

Our Reading Strategy 2023-2024

Information for families



Reading is a skill that unlocks opportunities and adventures for children. With it there is a level playing field for them in education, but where they are not able to read in line with their age, children are at a disadvantage for all areas of learning. At Wembdon, reading is placed at the heart of the curriculum, and we strive to ensure that all children can read in order to access their education and to develop a love of reading.

The following information will give you the answers to some questions you may have, but please ask your child's class teacher if you'd like to know more about supporting your child to be a reader.

When will my child be taught phonics?

The teaching of phonics is a focus on learning the code of reading to allow children to work out what new words say using the code/sounds they have learnt. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UCI2mu7URBc>

EYFS and Year 1 children are taught phonics in a daily 30-minute lesson as a whole class, we use the Bug Club phonics scheme. More information about the scheme can be found on the school website. There are clear expectations for what is taught each lesson, week and term and children are assessed in week 3 of each term and week 6 of each term. This assessment information is used to continually inform the planned teaching and learning and interventions for some children. Year 1 children in England have a phonics screening assessment in June each year, the outcomes of these are shared with families at the end of the year. Where children do not meet the expected attainment in this assessment, they continue to receive phonics teaching in Year 2.

Some children in Year 2, usually around one third of the year group, have daily 30-minute phonics lessons. For some children this is to consolidate what was learnt in Year 1 before moving onto the Year 2 reading curriculum from January. Other Year 2 children continue to have daily phonics teaching all year and those who did not pass the Year 1 phonics screening, are assessed in June. The outcomes of these assessments are shared with families. Where children do

not meet the expected attainment in this assessment, they continue to receive phonics teaching in small groups in Year 3.

Some children continue to receive phonics teaching whilst in Years 3, 4,5 and 6. These children are likely to be identified as having a special educational need or a disability (SEND) or may have English as an additional language (EAL).

When the class teacher completes phonics assessments, they will update the phonics sound mat that children bring home, this will be done in week 4 of each term and week one of a new term. If highlighted green, children know these sounds. Any sounds not highlighted are the sounds children would benefit from practicing at home as often as possible.

What books will my child bring home to read?

Children in EYFS and Years 1 2 and 3 will bring home books that are matched to their phonic knowledge and understanding. They will also have up to 5 books allocated on their online Bug Club platform. These books are selected by adults in school. The aim of these home reading books is for the children to consolidate the phonics learning from class therefore children should be able to read these books with 95% success. This means that there should be very few words the children don't yet know, and they should be able to read the book at speed with few mistakes. This is a different approach to previous years but is important to note that the book is not too easy. Reading research shows that children need to be able to read a book fluently before they can fully comprehend and understand what they have read.

Some children in Years 4,5 and 6 will continue to have books selected for them if they are continuing to access phonics lessons. The aim of these books is the same as written above for EYFS, Years 1,2 and 3.

In addition to the books allocated, children will also bring home a library book. These books are often above the reading ability of your child and therefore should be shared with an adult or older sibling. This is a good opportunity to talk about books, model fluent reading and use of voice to show where punctuation occurs in sentences. If your child brings home a non-fiction or information book, this is an opportunity to look at how the contents and index pages can help them select small sections of the book.

Most children in Years 4,5 and 6 will bring home reading books from our Accelerated Reader collection. These books are allocated following an online assessment of their comprehension skills. More information about Accelerated Reader can be found on our website. The aim of these books is for children to have at least 10 minutes per day of independent reading practice. Ideally, they need to reach a reading speed of 110 words per minute (with few errors) on a text that is appropriate for their age. When they can read at this speed, they will then be able to focus on understanding what they have read. The reading assessment that children complete at the end of Year 6 assumes that children can read at this speed. So, reading at home for Y4,5 and 6 children is essential for their progress.

What is daily independent reading practice?

There is much research to support the fact that children who practice independent reading for 10 minutes each day will make the expected progress in reading and often significantly more. This means all children should read a school allocated book independently, and not be reliant on an adult to help them, with an adult listening and supporting where required.

The school timetable is very pressured but there are opportunities for children to have independent daily reading practice from 8.50-9.00 am each morning. The children must have their home readers books in school with them for this to be effective.

Does my child have other reading lessons in school?

Yes, there are many other ways that we teach children the full range of reading skills.

- In EYFS and Years 123 children have guided reading in groups with a book closely matched to their phonics knowledge and understanding. The focus is on consolidating the phonics teaching and checking understanding of what has been read.
- In Years 456 there are timetabled reading lessons across the term. These will use a text linked to other curriculum areas and will be used to explicitly teach comprehension skills such as retrieval of information, inference of understanding and character development.

- All class teachers read a book to their class at the end of most school days, these are displayed on classroom doors. The aim of this session is to promote a love of reading and share and discuss a text with all children that some may not be able to read independently.
- All writing lessons are based on a book or a text and before the children use the text to inspire their writing, they read it and analyse it in detail. These are often linked to the history, science, or geography topics.
- Most subjects in the curriculum provide opportunities for children to read and learn new facts and information or consolidate knowledge they already have. This is especially true for history and geography where children will use a collection of texts and books to support their learning for each topic.

So, what is the best way to support my child's reading progress at home?

- Practice phonics sounds that are not highlighted on the sound mats that are sent home in week 4 and the first week of a new term. Be sure to use the correct pronunciation. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UCI2mu7URBc>
- Explain the meaning of new vocabulary.
- Read to children using real books to promote a love of reading and develop understanding of new vocabulary.
- Share a book with your child, model fluency and use of punctuation.
- Avoid asking children who are still learning phonics to read independently unless they can demonstrate they can read with 95% fluency and accuracy.
- Encourage older children to read independently for 10 minutes every day.

Where can I find out more information?

- Talk to your child's class teacher.
- <https://wembdonstgeorges.co.uk/phonics-early-reading/>