page represent the sounds in spoken words underpins successful word reading. Children's knowledge of the English alphabetic code – how letters or groups of letters represent the sounds of the language – supports their reading and spelling. Decodable books are closely matched to the sounds your child is learning in their phonics lessons and will only contain the sounds that they have already learnt, therefore, children should be able to read all words within the book easily. Whilst you child may find these books easy to read, they are vital in supporting early reading development, alongside improving their spelling, as they witness a wealth of words that include the sounds they know.

What is a reading for pleasure book?

A reading for pleasure book is one which is age-appropriate for your child. These books expose your child to a wide variety of text types (fiction, non-fiction and poetry) and their purpose is to help your child develop a great love of reading. Your child may not be able to decode all the words in these books independently, so we recommend that you **share this book with your child**, supporting them to sound out unfamiliar words, discuss new vocabulary and talk about the events in the text. Reading these books together will help to develop your child's comprehension skills and vocabulary as they are met with words and phrases they would rarely hear or use in everyday speech. As a school, we are working hard to expand our reading for pleasure titles available for the children to self-select and are excited to share these with the children in the new year.

How will the reading for pleasure books be organised?

Each year group will self-select books from a range of carefully organised age-appropriate books. Our staff have worked incredibly hard to ensure the books each year group will select from offer a wide range of popular authors, genres and text types. We have ensured the books children have access to across the school are progressive and encourage our children to make outstanding progress in reading.

To ensure the children understand which books they can select from and to ensure our books remain organised, they will have the following colours on:

Foundation – books with a **yellow label**.

Year 1 – books with a **pink label**.

Year 2 – books with a **green label**.

Years 3 and 4 – books with a **blue label**.

Years 5 and 6 – books with a **purple label**.

Why is reading so important?

Children who are good at reading do more of it: they learn more, about all sorts of things, and their expanded vocabulary, gained from their reading, increases their ease of access to all areas of the curriculum. Conversely, children who struggle to read struggle in all subjects and the wonders of a knowledge-rich curriculum passes them by unread. This is why the national curriculum says: *It is essential that, by the end of their primary education, all pupils are able to read fluently, and with confidence, in any subject in their forthcoming secondary education.*

How can I support my child reading at home?

As a parent, you play a significant role in your child's early reading development. Parents who engage their children in books prepare them to become committed and enthusiastic readers. You can transform your child's attitudes towards reading. Your child will learn to focus and share the enjoyment for the story, they learn how stories start and finish, and how a plot unravels and is solved; they learn that books can transport them elsewhere. Without this, children cannot experience 'the exquisite joys of immersion in the reading life'.

As well as reading daily in class with their teacher, we expect your child to read at home too. Your role as a parent in the teaching of reading remains paramount to your child's progress and we ask that you:

- Read with your child **every day**, even if it's just one page or paragraph, etc.
- Try to aim for at least 10 minutes.
- Question your child about what they've read.
- Give details, in their reading journal, of what they have read (no matter what they've read – it could be a book, a magazine, a leaflet from a trip out or road signs etc).
- Return your child's reading diary to school **every day**.

When sharing a book with your child:

- Make reading aloud feel like a treat. Make it a special quiet time and cuddle up so you can both see the book.
- Show curiosity about what you're going to read.
- Read through the whole story the first time without stopping too much. Let the story weave its own magic.
- Read with enjoyment. If you're not enjoying it, your child won't.
- Read favourite stories over and over again.
- Let your child pause, think about and comment on the pictures.
- If you think your child did not understand something, try to explain.
- Talk about the story and the pictures.
- Link the stories to your own family experiences.
- Link stories to others that your child knows.
- Encourage your child to join in with the bits they know.



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In the forthcoming weeks, we will be holding several reading meetings to explain this further to you and to demonstrate how you can best support your child with their reading.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your continued support in reading regularly with your child at home. It is such an essential part of their development as a reader and you play a crucial role in nurturing their love of reading.

Kind regards,

Miss Wilson
Reading Lead

