

Teaching Reading at Thurgoland School

Reading and Phonics

Learning to read is one of the most important things 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 want your child to love reading and to want to read themselves. This is why we work hard throughout school from Class R to Class 6, to make sure our children develop a love of books as well as simply learning to read.

We start by teaching phonics in Class R using a programme based on 'Letters and Sounds'. Children learn how to 'read' the sounds in words and how these sounds can be written down. This is essential for reading, but it also helps children to learn to spell well. As part of this programme, children also practise reading (and spelling) 'tricky words, such as 'once', 'have' and 'said'.

Once children can blend sounds together to read words, they practise reading books that match the phonics and the 'tricky words' they know. They start to believe they can read and this does wonders for their confidence.

Teachers regularly read to the children so that the children get to know and love all sort of stories, poems and information books. This helps to extend children's vocabulary and comprehension, as well as supporting their writing.

Children read 1:1 with teachers, teaching assistants, trained reading volunteers, and sometimes to reading partners.

In Class R and Class 1, children have guided reading sessions. These are taught in small groups and focus on objectives taken from the National Curriculum.

All classes read high quality shared texts where reading and writing combine, providing children with a deeper understanding of texts.

Reading comprehension is particularly emphasised in classes 2 to 6 where time is spent enabling the pupils to thoroughly understand what they have read, and therefore develop recall, inference and the opportunity to form and justify opinions about what they have read. Books are carefully chosen to meet the needs and interests of the cohort and our staff develop teaching plans to enthuse the children. They often link into our wider curriculum and what we are learning about in science, history and geography.

Which books are available to children in school?

School has recently made a significant investment in a variety of books to encourage your child to access a range of texts suited to their own personal interests while also extending their reading ability and confidence.

The school library is open every lunchtime for children to select books and borrow anything that is of interest to them. We have a lovely team of 'Little Librarians' who spend time with the children, talking about what they may like to read; the children can also choose from a range of books in each classroom

How long will it take to learn to read well?

Every child is different and children will learn to read at different speeds. By the end of Year 2, most children will be able to read aloud books that are the right level for their age. The focus then shifts to helping children understand what they are reading. In the summer term of Year 1, the government asks us to do a phonics check of all the children. We will let you know how your child has done. Children



who do not pass the test in Year 1 retake the assessment in Year 2 to ensure that they have made progress.

What can parents/carers do to help?

Children choose books from a selection chosen by the teacher matched to their current reading level. We ask that the children regularly share these books with a grown up at home. This regular practise is invaluable and enables children to progress more quickly and confidently. Each child has a reading diary where parents, teachers and children can make comments on their reading.

When your children are learning to decode in Class R and Class 1, you can help your child to sound out the letters in words and then to 'blend' the sounds together to make a whole word. Help your child to focus on the sound made by the letters. You can hear how to say the sounds correctly by searching on YouTube for 'Read Write Inc. Phonemes Pronunciation Guide'.

Sometimes, your child may bring home a book they already know well. Please don't say, "This is too easy" as they may have chosen it because they enjoy it! Instead, ask your child to tell you the story out loud, ask questions about what might happen next or what they think about the characters in the story. Class teachers are always on hand to offer advice about listening to your children read and can give you more in depth questions to ask to further their learning.

Make reading fun! Remember to keep reading *to* your child. They will then come across far more adventurous words than in their own first reading books and you will be helping them to grow a vast vocabulary and develop a deeper understanding of different stories. Most of all, it will encourage them to love books and want to read more. If a child sees and hears an adult reading, they are inspired by them!



We love to read at Thurgoland School!

We actively encourage a love of reading and all the children are involved in reading challenges at key points in the year. We hold a book fair each year after school and regularly send home Scholastic School Book Club Catalogues for families to purchase from if they wish. Reading is a daily occurrence and we provide high quality texts, whether in the classroom or library, and encourage children to choose books that interest them. Each year we celebrate World Book Day with fancy dress, literacy activities, art competitions and many other initiatives.

We know how important reading is, and really value the enjoyment reading brings. Learning to read opens doors for children and offers them opportunities to learn more and more. They truly can read to learn! As well as a vital life skill, reading can broaden all our horizons and bring endless pleasure; that is why reading is treated with such high regard by Thurgoland Primary School.

If you have any further queries about how we teach reading, please don't hesitate to get in touch with your child's class teacher.