



Reading at Istead Rise Primary School

Information for parents September 2025



This booklet contains information for parents/carers about reading at Istead Rise. Please speak to your child's class teacher if you have any queries.



The Importance of Reading

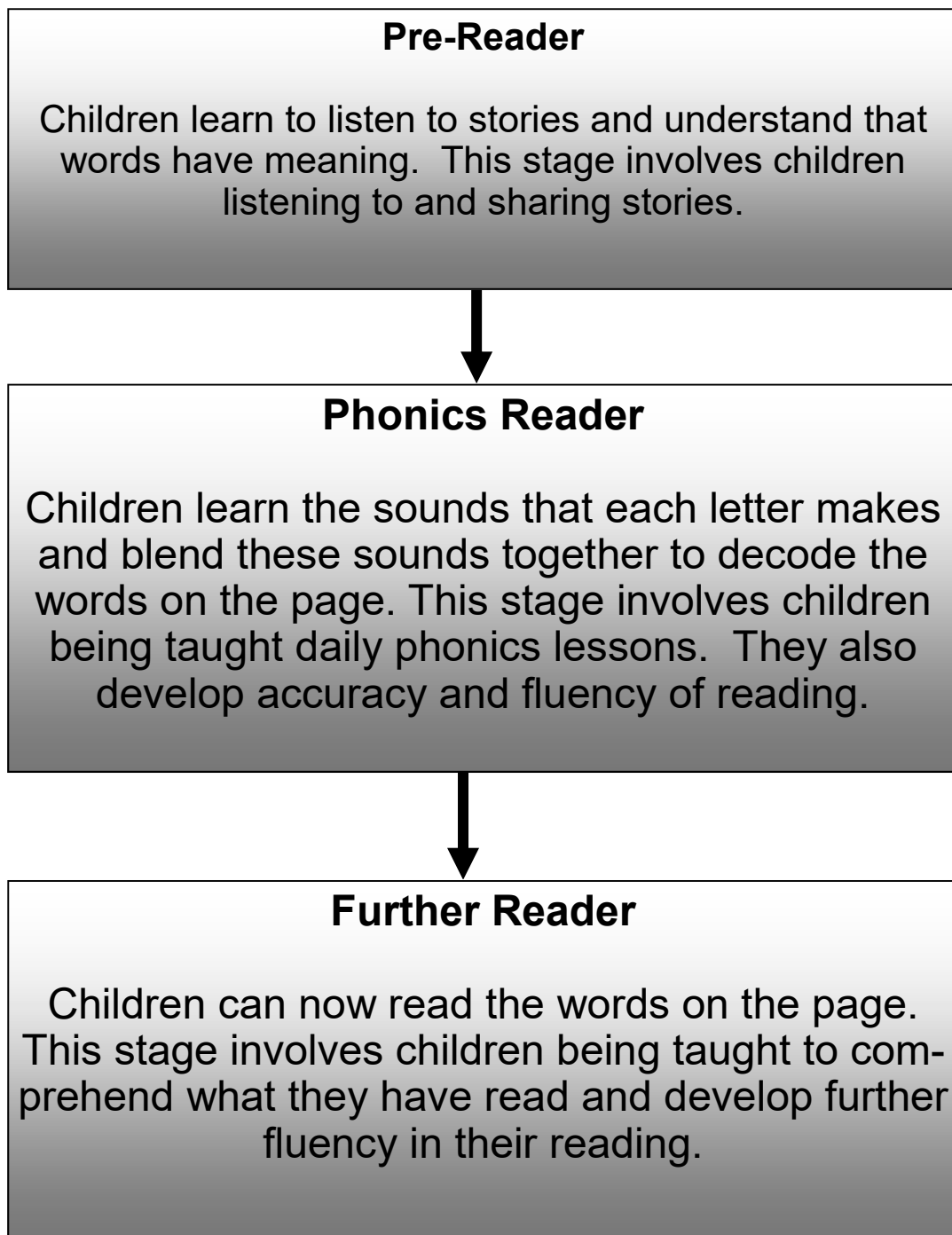
At Istead Rise, we are passionate about reading and believe that learning to read is one of the most important skills our children learn.

