

Burston Community Primary School

Information about how we teach children to read and write

The ability to read and write well is a vital life skill for all children, paving the way for an enjoyable and successful school experience. Children learn and practise many of the skills needed for reading and writing from a very early age and in an enjoyable way. They do this through a wide range of activities and experiences, at home, in settings and in school. They explore and learn through singing and saying rhymes, making and listening to music, talking with others, sharing books with adults and other children, dressing up, experimenting with writing and using puppets, toys and drama to retell and make up stories.

To make a good start in reading and writing, children need to be listened to, and to be able to listen. Talking with adults is as important as interaction with other children. Everyday activities, such as getting dressed, going shopping, playing games and preparing meals, are ideal opportunities for adults to talk to children. Adult talk provides essential 'modelling' skills so that a child can begin to understand that words are put together in a certain way to make a purposeful sentence.

Books are an excellent way to introduce new and unfamiliar vocabulary and sentence structure to children and reading aloud shows how punctuation is used.

How can you help?

You can help your child at home - reading with your child is vital. Research shows that it's the single most important thing you can do to help your child's education.

It's best to read little and often, so try to put aside some time for it every day. Ten good minutes is better than half an hour of struggle! Switch off your TV and mobile phone and give your child your full attention. Use this 'silence' to really listen and identify other sounds around your home. Good listening skills will help your child distinguish the sounds they hear in their phonics sessions at school.

Think of ways to make reading fun - you want your child to learn how pleasurable books can be. If you're both enjoying talking about the content of a particular page, linger over it for as long as you like.

Fun ways to help your child develop good reading habits.

- Snuggle up and read with your child every day. Have a special place to keep your books.
- Let your child act out the story. They might be moving but they are still listening!
- Talk about interesting words and what is happening in the book.
- Show your child how much you love reading and use expression and humour when reading to them.
- Make mistakes in familiar songs and rhymes and get caught!
- point out all the words around you when you go out or when you get food out of the cupboard or fridge.

Phonics

Phonics is method of reading which teaches children very early on that letters of the alphabet make a particular sound (this is called grapheme-phoneme correspondence!). Some common words do not follow this rule and are taught as a whole word. We refer to these as our tricky words. These are words which need to be learned by sight.

All children in Reception, Years 1 and 2 take part in high-quality phonics sessions every day. These are fun sessions involving lots of speaking, listening and games, where the emphasis is on children's active participation. They learn to use their phonic knowledge for reading and writing activities and in their independent play.

At Burston School we follow the DFE Letters and Sounds guidance for teaching phonics which is divided into six phases.

See more about Letters and Sounds here <http://bit.ly/1KBAeMx>

The letters and sounds are taught in a particular order and are linked in with handwriting.

Children in Reception are taught the cursive script from the start and are encouraged to use joins when they are ready to do so.

Reception

Phase One: This phase explores environmental sounds, instrumental sounds, body and voice sounds, rhythm and rhyme, alliteration and oral segmenting and blending.

Phase Two-Phase Four: Children learn single letter sounds for each letter of the alphabet, digraphs and trigraphs and consonant blends.

New tricky words are learnt each week along with the ability to blend sounds to read full words.

The first sounds children learn in school are s,a,t,p,i,n.

Year 1

Phase Five: Children learn alternative spellings and pronunciations for digraphs and trigraphs. Children also learn to add the suffixes -s/es for plurals and -ed/-ing when no spelling change is required.

Year 2

Phase Six: Children continue to develop their knowledge and independent use of alternative spellings for known sounds and learn and apply spelling rules for adding prefixes and suffixes.

If you want to check what the letter sounds are then this is a useful link <http://bit.ly/1JPaSoL>

We encourage shared reading from the very start of Reception, with children encouraged to access and share a wide variety of picture books and puppet sets. This helps to build up story language and vocabulary.

At the beginning of the Reception year most pupils will begin bringing home picture books to share. After the initial phonic (satpin) and blending teaching has taken place pupils will then begin on Pearson's BugClub phonic readers Phase 1, usually after half term. As their recall and fluency of new sounds develop they will work through the reading scheme. Pupils will also be encouraged to practise sounds in their sound books and tricky words on their tricky tags.

Pearson's BugClub phonics books correspond to the letters and sounds programme from Phase 1-5 with a selection of both fiction and non-fiction books.

On completion of Phase 5 pupils then transition to Oxford Reading Tree for stages 6-16 where they have the chance to develop their fluency and enjoyment of reading through a range of fiction, non-fiction, graphic novels, traditional tales and poetry.

While Pearson's and Oxford Reading phases allow pupils to develop their confidence with reading they are not prescriptive. Teaching staff use their judgement to help pupils progress through the stages and may accelerate or provide additional texts for pupils as required.

Pupils are always encouraged to read for pleasure both at school and in their free time at home and we welcome pupils bringing in favourite books from home to share.