

William Gilbert C of E Primary School and Nursery

The Read Write Inc. Phonics programme.

Reading and Curriculum Communication Meeting Year 2 parents – Thursday 14th September 2023 at 6pm

Dear Parents,

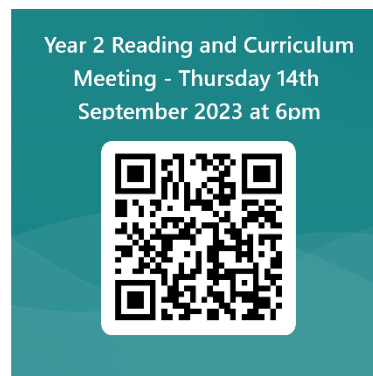
You will already be familiar with the approach to teaching reading that we use at William Gilbert School, your child learnt to read through the teaching of phonics using the Ruth Miskins Read Write Inc. programme.

Learning to read is the most important thing your child will learn at our school. Everything else depends on it, so we put as much energy as we possibly can into making sure that every single child learns to read as quickly as possible.

We would like to welcome you to Year 2 and continue to develop the partnership between home and school. This will begin with a meeting to share a range of information regarding your child's learning in Year 2 and suggestions of how best to get involved and support their learning.

We appreciate this meeting is early into the school term and hope to see as many of you as possible. It is important that you have all the information you need to understand and support the learning in Year 2 and the new expectations of your child as they approach the end of KS1. Please indicate if you can/cannot attend this meeting by following the link below or scanning the QR code which will take you to the online response form.

<https://forms.office.com/e/V2wFfsjNNb>



The rest of the letter gives a summary of the content of the meeting relating to the teaching of reading at our school.

How will my child be taught to read?

Phonics teaching began in the Reception class. In these lessons they learnt how to 'read' the sounds in words and how those sounds can be written down. This is essential for reading, but it also helps children learn to spell well. We teach the children simple ways of remembering these sounds and letters.

The children also practice reading (and spelling) what we call 'tricky words', such as 'once,' 'have,' 'said' and 'where'.

The children practice their reading with books that match the phonics and the 'tricky words' they know. They start thinking that they *can* read and this does wonders for their confidence.

The teachers read to the children, too, so the children get to know all sorts of stories, poetry and information books. They learn many more words this way and it also helps their writing.

At the end of Year 1, your child took part in the statutory Phonic Screening Check assessment. This gave us all an indication of their current decoding strengths and areas for further practice. The children also sat on a 1-1 basis with Mrs Britten and completed a word reading and fluency task. These two assessments have helped us group the children into ability groups for their phonics and reading lessons ready for the start of Year 2. During the Autumn term, or until they have completed the RWI phonics and reading programme (ending once they have read all the RWI Grey Storybooks). The children are assessed every six weeks and if necessary, will move groups so they receive the level of challenge that is 'just right'.

How will I know how well my child is doing?

We will always let you know how well your child is doing.

We use various ways to find out how the children are getting on in reading. We use the information to decide what reading group they should be in. Your child will work with children who are at the same reading level as him or her. Children will move to a different group if they are making faster progress than the others. Your child will have one-to-one support if we think he or she needs some extra help to keep up.

How long will it take to learn to read well?

By the end of Year 2, your child should be able to read aloud books that are at the right level for his or her age. In Year 3 we concentrate more on helping children to understand what they are reading, although this work begins very early on. This happens when the teacher reads to the children and also when the children read their own story book.

How do I know the teaching will be good?

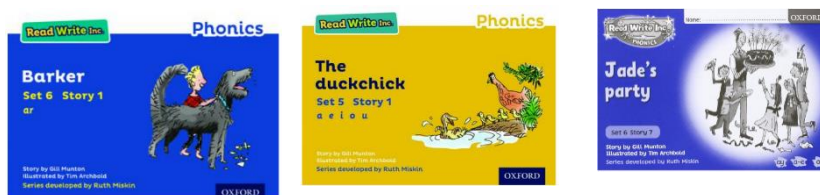
All the staff have been trained to teach reading in the way we do it in this school. We believe that it is very important that all the teachers and teaching assistants work in the same way. Senior teachers watch other teachers teaching to make sure that the children are learning in the way we want them to learn.

What can I do to help? Is there anything that I shouldn't do?

- You have been invited to a meeting so that we can explain how we teach reading. Please come and support your child. We would very much like you to know how to help.
- Your child will bring different sorts of books home from school. It helps if you know whether this is a book that your child can read on their own or whether this is a book that you should read to them. The teacher will have explained which is which. Please trust your child's teacher to choose the book(s) that will help your child the most.

They will bring home 3 different books

A Core Story Book – these may be full colour or black and white versions of the ones they have read in school. Please do not write on the black and white versions and treat them with the same respect as the full colour versions.



- Complete the 3 activities, detailed in the 'Learning to Read Parent Information Booklet' with the 'core storybooks' your child brings home. They will already have read this book at school, so it is typical that they will read this book without too much difficulty. Please do not say: 'This book is too easy!' they have already done the hard work at school and need to share this success with you and practice their 'storyteller voice' as they read it to you again.
- Give them lots of praise and encouragement. Learning to read is a complex and tiring process. We want it to be fun, enjoyable and meaningful.

A 'Bookbag book' – these are books that link to the **Core Storybook** your child brings home but they have not read this book before.



