



Reading at Malmesbury Park Primary School



Reading is key to a child's learning and at Malmesbury Park, we know how important it is to work in partnership with parents and carers to help children to develop their confidence in this area. Reading together at home is one of the easiest but most important ways in which you can help your child. As you share books together, you will help to develop your child's reading skills and also show them how enjoyable and important reading is. Thank you for your support - it really makes a difference.

What is our aim?

We value reading as an essential skill for life and we are dedicated to enabling our children to become lifelong readers. Our aim is for our pupils to

- Develop a love of literature across a range of genres, cultures and styles.
- Develop the habit of reading widely and with increasing stamina, for both pleasure and information.
- Read easily, fluently and with good understanding, developing a good working vocabulary.
- Read a wide range of texts and demonstrate their understanding through discussion and written responses.
- Apply their reading skills, enabling them to approach and understand an unfamiliar text confidently.
- Confidently discuss and review the books they read, making recommendations to others.

What reading skills and strategies do we teach at school?

Phonics is the key strategy which we teach in order to enable children to read the words they see. We follow the Letters and Sounds program. By using the phonics skills that they have learned, children will be confident to tackle new words and go on to become fluent readers.

In phonics, children are taught to

- Recognise the sounds that each individual letter makes
- Identify the sounds that different combinations of letters make - such as 'sh' or 'oo'
- Sound out words and blend them together from left to right to make a word (e.g. c-a-t)

As fluency develops, we focus increasingly on the children's understanding of what they have read and their responses to the text. We encourage children to

- find out the meaning of any new vocabulary
- describe or retell what they have read
- answer simple questions about the text
- 'read between the lines' and look for clues to gain a deeper understanding
- consider how texts are organised and how language is used effectively
- think about the writer's viewpoint
- make links between different texts

When do we teach reading at school?

In FS1 the children explore sounds in a practical way and stories, songs and rhymes are shared every day to develop early reading skills.

All children in FS2 and Year 1 are taught phonics in a structured way every day. It is the most effective way of teaching young children how to read words. In Year 2, children continue to work on their phonics, moving on to more complex reading and spelling activities when they are ready. From Year 3 onwards, phonics continues to be taught in small groups to children who are not yet confident.

Children have the opportunity to develop their comprehension skills during the daily Reading Masters lesson, which takes place from Year 1 onwards. Children are introduced to any new vocabulary, texts are read together and discussed as a class and the children show their understanding through carefully selected activities and questions.

All children read regularly with their teacher, sometimes in a group and sometimes individually. Children may also read with a teaching assistant or a parent helper. The frequency of individual and group reading sessions depends on the child's year group and individual need.

Children also have many other opportunities to read and enjoy texts as part of the wider curriculum, for example reading texts which are part of our projects, reading their own or a partner's work in class, carrying out research, preparing for and presenting class assemblies or during visits to our Library Bus. Your child's teacher will take advantage of opportunities to make links between reading sessions and other activities so that the children can practise their skills in context.

What do the children read?

Children will choose their individual reading book from our reading scheme which is colour banded using the nationally recognised Book Band scheme. This book needs to be taken home each day and can be changed when it is finished. This book is your child's 'learn to read' book as it is closely matched to their reading ability.

It is important that children develop comprehension skills alongside their ability to read the words. Class teachers review the Book Band colours regularly and will move a child on when they are confident that both comprehension and word reading targets have been met. You may find that your child can read the words fluently but stays on the same Book Band colour for a while to enable them to focus on their understanding. Please discourage your child from seeing the Book Bands as a race through the colours, but help them to understand that each band has a range of books which will help them in developing different reading skills.

Children also have the opportunity to select a 'love to read' book from our Library Bus. This can be changed each week during their class session. The children have more choice with the selection of this book, so it may need to be read and enjoyed together at home.

When children are reading during a Reading Masters lesson or in a group with their teacher, they will each have a copy of the same text, which will usually link to the class's current project. The level is selected by the teacher according to the reading ability of the class or group.

As well as stories and information books, children also enjoy many other types of texts such as comics, newspapers, magazines, poems, plays, e-books, internet pages, audio stories, recipes, instructions, TV guides, travel brochures, sports reports.... We have opportunities in school for children to read many of these.

How are the Reading Diaries used?

All children will start the year with a Reading Diary which will need to be in school each day and taken home each evening. An adult will write in the diary when your child has read in school and we would ask you to write in the diary when your child has read at home and to sign/initial it. You are welcome to write a comment about what they did really well or anything they found difficult but please don't feel that you need to do this every time.

You will see that the targets linked to your child's Book Band colour have been stuck into the front cover of the Reading Diary and that there are suggested questions inside the back cover. This will help you to see what your child needs to

work on and support you when talking about the books that you read together. The targets will be changed as your children moves up through the Book Band colours.

When do we read to the children?

Books enable children to discover new places, meet new people, learn about different cultures and customs and find out about the past. Reading develops imaginations, encourages critical thinking and helps to develop empathy. Teachers read a story or other text to the whole class at the end of each day and this is a chance for the adults to share their enthusiasm and for the whole class to enjoy reading for pleasure together.

How can you help your child?

We would ask that you try to find time to read with your child every day at home. The session does not need to be too long - 10 minutes is fine. The support you can offer in this will be of great benefit to your child. Children also enjoy sharing books with other adults or older siblings.

Your child should bring their colour banded book home every evening. Please let your child's teacher know if they are regularly forgetting. If your child would like to read something else instead sometimes, that is fine - please write it in their Reading Diary too. As long as they are reading and enjoying it, they are developing skills which they will carry into the future.

If your child is reluctant to read, don't force them or make an issue out of it. Talk to your child's teacher so that you can work together. Read to them as much as possible, try taking turns to read a page each, make up a game eg read each part using a different voice, use a favourite book to develop confidence before moving onto a less familiar one, try different types of texts such as comics or children's newspapers.

If your child reads aloud with confidence and fluency, don't insist on reading aloud all the time but at this stage you can help them to develop their understanding by talking to them about the meaning of any new words and by asking them to tell you about what they have read (try using the questions in the Reading Diary).

You could also....

Let your children see you reading - newspapers, magazines, catalogues, letters, books... - this will help them to understand that reading is an important skill. Encourage children to join you in reading the print which is all around us - labels, cereal packets and signs are all valid reading material!

Join the local library and make use of the facilities it offers. As well as providing a fantastic selection of books, many libraries run events and competitions to encourage a love of reading.

Don't give up on the bedtime story, even if your child is a good reader. The more stories they hear, the more they will want to read!

The more that you
READ

The more things you will
KNOW

The more that you
LEARN

The more places you'll
GO!



Dr Seuss