

Pensilva Primary School

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Dear Parents/Carers,

READING APPROACHES AT PENSILVA PRIMARY SCHOOL AND HOW YOU CAN HELP YOUR CHILD

At Pensilva Primary School, we value reading as a vital life skill and therefore place it at the heart of our curriculum. We see reading as an essential skill that leads to improved life chances. Reading underpins access to the entire curriculum and impacts on all learning. It is therefore integral to our whole school programmes of study. Children need to be confident and engaged readers to be able TO LIVE in their world, fully understanding the information around them. They need to be able to read to be able TO LOVE the worlds, stories and characters that live inside books! Being able to read helps children TO LEARN in all subjects of the curriculum.

In school we have a number of initiatives to support and teach your child to become a confident, enthusiastic, fluent and independent reader. There are two important elements to this process. They need to develop the skills to decode and read the words on the page fluently. Alongside this they need to develop their understanding of what they are reading (their comprehension of a wide range of texts).

From Reception to Year 6, each class has opportunities to develop their wider reading skills and ability to understand texts as part of the English curriculum that they engage in. They share books with their class teacher; talk about how books work and explore the meaning of text. The children return to key reading strands such as retrieval and inference as they journey through our school, building on and deepening their knowledge of each.

To support children independently learning to read from Reception, they begin to learn phonics. We follow the **Ruth Miskin 'Read, Write Inc. Phonics Programme'** (RWI) to teach our early readers all the phonic sounds progressively, whilst also learning to blend and segment sounds to read words. The children work in targeted RWI groups five times a week to develop this learning. To find out more and for ways to support your child to develop their phonic knowledge more information can be found at [Parent guide to Read Write Inc. Phonics | Oxford Owl](#).

Once children are assessed to have developed their phonics knowledge securely, they have daily opportunities to extend and further develop their wider reading skills and fluency, with an even greater focus on comprehension and understanding through 'reading for pleasure' opportunities supported by the '**Renaissance Learning's Accelerated Reader**' (AR) and through classroom reading activities.

'Accelerated Reader' is a computer program that helps us monitor children's independent reading practice. Each child picks a book at his/her own level and reads it at his/her own pace. When finished, each child takes a short on-line quiz in school - passing the quiz with a score equal or higher than 85% is an indication that your child has understood what has been read. The children are asked to write their test results in their '**Reading Record Book**' so you can celebrate how well they have done and each fortnight an 'AR' reading summary report is added to their reading record.

Since each child is reading books at their own reading and interest levels, most children are likely to be successful and enjoy the books and quizzes. Best of all they learn and grow at their own pace.

As part of the Accelerated Reader Programme children complete a 'Star Reader' test half termly. STAR Reading is used to determine your child's reading range (ZPD). It is a computer-based reading assessment program.

Once the assessment has been completed your child is allocated a ZPD. The ZPD (Zone Proximal Development) is the range of books that will challenge a child without causing frustration or loss of motivation. It is important for children to read with a high degree of comprehension and within his/her ZPD.

There are a wide range of books for children to choose from within their ZPD band. We encourage the children to begin reading within the middle of their range. They are aiming to be able to accurately answer questions on the book they have read with at least 85% accuracy. Once children are confidently achieving this, then they are encouraged to move to the higher end of their range for greater reading challenge.

How you can help?

As with anything, performance improves with practice. According to Renaissance Learning's research, children who read at least 20 minutes a day with a 90% comprehension rate on AR quizzes see the greatest gains.

Encourage and enjoy time with your child on reading related activities at home daily. This could be you reading a book to your child, your child reading to you or it could be discussing books that you have read together, asking questions about what they have read or visiting your local library together.

Listening to your child read and talking to them about their reading is essential whether they are starting their journey learning phonic sounds to decode texts in Reception through to them being an avid Year 6 reader learning to perform poetry or identify themes across long chapter books.

All Pensilva, children have two school books which they are asked to take home daily to support home reading.

For suggestions of ways you can help, we have created a '**10 top tips for parents to support children to read**' and you will find some comment starters in each child's '**Reading Record Book**' to suggest things that you could focus on when reading with your child and useful things that you can note down to communicate with their class adults.

We ask every child to collect a minimum of 8 entries a week in their **Reading Record Book**. Our aim is for every child to read at school and at home daily.

By working together, we can help ensure that every child at Pensilva achieves their full reading potential.

Thank you for your support with reading,

Mrs. Sissons

English and MFL Leader