- Reading is a vital tool for learning and for life.
- Reading not only helps us to widen our knowledge and experiences but also allows us to increase our confidence in many aspects of our lives.
- Helping children to make progress in reading is most successful when it is done in partnership between home and school.
- Any support you can give will improve your child's progress.

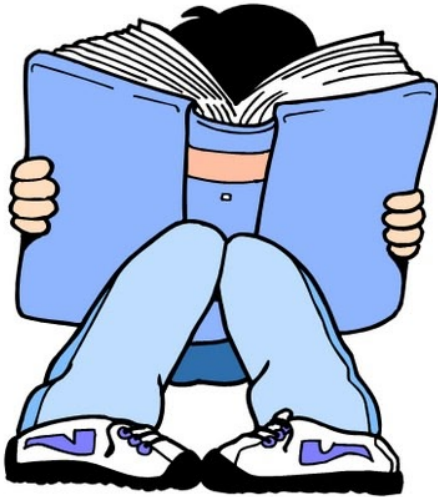


The Reading Development Journey

At Istead Rise, we use the staged approach below to categorise where your child is in their development as a reader. The stage your child is on will determine what they are taught in school and the reading books they bring home.



Daily Reading Lessons



Daily reading lessons will differ slightly for your child, depending on their year group and their stage of reading development.

In Reception and Year 1, the Read, Write Inc. programme is used to teach children to read fluently and with confidence. Further information on this programme can be found on the following pages to help explain this reading approach.

Reading Approaches

Children in Reception and Year 1 receive daily phonics lessons, as well as regular opportunities to share stories and books in class. Those pupils who have not achieved a pass in the phonics screening at the end of Year 1, and so are still requiring phonics teaching into Year 2, are given this support in a small group, as well as joining in with daily whole class guided reading sessions.

In Years 2 through to 6, children take part in daily, whole class guided reading lessons, allowing all children read aloud each day, either individually or as a choral group (reading aloud in unison with a whole class or group of students).

This approach helps to build reading fluency, self-confidence, and motivation. The reading ability of all pupils is regularly assessed, ensuring that children are accessing texts further their reading fluency, as well as questions to identify their understanding of what they have read, based on the R.I.C model: Retrieval, Inference, Choice.

Reading is not exclusive to reading lessons and all pupils are immersed in a range of texts throughout their other subjects, which is why we feel strongly that reading is a vital skill to unlocking all of the other areas of learning.



Read Write Inc ~ Phonics Guidance For Parents

From Reception until the end of Year 1 we use a teaching programme called Read Write Inc. This successful reading programme aims to teach children to read fluently and confidently, whilst also developing a wide range of vocabulary.

What do children learn?

Your child will learn to:

- read '**letters**' by their '**sounds**'
- blend these sounds into '**words**'
- read the words in a **story**



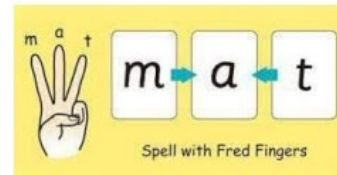
What are the 'speed sounds'?

In phonics the individual sounds are called 'speed sounds'. These are the sounds we use to speak in English. We use pure sounds ('m' not 'muh', 's' not 'suh', etc.) so that your child can learn to blend the sounds into words.



Who is Fred?

At school we use a frog puppet called Fred. He can only talk in sounds. Your child will be taught how to put sounds together to make a word. When we sound talk a word, we call it '**Fred talk**'. For example, Fred would say d-o-g we would say dog. Fred would say sh-o-o-p we would say shop. 'Fred talk' helps your child read unfamiliar words by pronouncing each sound in the word one at a time. Your child will start blending sounds into words as soon as they know a small group of letters. Fred Talk also supports early writing skills as your child will begin to use '**Fred Fingers**' to break down a spoken word into its sounds to enable them to write the word. We use the phrase 'Say the word – pinch the sounds' to help them remember.



