

Phonics and Early Reading

What is Phonics?:

Mrs Beechey – Reading Leader

At Parish we are relentless in our vision to ensure that every child becomes a confident, fluent reader, during their time with us. The systematic, synthetic phonics programme we use is Read Write Inc Phonics (RWI). We are fully committed to this programme as we feel it gives all children the best possible start.

Phonics is a way of teaching children to read quickly and skilfully. Children are taught how to:

- **Recognise the sounds that each individual letter makes.**
- **Identify the sounds that different combinations of letters (Special friends) make – such as 'sh' or 'oo'; and**
- **Blend these sounds together from left to right to make a word.**

Children can then use this knowledge to 'de-code' new words that they hear or see. This is the first important step in learning to read.

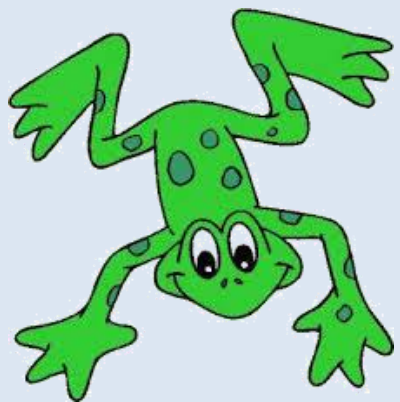


What is Read Write Inc?:

Read Write Inc (RWI) is an inclusive phonics programme which helps all children learn to read fluently and at speed so they can focus on developing their skills in comprehension, vocabulary and spelling. The programme is designed for children aged 4–7 with FreshStart also used across KS2.

RWI was developed by Ruth Miskin and more information on this can be found at

<https://www.ruthmiskin.com/en/>



Read Write Inc.
Phonics

Read Write Inc.
Fresh Start



How is Early Reading taught?

How will Early Reading/Phonics be taught?:

Until children read 90 words per minute, children have a daily phonics session with a trained member of staff using the Read, Write Inc. programme. Children are grouped according to their reading stage supporting guidance from 'Strong Foundations in the First Years of School'. These sessions are inclusive by design with clear systems, routines and structure. All sessions take place from 10.15am to 11am.

Reading

By the end of RWI, children will:

- learn 44 sounds and the corresponding letters/letter groups using simple picture prompts.
- learn to read words using Fred talk and sound blending
- read from a range of storybooks and non-fiction books matched to their phonic knowledge
- develop comprehension skills through stories



Writing

By the end of RWI, children will:

- learn to write and form the letters/letter groups which represent the 44 sounds with the help of fun phrases
- learn to write words by using Fred Talk
- Apply this knowledge through 'Hold a Sentence'
- Learn to build sentences by practising sentences out loud before they write



How are children assessed?

All children are assessed regularly by our Early Reading Leader using an online assessment. This allows children to be grouped with others at the same level and ensure all children are making progress. This allows complete participation in lessons for all children and ensure lessons meet the needs of all children. Spotlight children are also identified.

Handwriting

By the end of RWI, children will:

- Practise correct letter formation as part of their daily speed sounds sessions.
- Use mnemonics to help children visualise the letter before they write it down.
- Apply this and develop understanding using the RWI Handwriting Scheme of work.



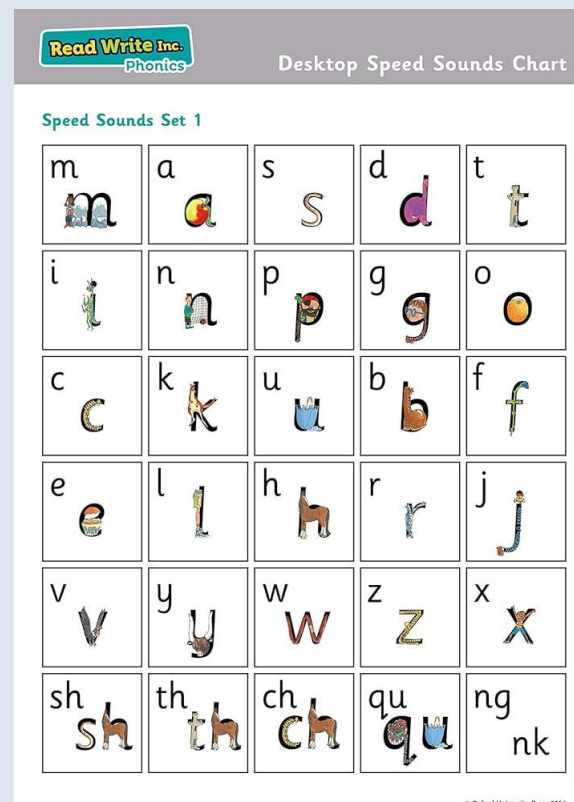
How is Early Reading taught?

