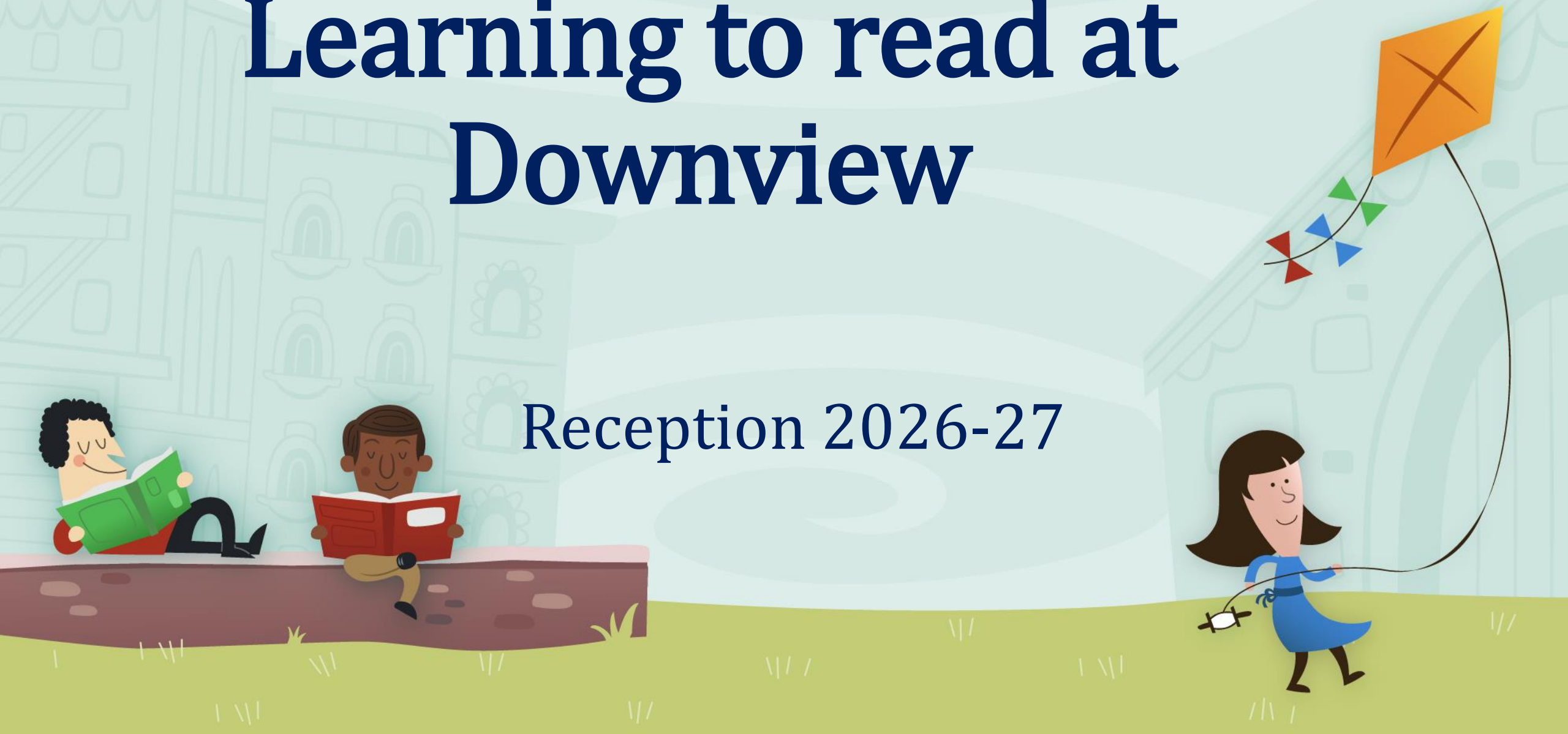
Learning to read at Downview

Reception 2026-27



Reading is the most important skill your child will learn, opening the door to all areas of the curriculum and helping them make sense of the world around them. Developing a love of books and stories from an early age builds language, imagination, confidence, and a lifelong enjoyment of learning.





Learning to read consists of two key skills



Word Reading: sounds and blending

Comprehension: understanding and discussion







Sounding and blending



(Synthetic) phonics teaches children to blend sounds together to read words and become confident readers.
We use the Song of Sounds programme at Downview.









Song of Sounds





Learning the phonemes…

- Children sing the song every day and learn an action to go with each sound
- They play games and complete activities to reinforce each sound as they are introduced to it.
- The sounds are shown in your child's reading journal.





