Read Write Inc
Parent Information Booklet



What is RWI Phonics?



Read Write Inc. is a government backed phonics scheme designed by Ruth Miskin, which through systematic teaching and consistent routines, enables children to achieve high levels of reading success. At Christ the Sower Primary School we believe that reading is the key to all learning and we are fully committed to making sure that every child is a reader by the end of KS1.

Who Teaches RWI Phonics?

We have a dedicated team of Teachers and Teaching Assistants who have all received accredited RWI training and they are referred to as RWI Tutors. They are passionate about achieving success and take part in weekly meetings for coaching and training purposes.
The scheme is overseen by the RWI leader, who monitors RWI sessions and ensures that all teaching is high quality and that children are focused and engaged.

How does RWI ensure success?

Each child is carefully assessed and placed into a RWI group based their phonics sound knowledge and reading skills. This ensures that all children are working at the right level for their ability which is the best way to ensure progress and confidence in their reading skills.
Your child might not be taught phonics by their own class teacher however all information and session notes are passed on from their RWI Tutor to enable further guidance and support in all subsequent lessons.
Groups are assessed every half term (6 weeks) and children are moved accordingly to either accelerate progress or provide further consolidation. Any children who are not making sufficient progress will be given targeted intervention or additional 1:1 support during afternoon sessions. This compilation of rapid acceleration, streamed groupings and targeted support all helps to ensure our children are confident readers by the time they leave Year 2.

How will my child learn to read?



Children are taught the early sounds in Set 1. This covers the alphabet and a few 'special friends' which are two letters which make one sound such as 'sh'. They will learn to spot and recognise them quickly through fun activities and also to write them using 'phrases' to help them remember the correct formation. Tutors teach children 'pure sounds' which can be heard using this link.

Using these simple sounds, children will learn to 'blend' words together so c-a-t becomes cat. To help the children do this, we have a lovely green frog called Fred! He can only talk in sounds so the children put the sounds together to make the word. We call this 'Fred Talk'. This is also used in early reading, as when children see a new word they can use 'Fred Talk' to break down the sounds and then say or read the word. Similarly, this supports early writing skills as children use 'Fred Fingers' to break down a spoken word into its sounds to enable them to write the word. We use the phrase 'Say the word – pinch the sounds' to help children remember.



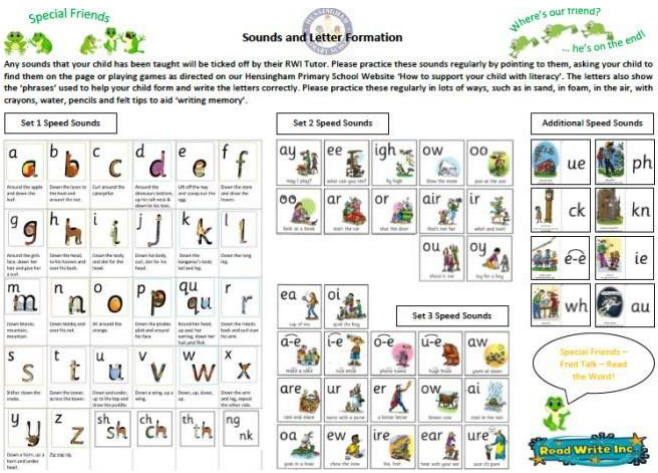
When they are confident with blending and know all of their Set 1 sounds, the children will move onto Set 2 sounds and then Set 3 sounds, which introduce alternative spellings for sounds they know and more special friends. They may begin to use 'Fred in their head' to read more quickly and fluently, which helps to build up speed, however this stage is also tricky for children as they need to be able to spot 'special friends' easily within new words.

Words which can be decoded are called 'Green Words' as they can be deciphered using phonics knowledge. Unfortunately, there are lots of words in the English language that do not follow these rules … they are called 'Red Words' or tricky words and need to be learned by sight. We use the phrase 'If it's red - it's hard to Fred' to remind children.