What is the order of teaching the speed sounds?

Set 1 sounds

In Read Write Inc. the individual sounds are called '**speed sounds**'. Set 1 sounds are the initial letter sounds. We encourage your child to read these individual sounds effortlessly. These are taught in the following order.

m, a, s, d, t, i, n, p, g, o, c, k, u, b, f, e, l, h, sh, r, j, v, y, w, th, z, ch, qu, x, ng, nk

m	a	s	d	t
i	n	p	g	o
c	k	u	b	f
e	l	h	sh	r
j	v	y	w	th
z	ch	qu	x	ng nk



Set 2 sounds

At the end of Reception and beginning of Year 1, your child will progress to learning their Set 2 sounds. There are 12 set 2 'speed sounds' that are made up of two or three letters which represent one sound, e.g. 'ay' as in play, 'ee' as in tree and 'igh' as in high.

When your child learns their Set 2 sounds they will learn:

- the letters that represent a speed sound e.g. 'ay'
- a rhyming picture prompt linked to the speed sound to help them remember the sound and the correct spelling e.g. 'ay' may I play
- a sound containing two letters that make one sound is called a 'digraph'
- a sound containing three letters that make one sound is called a 'trigraph'

Set 2 sounds are taught in the following order:

ay, ee, igh, ow, oo, oo, ar, or, air, ir, ou, oy



Set 2 Green Words and Word Time

As soon as your child has learnt initial letter sounds they will begin to blend the sounds to read real sight words. Each Word Time session involves oral blending of known sounds before your child is shown the words written down on the green cards. The dots and dashes below each sound are called 'sound buttons'. A dot represents a single letter sound and a dash represents a digraph (two letters that make one sound) or a trigraph (three letters that make one sound).

p̣ḷay	ṃay	ṣay
ḍay	ẉay	ṣpray

ṣort	ṣhort	ḥorse
ṣport	f̣ork	ṣnort



Set 3 sounds

In Year 1, your child will continue their learning and progress to their Set 3 speed sounds. When learning the Set 3 sounds your child will be taught that there are more ways in which the same sounds can be written, e.g. 'ay' may I play and 'a-e' make a cake. Just as before, when your child reads the 'speed sound' letters, they must say one sound for these letters.

Set 3 Speed Sounds

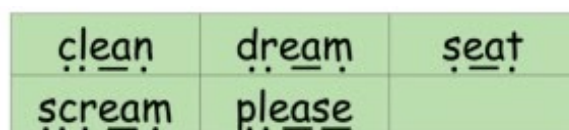


When your child learns their Set 3 sounds they will learn:

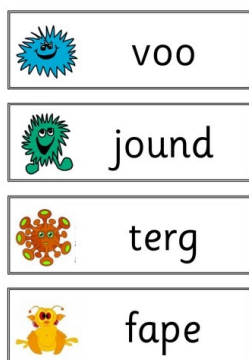
- a sound containing three letters that makes one sound e.g. 'ure' is called a **'trigraph'**
- a sound which has two letters and works as a pair to make one sound e.g. 'a-e' is called a **'split digraph'**.

Set 3 Green Words and Word Time

Similarly to the Set 2 Green Words, Set 3 Green Words are words in which your child should be able to read independently. These words are made up of the 'speed sounds' that your child will have learnt already. The dots and dashes below each sound continue to be called **'sound buttons'** and as in Set 2 Green Words, represent a single letter sound, digraph or trigraph.



What are Nonsense words (Alien words)?