Learning how to blend to read:

dig leg fan

"d - i - g, d - i - g, d - i - g, **dig**!"

Avoid "der, i, ger"!





A digraph is two letters that make one sound:

brown chain book





A trigraph is three letters that make one sound:

clear

fair

fright





Tricky **red** words…
These are taught separately as they cannot be sounded out.

do

the

said

push

some





How can you help at home?

- Sing the song together at home (you can find it on our website)
- Practise the actions together. Your child can teach these to you!
- Encourage your child to identify sounds in words they hear around them, on signs, food packets, or during story time. This helps them connect phonics learning to their world.
- When you say each sound keep it ‘pure’! Eg “c” not “cur”
- Practise little and often! Praise and positivity really work!





Reading scheme-Big Cat

Book Levels

- Pink
- Red
- Yellow
- Blue
- Green
- Orange
- Turquoise
- Purple



- Children usually make very good progress with your support at home. **Please spend at least 10 minutes every day reading with your child. Your input makes a really big difference!** Remember…little and often is the key!
- Find a quiet time, away from devices, and enjoy the reading together.
- We use the Collins Big Cat scheme and the children progress through this as they learn to blend sounds to read words.
- Lilac books encourage children to tell stories and sequence events and explain these.





Children read regularly to adults in school one to one and in small groups.
They will read every single day!
Please change your child's book after school any day…







Please don't change their **colour or box** number. Chat to the teacher if you think they might need more challenge.





Comprehension…

- The second key part of learning to read is understanding what's going on, why it's happening and predicting what might happen next.
- This is learnt through reading stories and talking about them.
- This is a very important part of learning to read and develops with sharing books with children at home and in school.
- Reading at bedtime really helps, try to create a strong story routine at the end of each day.
- Talk about the characters, the plot, the pictures. Change your voice for added fun!





Don’t worry if…

- Your child forgets a sound they could read before, this often happens and practise makes perfect!
- Your child wants to read the same book or , have the same book read to them over and over! They are building confidence and/or enjoying reading!
- They’re too tired to read. Revisit it again a bit later, little and often is the key. Reward effort and enthusiasm!





Reading Rewards at Downview…

- Please add your initials to your child's reading diary when you read with them each day.
- They will receive a token to spend at the vending machine once they have read 100 times at home. The machine is full of exciting choices!
- They will be rewarded along the way at 25 reads and 75 reads with additional small prizes.

100 Reads!

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40
41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50
51	52	53	54	55	56	57	58	59	60
61	62	63	64	65	66	67	68	69	70
71	72	73	74	75	76	77	78	79	80
81	82	83	84	85	86	87	88	89	90
91	92	93	94	95	96	97	98	99	100

Please sign and date when your child reads with you. When they have read 100 times at home, they will be able to visit the Downview book vending machine. We'll check each week to see how they are getting on!









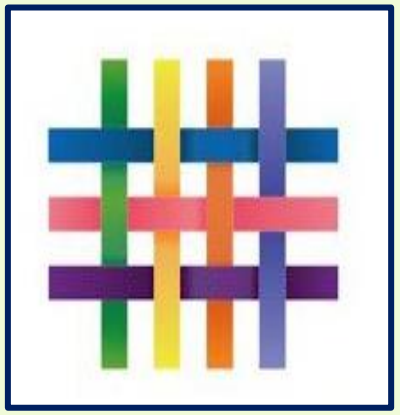



Additional support…

- We regularly assess your child's progress to ensure they are challenged but remain confident.
- We teach the initial sounds quickly over the first term and then move onto digraphs and trigraphs.
- We teach the children to blend and 'push' sounds together to read words as we teach new sounds.
- If needed, we may give them additional support in school in a smaller group and suggest things you can do to help at home, .







Tapestry

- Occasionally we may use Tapestry to suggest reading activities and games to try at home.
- Keep an eye on your notifications.





Please….

- Only books in book bags! No water bottles, toys etc
- Bring book bag EVERY day!
- Teachers will not always write in reading record books
- Take only 1 book at a time but please do change these as often as you like





Learning to write…

Segmenting (to write), is when children stretch out a word, listen for each sound they can hear, and write the letters for those sounds.
We teach the children to form the letters as we teach them different sounds.
They trace or write letters in sand, in the air, with different mark makers like chalk and eventually with pencils into their books.
Please avoid using capital letters when writing with your child at home





Thank you for coming today.

Your support at home makes a huge difference to your child’s progress.

Listening to your child read, sharing stories together, and talking about books helps develop the skills they need to become successful readers.