When faced with an unfamiliar word we use the phrase 'Special friends – Fred talk – Read the word' as this reminds them that it is important to spot the special friends before attempting to read the word. To further consolidate this we also use 'Alien Words' which are made up words that do not make sense. These words test to see if the children can spot any special friends and that they have good sound knowledge, rather than recognising familiar (or sense) words and using memory rather than reading skills. This technique is also used in the National Year 1 Phonics Check, which will be explained in more detail in the Spring Term.







All of the sounds are provided for your child in their Reading Record. Their RWI tutor will tick off the sounds they have learned, so parents can see which sounds their children should know, and be able to support them at home to build confidence. In addition, your child will have a list of the Red and Green Words they need to know for their specific level of book. It is suggested that parents support spelling of these words at home, to ensure speedy progress and word recognition.

By moving through the carefully designed stages (or colours) of books which consolidate the sounds learned at the right time, children will gain speed and confidence in their reading ability. As reading becomes more fluent, children begin to understand the stories they read and can enjoy the books.

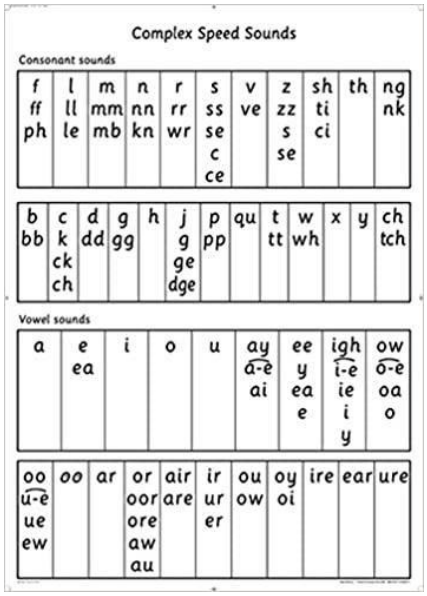


As part of the RWI sessions they will read their group books a total of three times; to support learning new speedy green words and more tricky red words, to investigate vocabulary and to build expression known as their 'storyteller voice'.

They will also complete comprehension activities as part of each book to ensure they know word meanings and can find and retrieve information as well as give opinions about the story or link to other books they know or life experiences.

How does RWI link to writing?

After the 30-minute session with their RWI Tutor, children will return to class for their English lesson with their teacher. They will explore many different writing activities, building up sentence structures and rehearsing ideas before writing. During this, they will



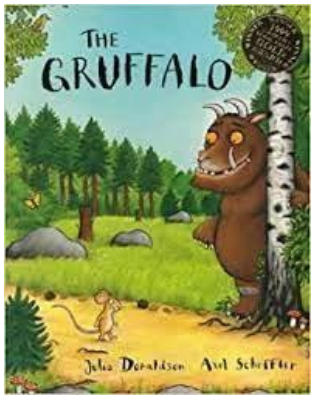
use the Sound charts to help them identify the correct spelling for a sound and will be taught various spelling strategies within their class to support spelling. They will continue to work on letter formation and investigate grammar and punctuation rules appropriate for their year group. This will enable all children to practice and apply their individual phonics learning throughout the lessons and for class teachers to provide further input.

What are the expected time scales?

The scheme provides a strict routine and is very fast paced. Children will learn a new sound per day so full attendance is vital!

(If your child has a holiday for a week – they would miss 5 new sounds and 7.5 hours of focused learning and therefore have knowledge gaps which may prevent them from moving forward.) As all children learn at different paces, some will find reading easy while others find it hard. We aim to support pupils who struggle or fall behind with thorough 1:1 or group interventions and may ask that further work is completed at home to allow them to 'catch up'. It is therefore hoped that all children will finish the phonics scheme by the end of Year 2.

How can I support my child with reading?



Whilst your child is learning their Set 1 sounds, we recommend you only read their 'Reading for Pleasure' library books. This is a book that they are interested in and have chosen to enjoy with
you. They can look at the pictures and spot letters or sounds that they know to build confidence but most importantly they should hear you read the book with expression in order to absorb the rich language and vocabulary within in and learn to love story time.

