



Brighstone C.E Aided Primary School

Headteacher – Mrs R. Lennon

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Friday 11th September 2020

How we teach reading – information for Reception parents

Dear parents and carers of Reception children,

We will be holding two Zoom meetings on **Wednesday 16th September at 3.45pm – 4.15pm** and **Tuesday 22nd September at 10am – 10.30am** in which we will explain how your child will learn to read at Brighstone Primary School (**you only need to attend one of these meetings**). Please come and support your child. We would very much like you to know how you can help your child to make progress and enjoy reading.

In the meantime, here is some information for you about how we teach phonics and reading, and how you can help. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to ask.

The Read Write Inc Phonics programme

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 for themselves. This is why we put our efforts into making sure they develop a love of books as well as simply learning to read.

The RWI programme aims to create fluent readers, willing writers and confident speakers. Reading opens the door to learning. A child who reads a lot will become a good reader. A good reader will be able to read more challenging material. A child who reads challenging material is a child who will learn. The more a child learns, the more he or she will want to find out. Using RWI, the children learn to read effortlessly so that they can put all their energy into comprehending what they read. It also allows them to spell effortlessly so that they can put all their energy into composing what they write.

At Brighstone, over the last couple of years, we have been very fortunate to have been awarded (through the Government's 'Teaching and Learning Innovation Fund') a significant amount of time, support and development in the training of teachers and learning support assistants to carry out the programme effectively with small groups of children. These groups are organised according to their specific needs, and the specific sounds and letters are taught in fun and engaging ways.

Five key principles underpin the teaching in all Read Write Inc. sessions:

Participation – As they are in small groups, children participate fully in every session. They are able to maintain high levels of concentration and they do not miss key elements of the teaching.

Praise - Children work together as partners. They take turns to teach and praise each other. They are motivated by praise from their teachers and learning support assistants.

Purpose - Every instructor has been fully trained in Read Write Inc. methods. They know the purpose of each activity, and how it leads into the next.

Passion – Children and instructors are passionate as they enjoy the progress that is made.

Pace - The lively pace keeps every child fully engaged and on task.

How will my child be taught to read?

We start by teaching phonics to the children in Reception class. This means that they learn 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. Ask them to show you what these are.

Your child will be learning single letter sounds for the next few weeks and then will start the next stage in the programme, incorporating the short phonics sessions into longer sessions of reading and writing, in which the children will have the opportunity to apply their phonic knowledge and word reading in books and when writing.

The children will be assessed before being assigned to their own small group for regular sessions using Read Write Inc. methods.

The children will also practise reading (and spelling) what we call 'words with tricky bits in', such as 'once,' 'have,' 'said' and 'where'. These are 'tricky' because they aren't spelt phonetically and therefore can't be sounded out.

The children practise their reading with books that match the phonics and the 'words with tricky bits in' that they know. They start believing 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.

Each session includes a variety of activities delivered with pace and vigour. Children have the opportunity to learn sounds which are reinforced during the session with reading and writing activities – learning is put into practise. We will also continue to share and enjoy a range of other stories that are linked to the books that they will be reading.

How will I know how well my child is doing?

When using RWI to **read** the children will:

- learn 44 sounds and the corresponding letter/letter groups using simple picture prompts (see video on the Ruth Miskin website)
- learn to read words using Fred Talk (sounding out and blending; e.g. m-a-t mat; p-l-ay play)
- read lively stories featuring words they have learned to sound out
- show that they comprehend the stories by answering questions.
- develop their vocabulary



When using RWI to **write** the children will:

- learn to write the letters/letter groups which represent 44 sounds.
- learn to write words by saying the sounds in Fred Talk
- write simple sentences

We will always let you know how well your child is doing. As children progress, they are regularly assessed to ensure they are placed in groups most appropriate for them. If a child is found to be struggling, one-to-one sessions are arranged for him/her to catch up with the group. Read Write Inc can support all children to make progress and it is particularly suited to supporting those children with dyslexic tendencies.

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 in the school too. 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, and have access to regular training sessions from school staff and our Read Write Inc trainer. We believe that it is very important that all the teachers and learning support assistants work in the same way. Senior teachers watch other staff 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?

There are some very useful short videos on the link below that explain how we teach children to read and write, how to pronounce the sounds and helpful tips when reading to your child. <https://ruthmiskin.com/en/find-out-more/parents/>

Every few days your child will bring home a small blue RWI book that has the 'green words' (words that can be sounded out) and 'red words' (words that have tricky bits in) that are from the story. The aim is that your child will become fluent with these words. Please help them to practise reading and spelling these at home. When reading 'green words', help your child to sound out the letters in them 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 by clicking on the above link.

When your child has reached a certain level of reading, they will also bring home a RWI Book Bag book that will be closely matched to their reading ability. *Please* trust your child's teacher to choose the book(s) that will help your child the most. The RWI Book Bag books are closely matched to your child's reading ability to enable them to feel confident and to ensure that they will succeed.

Please don't say, 'This is too easy.' Instead, encourage your child to tell you the story out loud; ask them questions about things that happen or what they think about some of the characters in the story. It is really important that together you chat about what you have read. This all helps to build understanding and enjoyment.

Each week your child will also bring home a library book of their choice to share with you at home. They are not necessarily expected to read this themselves. It is for you to read, enjoy and discuss with your child. Sometimes they may bring home a book they have enjoyed before. This is OK, as repeated readings of stories help to develop vocabulary, understanding and enjoyment. Please see the link below to find out the many benefits of reading to your child: <https://www.facebook.com/miskin.education/videos/why-read-to-your-child/2390960341219248/>

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>

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 suitable 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.

Some children take a bit longer to learn to put sounds together to read a word, e.g. c-a-t to make the word 'cat'. You can support your child with this by including sounding out in everyday life; for example, asking your child to 'get into b-e-d' or to 's-i-t on the chair'. We call this 'Fred Talk'. If you have any questions about this, please come and ask us:

Here are some ideas to help you: <https://www.facebook.com/miskin.education/videos/parent-tutorial-preparing-to-teach-reading-fred-games/893874187391691/>

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 them 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. 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.

If you would like to attend one of the Zoom meetings, please reply via this email or on Tapestry letting us know which meeting you will be attending and we will send you an invite.

Please don't hesitate to contact us if you have any questions. We are here to help.

Many thanks,

Mrs Lennon

Mrs Cousins

Headteacher

RWI Reading Leader