Set 1 sounds

Set 1 sounds are the initial letter sounds. They are taught in the following order.

m, a, s, d, t, i, n, p, g, o, c, k, u, b, f, e, l, h, sh, r, j, v, y, w, th, z, ch, qu, x, ng, nk

Children will also use pictures for each sound to help recognise the sound and then form the shape of the sound.



Set 2 and Set 3 sounds:

Set 2 Speed Sounds

There are 12 Set 2 'speed sounds' that are made up of two or three letters, which represent just one sound, e.g. ay as in play, ee as in tree and igh as in high. When children learn their Set 2 sounds, they will learn: the letters that represent a speed sound e.g. ay, a simple picture prompt linked to the 'speed sound' and a short phrase to say e.g. may I play.

Every speed sound has a list of green words linked to it, so your child can 'sound out' and 'sound blend' words containing the new speed sound they have just learnt, for example s-p-r-ay = spray.

Set 3 Speed Sounds

When learning their Set 3 speed sounds, they will be taught that there are more ways in which the same sounds are written, e.g. ee as in tree and ea as in tea.



An example of some Set 2 and 3 sounds.

Word time lessons





Once the children have learned a few initial sounds, they can begin to learn to blend the sounds together to read real words in a Word Time session. Each word time session involves oral blending of the sounds the children have learned and know. The children are then shown the words written down on the green cards. Children have opportunities to practice Fred talking the words until they become able to read them on sight. Ditty lessons following on from this, the children go from reading single words to wholes sentences.



How is Early Reading taught?

Alien Words/Nonsense Words

As children develop their skills, we want them to be able to apply their knowledge of sounds and decoding skills to read any unfamiliar word, whether it is real or nonsense. During lessons, children will have opportunities to practice their decoding skills by sounding out the letters in 'Alien word'. This shows us that children are using their decoding skills and not relying on existing knowledge of real words. This is an important part of the Phonics Screening Test which children complete at the end of Year 1.

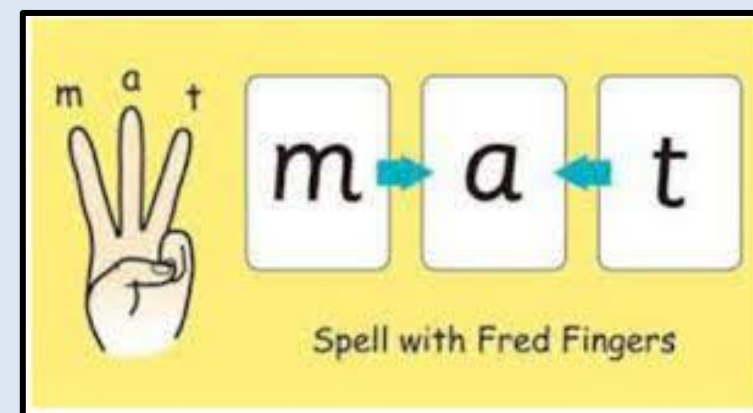
Practice sheet: Real words	Practice sheet: Pseudo words
in	ot 
at	vap 
beg	osk 
sum	ect 

Storybook lessons

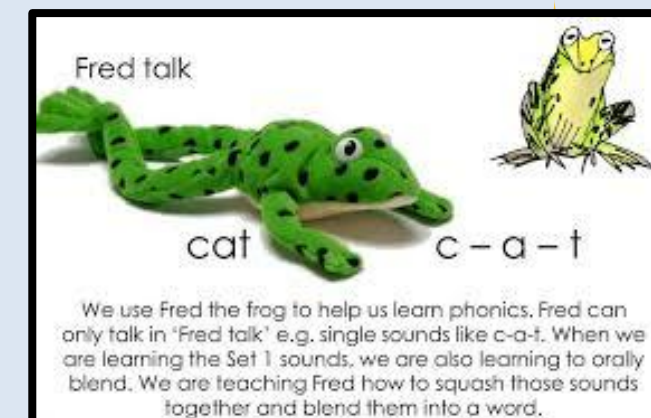
Once children are reading whole sentences, the next stage for them in the Read Write Inc scheme is to read the storybooks. These storybooks are closely matched to their developing phonic knowledge. All storybooks consist of green words, linked to the sounds the children have been learning. Red words (words that are not decodable) and also challenge words which support the children's developing vocabulary. The children practice these words individually and then can apply this knowledge when seeing them in the context of a story.

