



11th March 2021

Dear Parents and Carers,

Introducing our new phonics phase reading books and approach to reading at home with your child.

We are delighted to begin our return to school with the news that we have a wonderful selection of brand-new reading books for pupils in our Reception and Key Stage 1 classes. Although our pupils' reading attainment and outcomes are always strong, we were very aware that the reading matter on offer to them in school was somewhat outdated.

Our new phonics phase reading books (replacing our previous colour banded reading books), arrived just after Christmas and have been stamped, sorted, labelled, and assigned to phonics phases. They are all based on the 'Letters and Sounds' systematic synthetic phonics programme that we use in school.

Children are taught to read letters or groups of letters by saying the sound(s) they represent. Children start to read words by blending (synthesising) the sounds (phonemes) together to make a word. Systematic synthetic phonics is key to teaching children reading and writing. It provides them with strategies to decode words, which is especially important because English is such a difficult language to learn with the many ways to make the same sound from different letters or combinations of letters.

This means that as of now, all reading scheme books that we use in school for EYFS and KS1 will be decodable and will follow the groups of phonemes being learned by the children. When children complete the phonics phases and are secure, then they will move onto the book band system at their appropriate stage.

Finally, children will bring home their new phonics phase reading books weekly. These will be accompanied by an additional 'reading for pleasure' book of your child(ren)'s choosing from our fabulous school library. This book is intended to be shared and enjoyed with an adult (e.g. picture books will promote creation of shared stories and other books may need to be read to your child(ren) and discussed).

As a whole school we are planning to raise the profile of pupils reading regularly at home - a little and often, and on at least five occasions each week. The new phonics books are designed to be short with high impact to ensure the application of new skills.

Thank you for your continued support,

Laura Murray

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Laura Murray'. The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the right.

English Coordinator