

Reading

At Richard Cobden Primary School, we are committed to developing pupils as confident, keen and capable readers. We prioritise the explicit teaching of reading skills and, through a well-established culture of reading across the school, fostering a lifelong love and enjoyment of books and reading. Adults and children alike work hard to create an environment where reading is valued and championed. Developing strong reading skills and an enjoyment and interest in reading, is critical to accessing and responding to all areas of the curriculum and because of this, we put as much energy as we can into making sure that every child learns to read as quickly as possible.

The school uses a variety of reading schemes and carefully chosen high quality whole class texts to ensure that our pupils have access to a wealth of quality reading material that motivates them to want to read for a variety of reasons. Pupils also have access to a significant 'library' collection of books (both in class and in the school library) and are encouraged to read each evening at home.

The school plans for the teaching of reading and reading activities using the programme of study from the DfE National Curriculum at KS1 and 2, as follows:

The National Curriculum programmes of study consist of 2 dimensions:

Word Reading

Skilled word reading involves both the speedy working out of the pronunciation of unfamiliar printed words (decoding) and the speedy recognition of familiar printed words. Underpinning both is the understanding that the letters on the page represent the sounds in spoken words. This is why phonics is emphasised in the early teaching of reading to beginners when they start school.

Comprehension (both listening and reading)

Good comprehension draws from linguistic knowledge (in particular of vocabulary and grammar) and on knowledge of the world. Comprehension skills develop through pupils' experience of high-quality discussion with the teacher, as well as from reading and discussing a range of stories, poems and non-fiction.

All pupils will be encouraged to read widely across both fiction and non-fiction to develop their knowledge of themselves and the world they live in, to establish an appreciation and love of reading, and to gain knowledge across the curriculum.

Reading widely and often increases pupils' vocabulary because they encounter words they would rarely hear or use in everyday speech. Reading also feeds pupils' imagination and opens up a treasure house of wonder and joy for curious young minds. 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.

When pupils begin learning to read, we focus on teaching decoding skills, primarily through phonics but also, because no two children learn to read in exactly the same way, through a range of other strategies such as whole word recognition. Starting in Reception and continuing in KS1, pupils take part in daily phonics lessons based on the framework set out in Letter and Sounds. In addition, pupils in Year 1 and Year 2 take part in daily supported reading sessions where each small group of up to 6 pupils is supported by an adult. This provides the children with a daily opportunity to practise their decoding and comprehension skills with real texts, and the close attention of a trained adult helps pupils to engage with reading in a focused and positive way. In the Early Years and KS1, Teachers regularly read to pupils so they get to know and love all sorts of stories, poetry and information books. This helps to extend their vocabulary and comprehension skills, which in turn supports their writing.

We continue to support pupils' word reading and fluency skills as they enter KS 2, but the focus moves towards developing stronger comprehension skills. This is achieved through daily whole-class shared or guided reading lessons and listening to and discussing books and stories. We explicitly teach reading strategies such as activating prior knowledge, predicting, connecting, comparing, inferring, summarising, self-questioning, skimming and scanning and provide pupils with opportunities to practise these independently and when reading in other curriculum areas.

In whole class reading sessions, all pupils are given an opportunity to tackle longer or more challenging texts than they would be able to do alone. These sessions help pupils to develop vocabulary as well as introducing them to unfamiliar ideas and concepts which they are encouraged to explore with the teacher. Our focus on explicitly teaching and using Oracy in the classroom closely supports the development of higher order reading skills and pupils engage regularly in group discussion around characters and story themes. Books are carefully chosen to link to our topics and the wider curriculum where possible, with subject specific knowledge and social themes explored regularly.

At Richard Cobden we place great importance on home reading and all children are provided with a reading folder, a reading record book, an appropriately levelled home reading book and a book of their choice. Each child also has a login to the Bug Club online reading platform and teachers assign books matched to the reading level of each child. We encourage all parents to engage in the daily reading routine with their children and to talk about the stories and books they read.