- As they read their 'bookbag book', which they will have NOT read in school help your child to sound out the letters in words and then to 'push' the sounds together to make a whole word. Try not to refer to the letters by their names. Help your child to focus on the sounds. You can hear how to say the sounds correctly at this link: <https://ruthmiskin.com/en/find-out-more/parents/#lg=1&slide=2>

A 'Pick your Own' book – these are picture books or books selected by your child from our school library. These will be changed regularly – as long as you have indicated in your child's home-school reading log, that this book has been shared by an adult with your child.



- They will also have chosen a book from our school library – this book is for you to **read to them** and share with them. We **do not** expect your child to be able to read this. By trying to ask them to read these books to you, you will be unknowingly exposing them to sounds that we have not yet taught them, and this will mean that they will come across words they cannot read and could damage their self-confidence and enjoyment of reading. These books are to be enjoyed together. We know parents and carers are very busy people. But if you can find time to read to your child as much as possible, it helps him or her to learn about books and stories. They also learn new words and what they mean. Show that you are interested in reading yourself, and talk about reading as a family. You can find out about good stories to read to your child here: <https://www.facebook.com/miskin.education>

Once your child has completed the RWI reading scheme they will continue to select books from the library but will also select a book from our range of bookband books. These books have been recategorized according to genre and theme for the children to select freely from.

Why have we removed the ‘bookbands’ used previously?

We have conducted a great deal of research, along with talking to the children about the current bookbands. We continually strive to develop our pupils’ appreciation of ‘reading for pleasure’ and have decided to give them a greater freedom of the choice of books they read at home. Reading for pleasure has been defined by the National Literacy Trust as: “reading that we do of our own free will, anticipating the satisfaction that we will get from the act of reading. (Clark and- Rumbold, National Literacy Trust).

Following a study of recent research on the teaching and development of reading in Primary schools, and in response to many comments from pupils and parents on the pupil questionnaires, we have decided to make some changes to reading practises in Key stage 2 and for those pupils in KS1 who have completed the RWI phonics programme.

We want to maximise pupils progress in learning to read and ensure it promotes good self-esteem. We believe that allowing children to take home books from book band boxes hinders some children’s progress. This is because book bands mix together books from different phonic schemes. If a child takes home a book from a book-band box and comes across an unfamiliar word, they can only guess at it, if it includes sounds that they have not yet been taught. Only when children know the full range of grapheme-phoneme correspondences are they in a position to make an informed attempt to decode unknown words for themselves. In suggesting which books should fall into which coloured book bands, publishers have different criteria relating to decodability, the complexity of syntax, and each book’s structure, vocabulary, and length. The number of these possible permutations makes accurate book banding unachievable. What is ‘turquoise’ for one publisher is not necessarily ‘turquoise’ for another. Publishers have also been known to change their criteria from one year to another, so last year’s ‘purple’ may be this year’s ‘gold’.

Once a child is confident in blending unfamiliar words phonically, has the appropriate word reading pace, and reads with a storytelling voice (all of these skills are taught within the RWI phonics programme and will be achieved once they have completed the grey level), children will be allowed to choose the books they want to read for pleasure at home, rather than being limited, as they did previously, by their book band. Books will be grouped by theme and genre, to support children in finding books they will enjoy, and the library and reading book collections will be available for them to select from. I will write again to you regarding this stage of their reading journey late in the Autumn term/early in the spring term to explain this in more detail.

Does it matter if my child misses a lesson or two?

It matters a lot if your child misses school. The way we teach children to read is very well organised, so even one missed lesson means that your child has not learnt something that they need to know to be a good reader.

What if he or she finds it difficult to learn to read?

We want children to learn to read, however long it takes us to teach them. We will find out very quickly if your child is finding reading difficult. First, we move children to a different group, so that we can make sure that they have learnt what they need to know. If they still struggle, we give them extra time with an adult, on their own. These adults are specially trained to support these children.

Your child will still be in the same group with the other children and won't miss out on any of the class lessons.

If we have any serious worries about your child's reading, we will talk to you about this.

What if my child turns out to be dyslexic?

The way we teach reading is especially helpful for children who might be dyslexic. This is because we use a very well-organised programme that has a strong focus on phonics. This is very important for children who find learning to read difficult. If you are worried about your child, please come and talk to us.

My child has difficulty pronouncing some sounds. Will this stop him learning to read through phonics?

This isn't a problem for learning to read as long as we know what sound the child is trying to say. This is not something to worry about. Many children have a few sounds that they can hear clearly but find it difficult to say, particularly the l-sound, r-sound, w-sound, th-sound, s-sound, sh-sound and j-sound. Often they say a t-sound for the c-sound; "tttssh" for the s-sound; "w" for the r-sound and "r" for the l-sound. You can help your child by encouraging him or her to look at your mouth when you say the sound. Whatever you do, do not make your child feel a failure. They can easily learn to read, even if they find one or two sounds difficult to say.

We look forward to welcoming you to our reading meeting for Year 2 parents on Thursday 14th September 2023 at 6pm, where we will go through all that has been shared in this letter.

Please find attached our 'Learning to Read Parent Booklet' which gives further information and support.

Don't hesitate to contact us if you have any concerns. We are here to help.

Kind Regards

Mrs H Britten

Headteacher