

'RWI' Phonics and Reading

Intent

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 and fully understand 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.

We recognise that mastery in phonics is fundamental to children being able to access a broad range of fiction and non-fiction texts, across the curriculum. We aim to achieve this by teaching the **Read, Write Inc.** Phonics Programme (RWI) systematically with a relentless drive to address the needs of all learners. The key understanding and skills taught in RWI sessions are explicitly reinforced and developed across the wider curriculum.

Following the aims and objectives of the National Curriculum, the school endeavours to create a life-long love of reading. We provide children with the skills and knowledge they need to be able to enjoy reading. Children are given regular opportunities to develop their ability to read for sustained lengths of time.

Once their phonic understanding is secure, we use the '**Accelerated Reader**' Programme (AR) to support this but we have modified it to enable the children to have opportunities to choose how they engage with reading, e.g., sharing the weekly news in a newspaper or increasing knowledge with non-fiction books as well as reading their individually chosen AR books as we believe that reading for pleasure should be paramount.

It is our Pensilva ambition that all children will leave our school as fluent, confident readers with a desire to read and enjoy a range of texts. Through our sustained approach, children become inquisitive about language and its structure and actively read for meaning. They also develop widening knowledge and use this to make connections between subjects and aspects of learning. As a result of this, children become happy, confident readers who develop enquiring minds.

Implementation

Our curriculum is structured through the use of high-quality core texts. These text types are carefully selected, across all year groups, so that children are systematically exposed to a variety of genres. This is particularly important in closing the vocabulary gap. Reading comprehension strategies and vocabulary extension is taught both through the interaction with the high-quality core texts in English sessions and in discrete reading comprehension lessons throughout the school.

Reading for pleasure is a joy that staff at Pensilva Primary want for all our children, whatever their reading preferences may be. Developing a love of literature and language and also seeing its importance as a tool to master, is integral in our curriculum. We therefore have a recommended set of core books for each Year group to enjoy in reading time, or in their English lessons or in daily book sharing time to ensure that they have access to a rich variety of high-quality texts, including those relating to Cornwall and/or Cornish authors.

Our teachers talk about books and reading experiences with our children regularly. Each classroom has an attractive but purposeful reading area. The main goal of these areas is that Books are celebrated and promoted, providing the children with breadth and choice.

Read Write Inc.

We are proud to use a synthetic phonics programme called 'Read Write Inc.' (RWI) produced by Ruth Miskin. RWI is a method of learning letter sounds and blending them together to read and write words. As part of this, children from Reception to Year 4 have four weekly phonics sessions in small groups where they participate in speaking, listening and writing activities that are matched to their developing needs. The teachers draw upon observations and continuous assessment to ensure children are stretched and challenged and to identify children who may need additional support.

Children work through the different phases, learning and developing their phonics sounds and knowledge. First, children learn the 44 common sounds in the English language and how to sound-blend words for reading, at the same time they develop skills of handwriting and spelling. They progress to read and comprehend lively storybooks containing words that they can decode so they achieve early success in reading.

Children in the Foundation Stage will start to take home 'Ditty Books' for daily reading at home, when they have learnt the initial phonic (Set 1 sounds). A key element of the RWI approach is that practice across the school is completely consistent. This is achieved because every member of staff delivering RWI is highly trained, coached and supported to be an expert in the teaching of phonics. Children are grouped by ability from Reception to Year 4 allowing lessons to specifically address individual learning needs.

In Key Stage 1, we have a skills-based approach to reading alongside RWI phonics teaching using the reading domain skills within whole class English and reading comprehension lessons. At Pensilva, as the children move to KS2 these lessons continue and extend the children's understanding. This consistent and structured approach across the school empowers the children to respond confidently with this shared reading language. Teachers plan exciting and engaging lessons where they cover a range of learning objectives based around the key reading skills of prediction, retrieval, vocabulary, summary, comparison and inference. Built into these sessions are times when the teacher reads aloud sections of the text to the children as an expert model of fluency, intonation and expression. Children pair read with a carefully chosen partner – teachers listen carefully to individuals and pairs to ensure fluency, accurate intonation and expression. Additional reading strategies, for example, 'echo reading' or 'jumping in' may be used to practise fluency, intonation and expression. We aim high and then support all children to reach these expectations. Fluent, confident readers are challenged to explain further or find evidence to justify their thinking.

In English units, we use a text-based approach that enables us to create opportunities for reading, discussion and writing within lessons. We teach reading through the powerful and effective tool of storytelling and immersion in quality texts. In early KS1, there is a greater emphasis on phonics and retelling; this is then applied throughout the remainder of Year 1 and 2 to consolidate what has been learnt. Within daily phonic sessions, children have the opportunity to revisit previous learning, practise and apply new skills in structured but engaging ways.

In ensuring high standards of teaching and learning in reading, we implement a curriculum that is progressive throughout the whole school (refer to Reading Progression of Knowledge and Skills Document). This ensures progression between year groups. Planning involves teachers creating engaging lessons, based on the children's prior learning.

As part of our reading for pleasure culture, each day the teacher and/or a classroom adult reads to the class. They will read carefully selected quality texts. These could be chosen from each year groups core texts selection or a personally selected text. The focus of this is simply reading for pleasure so questioning is kept to a minimum.

Impact

Ongoing formative assessment takes place within each phonics lesson. Regular RWI assessments are used to identify gaps in knowledge and will inform future planning. Children's progress is continually reviewed to allow

for movement between ability groups, and children move phonics groups when it is felt necessary to meet their needs. Children are regularly moved onto the next phonic band when their fluency (minimum of 90 words per minute) and understanding show that they are ready. Children move through the phonic book bands until they reach the required standard to become a Free-Reader. When children are free readers their reading choices are supported by the Accelerated Reader Programme (AR). The children complete half termly Star Assessments and a ZPD is assigned to them. Children are encouraged to select books that interest them within this ZPD range. When books are read the children have access to an iPad to complete the related AR test.

The national Phonics Screening Check is performed in June of Year 1. The purpose of the screening check is to confirm that all children have learned phonic decoding to an age-appropriate standard. The children who did not meet the required standard for the check in Year 1 enter again in Year 2 with additional support.

We recognise that quality first teaching in phonics is the essential first step in improving outcomes for all children. With this in mind, we ensure that teachers and teaching assistants are kept up to date on the latest initiatives and news. This is through continuous professional development by outside providers and within school.

Essential Characteristics

- Excellent phonic knowledge and skills.
- Fluency and accuracy in reading across a wide range of contexts throughout the curriculum.
- Knowledge of an extensive and rich vocabulary.
- An excellent comprehension of texts.
- The motivation to read for both study and for pleasure.
- Extensive knowledge through having read a rich and varied range of texts.