

Phonics and Reading at Castle Hills Primary School

At Castle Hills Primary School we have high expectations of all children and aim to encourage a 'love for reading' so children become lifelong readers. We prioritise the importance of developing strong confident readers, who develop a passion for reading. Reading plays a very important part in every day school life. Throughout the school year we organise several events to further encourage pupils to become keen readers: we celebrate World Book Day every year, where the children dress up as their favourite book characters, breakfast and book mornings, extreme read challenge, story sack workshops, subscribe to Imagination Library initiative and much more.

We follow the Letters and Sounds approach as outlined in 'Letters and Sounds': Principles and Practice of High Quality Phonics, found in the Primary National Strategy 2017. We also use Jolly Phonics in the Early Years to support letter recognition.

Phonics is taught systematically every day in Early Years and Year 1. High-quality phonics teaching helps children develop their reading, writing and spelling. It supports children in securing crucial skills of word recognition and decoding to enable children to read fluently. The teaching of phonics is systematic; this means that it follows a carefully structured programme building on previous learning to secure children's progress. It is taught discretely daily at a brisk and active pace. There are opportunities to apply phonic knowledge and skills across the curriculum and in activities such as whole class reading and guided reading, as well as reading independently. Pupil's progress in developing and applying their phonics knowledge is regularly assessed and monitored.

Beginner readers are taught:

- Grapheme-phoneme correspondences in clear stages (linking spelling and sounds)
- The important skill of blending (synthesising) phonemes
- Segmenting words into their constituent phonemes to support reading and spelling

We use a wide range of reading books which are phonically decodable in EYFS and KS1. We use a variety of parallel schemes including Oxford Reading Tree, Bug Club, Project X and Rigby Star which all support specific aspects of reading. We encourage parents to read at least five times per week with their children and have a reading reward system in place 'In It To Win It', as well as weekly reading reward certificates.