



How Reading is taught at The Loyne Specialist School



Reading at the Loyne is understood in its broadest sense. Pupils are carefully assessed in their symbolic development which means that we assess their ability to attribute meaning from visual stimulus within their environment starting with objects and moving through photographs, symbols to the written word. Their level of symbolic understanding then directs their mode of communication, both receptive (taking information from the environment) and expressive (sharing what they know). This is incorporated and taught throughout their curriculum.



01

Reading begins from birth where the child is picking up cues from their environment to make sense of the world. Reading books (or any kind of physically shared visual activity) provides the child with the comfort of body heat, rhythm of heart or voice including the timbre and pitch of voice. This is a soothing shared activity often resulting in stillness and calm. Other activities at this stage can be listening for sounds in the home and in the environment as this supports the child in being able to recognise and say what sounds are and where possible make the sound themselves.



At The Loyne many of our pupils are at this stage of reading development. Pupils will have opportunities to develop their early attention and concentration through multi-sensory exploration, listening to and making sounds using their own voices, participating in body percussion games and intensive interaction where they are encouraged to participate in turn-taking with activities with another adult using sound making equipment and vocalisations. Pupils will participate in sensory stories where they are encouraged to engage and interact with objects and sensory experiences linked to a story. They will also be encouraged to develop their visual and auditory tracking skills using motivating items and sounds.



As the child develops this ability to share attention supports the child further in using their eyes to scan pictures and focus their gaze on one spot. It also supports the child in developing book behaviours such as learning to turn pages from right to left, looking at the front and back of a book and taking an interest in choosing their favourite book. This favourite book can be read over and over often for many nights. They never tire of looking and asking about it. This is comforting for the child and should be encouraged.

02

We have a cohort of pupil at this stage in their reading development. Pupils will have regular reading activities with staff where they share a book, this may be a personalised book or a book without words and where they are listening to an adult describe pictures, often of places and events that are familiar to them. Pupils are encouraged to communicate what they see using sounds, signs, gestures and words. Staff will create opportunities to assess whether pupils are understanding the meaning contained in print and images. They may ask pupils to point to characters and objects on a page, or match a symbol of a picture to items on a page.



03

Looking at and talking about simple clear picture books supports the child in connecting nouns (names) and verbs (doing words) and adjectives (descriptive words) to pictures. Soon through repetition the child may begin to pick up on frequently seen, familiar words and recognise and say these out loud. At this point when child is beginning to see print as providing meaning they are ready to move into the formal teaching of reading.



Where pupils are assessed as being ready to access formal 'learning to read' activities this will be incorporated into their Personalised Learning Outcomes as an area of priority (pupils are typically working at B Squared progression step 2). In school where pupils are able to blend spoken sounds e.g. if they hear the sounds c-a-t they know this is the word 'cat' they will be taught letter sounds and what these look like in print and they will commence 'Little Wandle' (the phonic scheme that is used in school). Once they have learned 2 or more letters/sounds they will be taught how to blend these sounds together to make a word e.g. a-t = at, s-a-t = sat. Alongside this pupils will also learn tricky words e.g. said.

For some pupils, they will learn to read words by learning them from sight rather than using a phonic approach. Where pupils have difficulties with their expressive language they may be taught to use sign supported English to read or another method to overcome their spoken difficulty will be identified.