

Phonics and Early Reading at James Elliman Academy



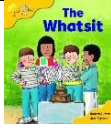






Introduction

At James Elliman, we consider ourselves a Reading School, and our curriculum has been uniquely designed to incorporate a values-led and text-rich foundation as its starting point. We want our pupils to develop a rich wealth of vocabulary and a love for reading from an early age; acquire life-skills, knowledge and an understanding of the world and be the best they can be, both in themselves and to others. Our approach to early reading and the development of phonetic knowledge is based on this ethos. We serve a richly diverse neighbourhood in Slough and the many languages spoken within our community make it a stimulating, inclusive and exciting place to live and learn. Our pupils join us at a wide range of starting points and we offer them all the opportunity to instil a lifelong love for reading.

The Reading Journey

Our children learn to read through a multi- pronged approach. A synthetic and systematic phonics programme is taught, alongside reading skills lessons.

Enjoyment of Traditional Stories and Nurseries Rhymes	Read Write Inc	Reading Scheme Books	Reading Skill Lessons Taught Using Schofield and Sims
			
Books for enjoyment selected from the lending library in each year group			
			
Texts related to topics and themes in subjects			
			
Texts linked to the class author read by the teacher			
			

How Do We Teach Reading?

In the EYFS (Early Years Foundation Stage) and Key Stage 1 (KS1) we have implemented Read, Write, Inc Phonics Programme (RWI). The children are taught to read accurately and fluently, whilst also learning to form each letter, spell correctly and think about the process of sounding words out. They learn over 150 graphemes that represent 44 sounds in speech. These sounds are organised into three sets and simple phrases and pictures help the children to link the letter-sound correspondents. High frequency words which are not phonetically decodable are known as 'tricky' words and taught by sight. Phonics lessons take place daily in small groups of children who have been matched at the same level of competency. The children have a phonics reading book which is matched to the sounds they are learning, in order for them to practise their decoding and reading skills. The children are assessed at regular intervals and these assessments ensure they are within appropriate groups according to their need. All of our early years and KS1 staff are trained in the teaching of phonics.

The five main principles underpinned by RWI are as follows:

Purpose - know the purpose of every activity and share it with the children, so they know and understand the one thing they should be concentrating on at that moment.

Participation - ensure that every child is involved throughout the lesson. Working in partnership is a fundamental part of this scheme.

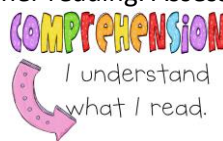
Praise - ensure that children are praised for effort and participation, not necessarily ability.

Pace - teach with speed and rigour and ensure that every minute is dedicated to high quality teaching and learning

Passion - be passionate about teaching phonics so that the children are engaged, motivated and enthusiastic about learning.



In addition to RWI, reading lessons in class, taught through the Schofield and Sims Complete Comprehension scheme, ensure that children learn the first steps needed to fully comprehend texts. The lessons follow the process of reading the text together, discussion and links with other texts, exploring vocabulary, sentence level work, teaching and practising skills of retrieval and inference and further reading. Assessments track the progress of children.



To supplement the RWI and reading schemes, children are also given a reading book for a levelled library system which is assessed to be at the optimum range to develop their reading skills. More than one scheme is utilised and banded together appropriately, providing more choice and range for the children to select their books from.

Topics in subjects such as Geography, History and Science are introduced by the stimulus of a high quality text. These texts are carefully chosen to promote the subject knowledge and increase vocabulary. In Science, we use the Collins Big Cat scheme as a hook to the new unit of scientific knowledge and skills. The unit is then further supplemented with scientific books as part of the display of work. The children have access to the texts for the duration of the unit. This approach emphasises the inclusion of reading for pleasure as well as for information.



Texts linked to specific subjects and topics are recommended to the children at the start of new units, in order to supplement learning, such as 'Who's Driving' by Leo Timmers, linked to the history of transport in Year 1. This also invites independence as children are encouraged to read further through their own motivation and desire to progress.

The importance we place on reading is also evident through our displays, all of the classes named after authors, and a variety of other ways in order to develop further, such as:

- Children are heard reading at least 3 times per week in EYFS and KS1
- Story time sessions including texts by the class author, providing children with the opportunity to listen to high quality texts
- Reading homework expectations of reading daily
- Weekly visits to the lending library
- Children who leave KS1 without a full grasp of phonics may continue to follow the phonetic learning journey beyond Year 2
- The opportunity to select extra reading for pleasure books from our KS1 and KS2 book vending machines.
- High quality reading corners in classrooms to encourage reading for pleasure
- Parent information on how to help children develop reading skills
- Spelling Shed to support decoding in blending and segmenting sounds

Dream Big
READ!