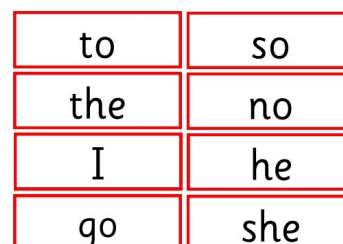


As your child builds up their knowledge of sounds they begin to apply their decoding skills. They will be able to read any unfamiliar words whether real or nonsense. During their phonic sessions, your child will practise using their decoding skills, sounding out the letters in **'Alien words'**. In these sessions, your child will be unable to use their knowledge of real words and instead have to use their letter-sound knowledge. This is important as 'Alien words' are part of the National Year 1 Phonics Screening Check which your child will complete towards the end of Year 1.

What are Red words?

'Red Words' (sometimes referred to as 'Tricky Words') are **words that cannot be sounded out using Phonics.**

Instead, they are words that have to be learnt through sight-reading. Your child will learn to sight read Red Words within the Read Write Inc. books they read.



What are the Ditty Books and Story books?

During the Read Write Inc. session, your child will be introduced to 'Ditty books' or 'Story books' where they will be taught to use sound-blending (Fred Talk) to read single words. Your child will read the book three times in a small group, with a peer and independently. This will support them learning new speedy green words and more tricky red words, building expression known as their 'storyteller voice' and to investigate vocabulary. Your child will also have plenty of opportunities to practise their developing comprehension skills.



As your child progresses in their reading, they will be given a different story book. By moving through the carefully designed stages (or colours) of books which consolidate the sounds learned at the right time, your child will gain speed and confidence in their reading ability. As reading becomes more fluent, your child will begin to understand the stories they read and can enjoy the books.

How is my child assessed?

Your child is carefully assessed and placed into a Read Write Inc. group based on their phonic sound knowledge and reading skills. This ensures that they are working at the right level for their ability which is the best way to ensure progress and confidence in their reading skills. Groups are assessed every half term (6 weeks) and your child will be moved accordingly to either accelerate progress or provide further consolidation. If your child requires further support, targeted intervention or additional 1:1 support is provided.



What are the progress expectations?

Below are the book band colours for Reception and Year 1. If your child is in Year 2 and they did not pass the Phonic Screening Check at the end of Year 1, they will continue to work in small groups and follow the Read Write Inc. phonic programme.

Book Band	Year Group Expectations
LILAC	Reception
PINK	Reception
RED	Reception
YELLOW	Reception / Year 1
BLUE	Year 1
GREEN	Year 1
ORANGE	Year 1 / Year 2
TURQUOISE	Year 1 / Year 2
PURPLE	Year 2
GOLD	Year 2
WHITE	Year 2 / Year 3

Who will be following the programme?

All children in Reception and Year 1 will follow the Read Write Inc. programme. By the end of Year 1, most children will have reached the required threshold in phonics and will begin to progress to the 'further reader' stage. Children who have not met the required threshold in phonics will continue to receive daily phonic sessions, while also participating in whole class daily reading lessons so that they can join in with choral and echo reading to help further their fluency alongside the rest of their class.



Further Readers

Whole Class Reading




- Pupils participate in daily **Whole Class Reading** lessons with a teacher.
- These lessons focus on key reading skills, based on the **R.I.C** model of:

i) **Retrieval** (finding explicit information in a text)

ii) **Inference** (finding clues within the text as to why something has happened, these are not usually explicitly stated in the words of the text but involves 'reading around' what is inferred through character action or speech)

iii) **Choice** (related to the style, vocabulary or punctuation choices the author has made to imply something about the character or events)

- Teachers begin by reading a text aloud with the pupils to 'model' fluency and accuracy. Pupils will then continue to read the text, as part of a class or smaller group. The teacher sets the pace for the reading and models intonation as the class accompany them.
- Vocabulary and understanding of the text is discussed throughout.
- Lessons throughout a week incorporate opportunities to read a variety of high quality texts, as well as answering written comprehension questions based on the R.I.C model.