Spelling with Fred Fingers:

Children are taught to use their fingers to help them write words. Children will say a word out loud and then break it down into its individual sounds using their fingers. So, if a word has three sounds in like dog, d-o-g or ship, sh-i-p the child will hold up three fingers. If the word has four sounds in, the child will hold up four fingers. The children then 'pinch' each finger as they say the sounds they need in the word. This supports them when writing words as they write a letter that represents each sound.



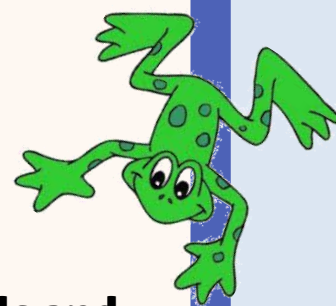
Phonics through the Day



The teaching of sounds is kept to the phonics lessons to ensure consistency of teaching. However, there are two important things to do throughout the day to help teach all children to read sounds and learn to blend quickly:

**Use Fred Talk and play Fred Talk games
Pinny time.**

**Fred Talk + Speedy Sounds = reading
These sessions use the character 'Fred' who speaks in sounds and helps children to read sounds as words.**



Pinny Time:

Pinny time helps children to practise reading the sounds taught so far speedily and to make sure children 'keep up, not catch up'.

**Each teacher/TA should have their own apron or 'pinny' with pockets containing a set of Speed Sounds Cards.
5-minute pinny time sessions are timetabled throughout the day.
Children who need to increase their speed are targeted.
'Speed minute' sessions throughout the day when a bell rings.
How many sounds the group of children can read in one minute?
Pinny time can take place ANY time ANY place!**

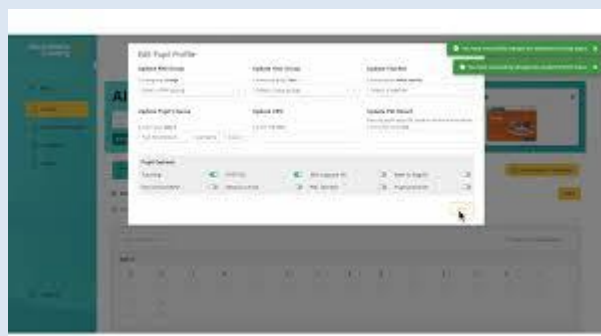
Fred talk and Fred talk games

Speaking like Fred helps children to understand that words are made up of sounds. Teachers and teaching assistants will use 'Fred Talk' throughout the day to help children practise blending sounds together. Fred Talk follows a consistent routine:

- **Say the word in sounds as Fred, e.g. c-a-t. Ask children to repeat. Pause to allow children to 'jump-in' with the whole word.**
- **Say the word in sounds followed by the whole word, e.g. c-a-t, cat. Ask children to repeat.**
- **Use Fred Talk for single-syllable words at the end of sentences throughout the day e.g. it is time for l-u-n-ch...lunch, come and sit on the f-l-oor...floor.**
- **Fred Talk words at the end of the sentence and keep the words short and simple.**

How are children assessed?

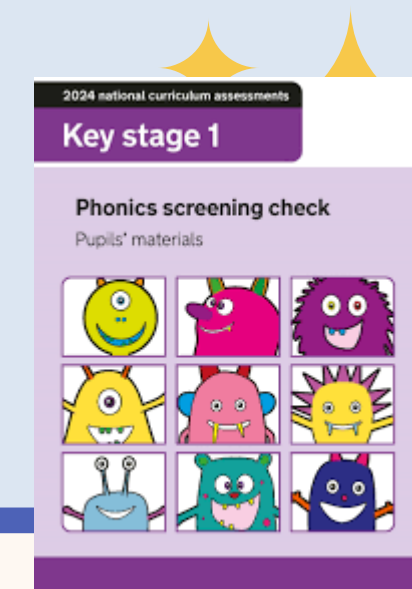
Children are regularly assessed and groups changed accordingly to support their learning and development. If children are not progressing at the expected level, they are targeted through the RWI intervention, so they catch up quickly. This is supported by ongoing teacher assessment and the Weekly Strong Starts Tracker in Reception.



