**How we teach early reading at Costessey Primary School**

Learning to read is the most important thing your child will learn at our school. Everything else depends on it, so we put as much energy as we possibly can into making sure that every single child learns to read as quickly as possible.

We want your child to love reading – and to want to read for themselves. This is why we put our efforts into making sure they develop a love of books as well as simply learning to read. At Costessey Primary School we use the Read Write Inc. Phonics programme to teach reading in reception and KS1.

**How will my child be taught to read?**

We start by teaching phonics to the children in the Reception. This means that they learn how to ‘read’ the sounds in words and learn how those sounds can be written down. This is essential for reading, but it also helps children learn to spell well. We teach the children simple ways of remembering these sounds and letters.

Once children are able to ‘blend’ the sounds they have learnt into words (for example c-a-t ‘cat’), they practice their reading with books that match the phonics and the ‘tricky words’ they know. They start thinking that they *can* read and this does wonders for their confidence.

The teachers read to the children too, so the children get to know all sorts of stories, poetry and information books. They learn many more words this way and it also helps their writing.

**How does the school know how well your child is doing?**

We use various ways to find out how the children are getting on in reading. We use the information to decide what reading group they should be in. Your child will work with children who are at the same reading level as him or her. Children will move to a different group if they are making faster progress than the others. Your child will have additional small group support if we think he or she needs some extra help to keep up.

In the summer term, the government asks us to do a phonics check of all the Year 1 children. That gives us extra information about their progress. We will let you know how well your child has done.

**What can you do to help?**

You have been invited to a meeting so that we can explain how we teach reading. Please come so you can support your child. We would very much like you to know how to help.

Your child will bring different sorts of books home from school. It helps if you know whether this is a book that your child can read on their own or whether this is a book that you should read *to* them. Our reading newsletter explained what the different books are.

Help your child to sound out the letters in words and then to ‘push’ the sounds together to make a whole word. Try not to refer to the letters by their names. Help your child to focus on the sounds. You can hear how to say the sounds correctly at this link: <https://ruthmiskin.com/en/find-out-more/parents/#lg=1&slide=2>. Watch the video titled, ‘How to say the sounds’.

We know parents and carers are very busy people. But if you can find time to read to your child as much as possible, it helps him or her to learn about books and stories. At Costessey Primary School we expect our children to read at home 5 times a week. They also learn new words and what they mean. Show that you are interested in reading yourself and talk about reading as a family. Please record all reading in your child’s reading record so we can see that you have read with them at home.

**Does it matter if my child misses a lesson or two?**

It matters a lot if your child misses school. The way we teach children to read is very well organised, so even one missed lesson means that your child has not learnt something that they need to know to be a good reader.

**What if he or she finds it difficult to learn to read?**

We want children to learn to read, however long it takes us to teach them. We will find out very quickly if your child is finding reading difficult. First, we move children to a different group, so that we can make sure that they have learnt what they need to know. If they still struggle, we give them extra time with an adult, on their own or in a small group.

Don’t hesitate to contact your child’s teacher if you have any concerns or would like to know how your child is making progress with their reading. We are all here to help and look forward to seeing you all at our reading information meetings soon.

Thank you for your continued support with your child’s reading at home.

Miss Bizley

Reading Lead