**The Teaching of phonics and reading at Kirkham and Wesham**

We believe that reading for pleasure is extremely important and try to give as many opportunities to develop a love of reading as we can. Teachers read interesting and meaningful fiction and non-fiction texts to the pupils on a daily basis, and some time is devoted to daily quiet reading. Our school library is updated regularly with new books, including recommended authors and award winning books. We aim for all children to independently read for pleasure.

The programmes of study for reading at key stages 1 and 2 acknowledge that reading consists of two dimensions: word reading and comprehension. Skilled word reading involves both the speedy working out of the pronunciation of unfamiliar printed words (decoding) and the speedy recognition of familiar printed words. This leads to reading fluency. Once children have mastered fluent decoding, they can focus on connecting the words and understanding the texts. Our goal is for all children to read fluently, and with confidence, in any subject by the end of their primary education. We recognise that reading fluently and being motivated to read are key to children’s success in school and future life. We very much teach our children to ‘learn to read’ and then crucially make sure they apply their skills so that they ‘read to learn’.

**Word-reading (decoding) and spelling (encoding):**

Phonics is key to teaching early reading and is taught in EYFS and Year 1 for 20-30 minutes daily. We have adopted the DfE approved SSP programme (systematic synthetic phonics) Success for All. Early reading books are fully decodable and matched to the phonics programme so that children feel a sense of success and achievement each time they read. With regular practice, they develop more speed and accuracy.

Our phonics teaching is underpinned by a clear understanding of the alphabet and how this represents the sounds (phonemes) with single letters and groups of letters (graphemes). Children are taught the correspondences between letters and sounds (graphemes and phonemes), as well as the skill of blending the individual shounds together to read. The term synthetic phonics refers to the verb synthesise meaning to combine. The skills of segmenting words into their individual sounds and then putting them back together is explicitly taught in our phonics lessons.

**Comprehension:**

Developing talk and role play in the early years are vital to developing language comprehension. In addition, listening to and discussing stories and non-fiction develops children’s vocabulary and through this children meet new words which they would rarely hear or use in everyday speech. At KWPs, we believe a language-rich environment is important for children to continue developing their vocabulary, with children taking part in conversations and talking through their thoughts and ideas. Listening is also an essential skill and it is important for our pupils to understand what good listening is.

Stories are a rich source of language and storytimes are an important part of our school day with teachers spending time reading aloud to their class. Through stories, children encounter vocabulary and story language they are unlikely to hear in everyday conversation. Literature is a powerful medium to develop imagination and learn about lives which may differ from their own. We know that children also benefit hugely from listening to family members read aloud to them and actively encourage families to enjoy stories together at home.