



Reading and Phonics

Children in Reception and Key Stage 1 follow the synthetic phonic approach, using the 'Letters and Sounds' program. It's an approach to teaching phonics in which individual letters or letter sounds are blended to form groups of letters or sounds, and those groups are then blended to form complete words.

We use a combination of reading schemes. These include Oxford Reading Tree, Floppy's Phonics and Collins Big Cats. These give a variety of fiction and non-fiction books to develop children's reading range. Children learn to read at different rates. Once they finish the reading scheme, we encourage them to become 'free readers' and choose their own books.

Our daily phonics sessions in Reception are fun, involving lots of speaking, listening and games. 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.

Letters and Sounds is divided into six phases, with each phase building on the skills and knowledge of previous learning. There are no big leaps in learning. Children have time to practise and rapidly expand their ability to read and spell words. They are also taught to read and spell 'tricky words' – words with spellings that are unusual or that children have not yet been taught. These include the words 'to', 'was', 'said' and 'the' – you can't really break the sounds down for such words so it's better to just 'recognise' them.

Children throughout the school read daily either independently or to an adult. They also take part in a structured guided reading session with the class teacher which challenges their reading ability further. We encourage parents to read with children at home on a daily basis.