**How we teach Reading at Fleggburgh CE Primary School**

At our school we use The Read Write Inc Phonics programme in Key Stage 1, to support early development of phonics and reading.

Learning to read is one of the most important thing your child will learn at our school. Everything else depends on it, so we put as much energy as we possibly can into making sure that every single child learns to read as quickly as possible.

We want your child to love reading – and to want to read for themselves. This is why we put our efforts into making sure they develop a love of books as well as simply learning to read.

**How is your child is taught to read?**

We start by teaching phonics to the children when they join us in Reception class. This means that they learn how to ‘read’ the sounds in words and how those sounds can be written down. This is essential for reading, but it also helps children learn to spell well. We teach the children simple ways of remembering these sounds and letters. We will share this approach and “pure sounds” with you at Home visits and also in parents sessions during the school year.

The children also practise reading (and spelling) what we call ‘tricky words’, such as ‘once,’ ‘have,’ ‘said’ and ‘where’. These are words that the children can not decode through using their phonic knowledge.

The children practise their reading with books that match the phonics and the ‘tricky words’ they know. They start thinking that they can read and this does wonders for their confidence.

The teachers read to the children, too, so the children get to know all sorts of stories, poetry and information books. They learn many more words this way and it also helps their writing.

**How do we know how well a child is doing?**

We will always let you know how well your child is doing – at each Parents’ Meeting and through Reception EYFS sharing sessions, we will discuss how confident your child is with remembering and using their phonic knowledge and also their increasing fluency with decoding new words.

We use various ways to find out how the children are getting on in reading. We use the information to decide what reading level they should be in. Your child will work with children who are at the same reading level as him or her. Children will move to a different group if they are making faster progress than the others. Your child will have one-to-one support if we think he or she needs some extra help to keep up.

We also use a reading test so that we can make sure that all our children are at the level that they should be for their age compared to all the children across the country: we will also “screen” the children at various times during the school year, this screening will use real and also “…” words, which we use to see how the children apply their phonic knowledge in unknown situations – your child may refer to these as alien words.

In the summer term, the government asks us to do a phonics check of all the Year 1 children. That gives us extra information about their progress. We will talk to you about how well your child has done, and especially if we have any worries at all.

**How long will it take to learn to read well?**

By the end of Year 2, your child should be able to read aloud books that are at the right level for his or her age. In Year 3 we concentrate more on helping children to understand what they are reading, although this work begins very early on. This happens when the teacher reads to the children and also when the children read their own story book.

**How do I know the teaching will be good?**

All the staff have been trained to teach reading in the way we do it in this school. We believe that it is very important that all the teachers and teaching assistants work in the same way. Senior teachers watch other teachers teaching to make sure that the children are learning how we want them to learn.

If you are worried about the teaching or you have any questions, please come to school and talk to us.

**What can parents do to help?**

Your child will bring different sorts of books home from school. Please trust your child’s teacher to choose the book(s) that will help your child the most. We encourage you to hear your child read for between 5-10 minutes a day. On top of this please spend time reading with your child and sharing books. Even if you are reading to them, this is still supporting their reading development. Allowing them to absorb the vocabulary used as well as begin to think imaginatively about the text.

When reading a book together, help your child to sound out the letters in words that they are unsure of and then to ‘blend’ the sounds together to make a whole word. Try not to refer to the letters by their letter name but by the sounds they make. Help your child to focus on the sounds. You can hear how to say the sounds correctly through the attached clip: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5J2Ddf_0Om8>

We know parents and carers are very busy people. But if you can find time to read to your child as much as possible, it helps him or her to learn about books and stories. They also learn new words and what they mean. Show that you are interested in reading yourself and talk about reading as a family.

**Does it matter if a child misses a lesson or two?**

The way we teach children to read is very well organised, so even one missed lesson means that your child has not learnt something that they need to know to be a good reader.

**What if a child finds it difficult to learn to read?**

We want children to learn to read, however long it takes us to teach them. We can find out very quickly if your child is finding reading difficult. We can support children during their time in Key Stage 1, Emerald Class by moving children within the groups, so that they have a chance to be sure and use confidently, the sounds and skills they have learnt before moving on. If they still struggle, we give them extra time with an adult, on their own. These adults are specially trained to support all children. Your child will still be in the same group with the other children and won’t miss out on any of the class lessons.

**If we have any serious worries about your child’s reading, we will talk to you about this.**

Some children take a bit longer to learn to put sounds together to read a word, e.g. c-a-t to make the word ‘cat’.

**What happens where a child has difficulty pronouncing some sounds?**

This isn’t a problem for learning to read as long as we know what sound the child is trying to say. This is not something to worry about. Many children have a few sounds that they can hear clearly but find it difficult to say, particularly the l-sound, r-sound, w-sound, th-sound, s-sound, sh-sound and j-sound. Often they say a t-sound for the c-sound; "tttssh" for the s-sound; "w" for the r-sound and "r" for the l-sound. You can help your child by encouraging him or her to look at your mouth when you say the sound. Whatever you do, do not make your child feel a failure. They can easily learn to read, even if they find one or two sounds difficult to say. Teachers and support staff in the school are also Elklan trained, which means that they are aware of how best to support children with speech and language concerns; however, we ensure that the staff model high quality phonics and sounds and encourage children to use these models in their own reading.

**As ever – Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any concerns.**

**We are here to help.**