



Dear Parents,

Please carefully read the following information about changes to the way in which phonics and reading will be taught this year at Prior Heath. Changes to our policies and practice have been introduced in line with the latest Government guidance.

Phonics

In response to Government guidance, this year we are introducing a new phonics teaching scheme across the school called, "Unlocking Letters and Sounds". This scheme is a validated, systematic, synthetic phonics programme which will introduce the children to phonemes (sounds). The children will be taught to blend and segment these phonemes to enable them to read and spell. As they progress through the programme, more complex phonic patterns are explored and the children will learn graphemes (written representations of phonemes) including the alternatives for each one.

For further information on our new programme, please visit

<https://www.unlockinglettersandsounds.com>

Reading books

This year, your child will bring home one **phonic reading book** every **Monday** and **Thursday**. As the teaching of reading involves developing skills necessary for both word reading and comprehension, your child will be expected to read the book 3 times, **over the course of 3 days**. Each time your child reads the book, there should be a different focus. Please refer to table below.

1 st read	Focus on decoding The children should segment the sounds in each word and then blend the sounds together to read the word e.g. d/o/g = dog b/oa/t = boat
2 nd read	Focus on prosody (expression, pace and tone) Prosody is expressiveness in speech. It provides context, gives meaning to words, and keeps listeners engaged. Prosody involves emphasising the right words, using voice pitch and taking appropriate pauses.

3 rd read	<p>Focus on comprehension and understanding (answering questions about the text, retelling the story in their own words).</p> <p>To be able to accurately understand written material, children need to be able to (1) decode what they read; (2) make connections between what they read and what they already know; and (3) think deeply about what they have read.</p>
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Please record these reads in your child's yellow reading record book with any comments related to the above foci.

Library books

In addition to the phonic reading books, your child will also choose **2 books from the school library** to bring home every **Friday**.

These library books should be used as **reading for pleasure books** and will have words that your child may not be able to read using their current phonic ability. Therefore, please share these books **with** your child by reading aloud to them. As a school, we recommend that all children are read **to** for at least 10 minutes a day. This will help them grow into eager and confident readers.

Here are some top reading tips:

- Set aside a special time. Just 10 minutes a day is enough to create a reading habit.
- Read to your child or share a book with your child if they are beginning to read with more independence. Model expression by using different voices!
- Model reading for pleasure to your child. Show them that adults enjoy reading for pleasure too!
- Value the books that your child chooses to read. All reading is valuable for a child's development. Some of us prefer non-fiction; some of us prefer comics. One child might like superhero books; another might prefer a book of football statistics!
- Encourage the use of audiobooks. Audiobooks often allow children to experience books above their own reading level. They also allow you to make the most of long car journeys! Listening to a story multiple times can improve children's vocabulary and encourage deeper comprehension.
- Refer to stage and screen. Use your child's favourite films or games as a springboard into reading. Having a prior knowledge of the characters and storyline can be a helpful bridge into reading a longer story.

We hope that the above information has been useful. If you have any questions do please speak with your child's class teacher. There will be further information shared about phonics and reading at the year group meetings and on our school website.

Yours sincerely,
The Reading Team
(Miss Bates, Mrs Thebault and Mrs Shah)