Section 1				Section 2			
Word	Correct	Incorrect	Comment	Word	Correct	Incorrect	Comment
bat				age			
yed				meat			
dop				web			
set				zome			
meck				brand			
shag				thout			
joll				stret			
choit				sprow			
blene				lwa			
chell				fred			
flap				break			
quik				eute			
shop				crust			
yed				toak			
peel				strip			
check				scaps			
play				label			
swep				warsh			
soft				blomom			
yarda				tharful			

Assessment

Phonics Screening Check



In Key Stage 1, children are assessed at the end of Year 1 using a Government Statutory Assessment Tool known as the Phonics Screening Check (This will take place during the week commencing Monday 8th June 2026). This screening check, demonstrates if your child has learnt phonics and can use their skills to decode words to an appropriate standard. If your child does not achieve the pass mark (usually 32+), they will rpeat the Phonics Screen check in Y2.

For more information on the Phonics Screening Check please attend our parent information session in the Spring term or visit https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/68c815665e09a4a59af0beb1/Phonics_screening_check_information_for_parents.pdf

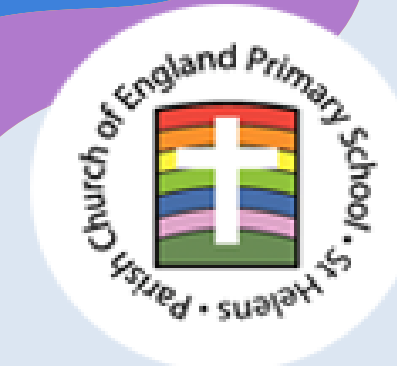
School KS1 Phonics Results

In 2023, 83% of Y1 children passed the Phonics Screening Check in our school which is above the national average.

In 2024, 97% of Y1 children passed the Phonics Screening Check in our school which is above the national average.

In 2025, 93% of Y1 children passed the Phonics Screening Check in our school which is above the national average.

The government target for passing the Phonics Screening Check is 90%.



Keep Up not Catch Up

For pupils who are identified as needing extra support with phonics through their Read Write Inc assessments, we use a variety of additional support such as:

- **Targeted group support**
 - **Fast track tutoring**
 - **Online portal**



Group support

Children are supported in a group of up to 5 in a targeted group. These sessions focus on key sounds or words to support. When children reach yellow, blue or grey groups these sessions are used to build fluency.



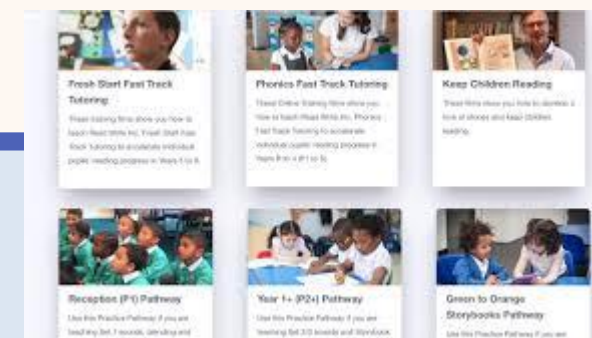
Fast track tutoring

Fast track tutoring sessions are 1 to 1 tutoring sessions that take place daily. This intensive support helps children to build their word reading skill and build confidence in blending sounds together to make words.



Online Portal

To further support children we make use of the Read Write Inc portal to support children by accessing online videos of speed sound sessions. Children are able to access these independently or with support.



Phonics in Key Stage 2

For pupils who require access to phonics teaching in Key Stage 2, we offer tailored support depending upon the stage of their phonics learning.

Year 3 and 4

Pupils in Year 3 and 4 access Read Write Inc lessons alongside their peers in KS1. They are assessed regularly and regrouped to ensure rapid progress. Pupils often access additional support in phonics alongside their group teaching to ensure rapid progress.

Read Write Inc.
Phonics

Fresh Start

RWI Fresh Start is a phonics-based intervention program for 9 to 13-year-olds who are still struggling to read. It aims to accelerate reading progress and improve comprehension for older students who have fallen behind. The program uses age-appropriate materials and includes step-by-step teacher guidance to help students catch up and become more confident readers.



Reading is the Beating Heart of all that we do!

