



What is phonics?

Words are made up from small units of sound called phonemes. Phonics teaches children to be able to listen carefully and identify the phonemes that make up each word. This helps children to learn to read words and to spell words. Fresh start builds on children's phonics skills in order to develop their reading fluency, comprehension and writing skills.

What is Fresh Start?

Fresh Start is a programme that is used in key stage 2 for children who need support with their reading. It is a 'quick catch up' programme where children work in small groups to read a text, unpick it, answer questions on it and then complete writing tasks based on their reading. The sessions follow a similar structure to the daily phonics lessons that take place in key stage 1. They run at least 3 times a week for 20-30 minutes and take place in addition to the reading and writing lessons in class.

What happens in a Fresh Start session?

During a Fresh Start session, children will begin by reviewing their phonics sounds and ensuring they are secure with using them to read individual words. Children will then move onto reading and discussing a short piece of text before completing comprehension questions based on it. As the sessions progress (children will work on the same text for several sessions), children will begin to work on grammar and writing skills based on the text whilst still practicing their reading skills. By working on their reading and writing at the same time, children develop more effective skills as they can see the link between the two.

## How can parents/carers help at home?

Reading at home is crucial to helping your child to develop their reading ability. Ideally children should read at least 4 times a week, this does not have to be their school reading book, it can be a book of their choice, a comic, a newspaper or a leaflet. As well as this, reading to your child helps them to develop their reading comprehension skills.