TBAT demonstrate an understanding of a text.	
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What is the name of the ship? 2. What was the narrator's name? 3. How many years had they been working on the ship? 4. What did the 'flashing red symbol' mean? 5. What had caused 'the annoying whirring sound'?
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 6. What evidence is there that Captain Starbright isn't happy with the situation? 7. How do you know that Joan didn't want to disturb the captain when she entered the room? 8. What does Joan think about the likelihood of the ship opening to the public soon? Explain your answer.
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 9. Find and copy a word that tells you that the food wasn't very good quality. 10. Which phrase tells you that the speakers have been used a lot? 11. Describe what she means by the 'lurching' she felt in her stomach. 12. Copy a phrase that tells you that the Captain would rather be on Earth? 13. What does the word "incredulous" tell you about how Joan was feeling?



Home Reading: Books and Expectations



**ALL READING BOOKS SENT HOME MUST BE
RETURNED TO SCHOOL AS SOON AS YOUR
CHILD FINISHES READING IT.**



Home Reading for Phonics Readers

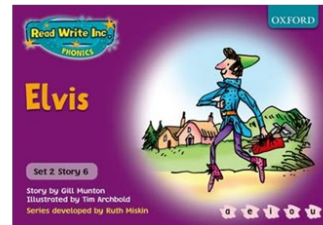
Phonics readers will bring home two types of reading activity

Read Write Inc Books or Sound Cards



Children at the start of their phonics learning will be given focused sounds to practise at home using the sound cards provided. Parents are encouraged to visit these sounds with their children regularly.

Phonics readers who are confident in blending sounds to read words, will also bring home a RWI book to read to an adult. This book has been carefully chosen so that they can work out all the words.



Shared Reading Books

Your child will also bring a book home with words that they may not be able to read yet. This book is for you to read to your child and talk about together.

Guidance for Home Reading

A daily read for a Phonics Reader may include any of the reading activities above or sharing any books you may have at home.

Please ensure your child engages in reading activities daily and an adult signs their Pupil Planner.

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Home Reading for Further Readers

Find your reading magic

Lexile Scores:

YEAR 1
0 - 200

YEAR 2
200 - 325

YEAR 3
325 - 625

YEAR 4
625 - 725

YEAR 5
725 - 750

YEAR 6
750 - 900

900 +

<https://hub.lexile.com/find-a-book/search>

1. Choose your reading book.
2. Find its lexile 'L score'
3. Think about its suitability
4. Write the 'L score' & book title in your planner

Lexile Scores

The Lexile system measures both a child's reading ability and the difficulty of a text. The point of the Lexile system is to help match readers with texts.

Each time your child chooses a new home reading book as a Further Reader in Years 2 through to 6, they will need to check its Lexile score, so that they are aware of the difficulty of the book, based on the age it is intended for.

In Year 2, the home reading books that children select as they begin choosing their own, are from the 'Bug Club' range of books. These are colour banded to follow on from Year 1, and also carry a Lexile Score.

Our pupils also have access to the Reading Eggs online platform, and while we primarily use this for spelling reinforcement, the books in the reading area are Lexile scored for the ability of the child based on an initial online reading or phonic quiz.

	Term	Number	Book band	Lexile
Year 2	Autumn	7	Turquoise	325 - 400
	Autumn	8	Purple	400 - 475
	Spring	9	Gold	475 - 575
	Summer	10	White	575 - 625
	Summer	11	Lime	625 - 650



Further readers will bring home at least 1 reading book at a time. This book will have been chosen by your child, and will be linked to their reading ability as well as their interests.

Guidance for Home Reading

As your child becomes more confident with reading, they should be encouraged to spend time reading daily, quietly and independently, whilst having the opportunity to discuss what they read with an adult at home.

