

Growing Lifelong Readers at Hazelmere Infant School and Nursery

Reading is an essential life skill and when teaching reading, three broad areas need to be addressed in order that children will not only be accurate readers but also motivated readers with a love of books that stays with them for life.

1. Word recognition

At Hazelmere Infant School and Nursery we follow the Government backed scheme, Letters and Sounds. Through this phased approach the children will progress in their knowledge of the different sounds (phonemes) that are made by individual letters or letter groupings (graphemes).

Introduction to Letters and Sounds begins in Nursery where the children will start Phase 1. This phase is fundamental to the whole approach and stays central throughout each year group.

In Reception the children will work on Phase 2, 3 and 4 where they will be introduced to individual letter phonemes and then digraphs (2 letters together).

In Year 1 the aim is for children to be working on Phase 5 throughout the year. They will then have a phonics test at the end of the year. This is a national test and you will receive the results of this.

By Year 2 most children will be working on Phase 6 which introduces grammar such as changing verb endings (.ed, ..ing etc) and continue revising spelling patterns.

It is important to note though that children progress at different rates and so your child will be working within the phase that is appropriate for them. Children's progress is monitored every half term and the groupings for each phase are flexible. It is important that your child is working at the correct phase for them as this will provide a solid base for future learning.

2. Understanding texts

Although important, it is not enough that children are able to decipher print. Understanding texts is vital and is taught through daily reading, either in small guided reading groups, one to one reading or class reading activities as well as reading at home. Skills that will be developed include the ability to discuss and predict events, to self-correct when they realise they have read a word incorrectly, discuss what they like and don't like about the book, describe characters, settings and plots, to infer and deduce meaning (reading between the lines) and joining in with retelling a story and role play of texts.

3. Reading from choice

All through their life, children will be required to read. Therefore, alongside teaching the skills for word recognition and understanding texts, children at Hazelmere Infant School and Nursery are given every opportunity to become enthusiastic readers who will happily spend time reading quietly either for enjoyment or information. This message is enhanced if, in their home environment, they see adults reading for pleasure and if they are read to by their family. Equally important is for each child to have the opportunity to share their school reading book with their family. We are developing our library area in school and each classroom provides a print rich environment which motivates children to read. Children have access to a variety of texts, including fiction, non-fiction, poetry and playscripts.

Developing lifelong readers is a partnership between home and school. Research shows without doubt that children who read regularly at home and are read to, make quicker and more secure progress in becoming fluent readers than those who only read at school. Therefore we thank you in advance for your support in developing this skill in your child.