



Dear Year 1 Parents and Carers,

Year 1 Phonics and Reading Books

There have been some questions from parents about the reading books that Year 1 children are taking home and how this may differ from previous years, especially if your child has an older sibling who has been through the school. The guidance from the Department of Education (DfE) on early reading was updated in September 2023 and they have made recommendations, based on educational research, on how children learn to read best. The school is following that guidance along with what we know works for our children.

In Year 1, children will take home a Phonics Shed book matched to the current Grapheme Phoneme Correspondence (GPCs = phonic sounds) taught in class. This book will be first shared as part of an adult-led group in daily phonics sessions in school and then we encourage parents to consolidate this learning by reading it again at home. This book is known as a “fully decodable” book - this means that there are no phonic sounds in the book that your child has yet to come across. The reason for this is to develop fluency and confidence and for them to practise the sounds that they know, alongside mastering the skill of decoding words with known sounds. Children who are confident with the sounds taught in class will ‘go deeper’ in daily Phonics sessions by applying their skills further, for example to write and spell words using the correct GPCs and using new words in a sentence.

Children are regularly assessed in their Phonics and reading skills and when all of the sounds have been secured, your child’s class teacher will suggest suitable “post-decodable” books for them to bring home to read (formerly called ‘book band’ books). For the majority of children, this will be during the Spring term when all sounds have been taught, however, this may happen at an earlier point in the year for some children.

In addition, to support your child’s love of reading, in our weekly library sessions, children will take part in class discussions about books and will be supported to choose a book of their choice to enjoy at home with an adult or older sibling. If your child is a confident reader, we would encourage you to ask your child questions about their library book and re-read it throughout the week to build their comprehension, fluency and expression skills.

We hope that this clarifies the reading journey that your child is on, for more information about Early Reading and how you can support your child’s reading development at home have a look at <https://wordsforlife.org.uk/parent-support/reading-your-child/> or <https://www.booktrust.org.uk/books-and-reading/tips-and-advice/reading-tips/>

If you have any questions, please speak to your child’s class teacher,

Thank you for your continued support,

Mr Anderson
English
Subject Leader

Mrs Guise
English
Subject Leader

Miss Magern
Phonics
Subject Leader

Miss Andrews
Year 1 Leader

Mrs Porter
Year R Leader