When your child is learning to blend, they will be given RWI Blending books. To help your child with these, ask them to try to 'Fred Talk' the word and blend it together … when they turn the page they will see if they were right! Encourage them to sound out carefully using



pure sounds and give lots of praise and support for effort and success. You should also continue to read their library book and encourage them to spot any sounds, special friends or words they know to boost rapid identification by sight.

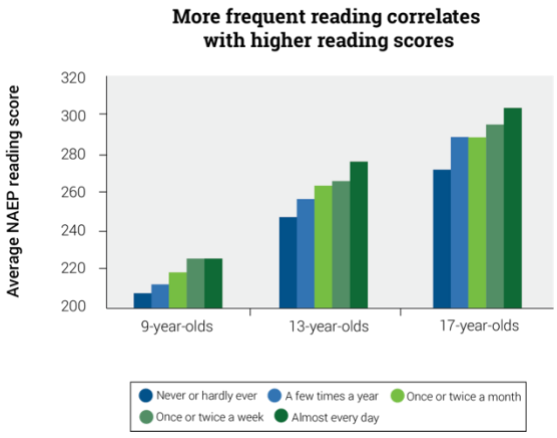
Once confident in blending, children will begin to receive two RWI books. One is the Black and White copy of the book they have read at school. They will have read this book three times with their RWI Group Tutor so should be confident and familiar with the story. This is done to build self-esteem and enjoyment in reading as well as to allow them to show off their reading skills to you! The second book is a Book Bag Book. This will be unfamiliar to your child so read the opening instructions on the front page carefully before reading.



These books allow children to apply their reading skills and are matched to the sounds they have been taught so far. These books should be read at home three times before

being returned to school. In the first read your child will be focussing on reading each word individually and it may seem robotic. In this phase very little comprehension of the story is likely. In the second read, their word recognition will become quicker allowing a faster pace and better understanding of the story. In the third read, the speed should be much quicker and therefore the child is using more brain power to understand the story rather than on reading each word. This is the point when the story becomes meaningful and pleasurable and they can answer questions based on the content. There are questions at the end of the book to check understanding and promote discussion of the story. Please take the time to complete these activities as there are the early comprehension skills which are built upon throughout school.

It is recommended that all reading should take place in a calm and quiet environment, a story before bed time or snuggled on the sofa without distractions of the TV etc so the focus can purely be on the reading enjoyment. It should be relaxed and enjoyable and lots of praise should be given when children are successful. Please try not to get frustrated if your child is struggling as this likely to put them off trying, instead encourage them to sound out words using Fred Talk and help them to blend and then praise for being successful.



Many children will want to avoid reading after a 'long day' at school, being very creative with their excuses, but please be persistent in completing home reading as this is vital towards their success and research shows that pupils who do not consolidate learning at home are far less able readers when they leave Year 2, causing many problems throughout their academic life and widening the educational gap between them and their peers.

Don't forget that even if your child can read RWI books it is still important for them to regularly hear you read in order to learn expression. This will remove some of the pressure on them and also

helps to improve their vocabulary levels as the books they listen to can be for any age. They will still be bringing home a library book of their choice so make sure to include this in the weekly routine if you can. Audio books are also helpful and can be a good technique for settling and relaxing children before bed or as part of longer car journeys.

Are there any resources I can buy?

Simple activities can be completed to help your child recognise sounds and read or write words, so there is no need to buy any resources for use at home. There are lots of links to activities, printable materials and online games which support phonics on our school website: https://www.hensingham.cumbria.sch.uk/parents/how-to-support-your-child-with-literacy/

Whilst it is not compulsory to purchase any support materials at home, if you do wish to purchase items, we would highly recommend these cards which can be bought from Amazon for less than £5. They will help to reinforce the sounds and pictures used and provide familiar illustrations to aid memory and learning and also come with advice on how to use them and play various games.



We do not ask parents to buy RWI books, however appreciate that other phonics books may be already be available in the home. These are not a problem to use however please bear in mind that the sound knowledge expected in different schemes may not match your child's RWI ability and this may cause some confusion or frustration for your child. If you need more than the two RWI Books already provided, please speak with your child's RWI Tutor.

The main resource you can provide your child with are time, patience and praise, and together we will make sure they are confident readers