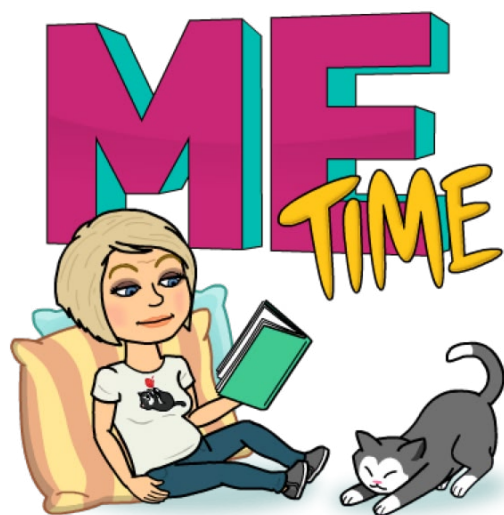
In Years 2 through to 6, pupils are encouraged by their teacher to check the Lexile Score for the book to aid them in selecting reading materials that are suitable for their reading ability, and this is written into Pupil Planners along with the book title. Further guidance on Lexile Scores can be found in this booklet.

Further readers should read independently for approximately 20 minutes daily.

Please ensure your child reads daily and an adult signs their Pupil Planner.

Reading for Pleasure

We recognise the value of encouraging reading for pleasure. Author events, whole school reading and writing tasks and book celebrations, such as World Book Day and Sponsored Reading Challenges, are regularly incorporated into school life to help foster a love of reading in our pupils.



How to read a story to your child

If you can find the time beforehand, read the read-aloud book to yourself first, so you can think about how you're going to read it to your child.

On the first reading:

- Make reading aloud feel like a treat. Make it a special quiet time and cuddle up so you can both see the book.
- Show curiosity about what you're going to read: 'This book looks interesting. It's about an angry child. I wonder how angry he gets...'
- Read through the whole story the first time without stopping too much. Let the story weave its own magic.
- Read with enjoyment. If you're not enjoying it, your child won't either.
- Read favourite stories over and over again.

On later readings:

- Let your child pause, think about and comment on the pictures.
- If you think your child did not understand something, try to explain: 'Oh! I think what's happening here is that...'
- Chat about the story and pictures: 'I wonder why she did that?'; 'Oh no, I hope she's not going to...'; 'I wouldn't have done that, would you?'
- Link the stories to your own family experiences: 'This reminds me of when ...'
- Link stories to others that your child knows: 'Ah! Do you remember the dragon in? Do you remember what happened to him?'
- Encourage your child to join in with the bits they know.
- Avoid asking questions to test what your child remembers.
- Avoid telling children that reading stories is good for them.



Supporting Further Readers at Home

It is important that your child has the opportunity to discuss what they have read to demonstrate their understanding and to enable them to think more carefully about the text.

Useful questions for reading times:

Fiction Books (including Poetry)

- Why do you think that behaves in the way that they do?
- Would you like to have as a friend? Why/why not?
- Can you think of any other words the author could have used to describe this?
- What part of the story do you think is the funniest, saddest, most interesting?
- What questions would you like to ask the author?

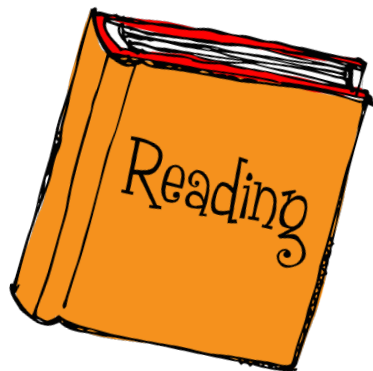
Non-fiction Books

- What have you learnt from your reading today?
- How does the way the text is set out help you understand it?
- Here it says (point to the contents page) is on page ... What do you think that page will be about?



10 tips for parents to support children

1. Encourage your child to read
2. Read aloud regularly
3. Encourage reading choice
4. Read together
5. Create a comfortable environment
6. Make use of your local library
7. Talk about books
8. Bring reading to life
9. Make reading active
10. Engage your child in reading in a way that suits them





Istead Rise Primary School