

Comprehension at Dial Park

Even before children can read we begin to help them to understand what's happening through talking to them. This is the beginnings of comprehension.

In Nursery our children are encouraged to tell a story using picture books which are sent home to be shared with the child's parents. Staff also spend time asking questions whenever they read a story. In this way children begin to realise that the different pages and pictures relate to each other and form a sequence. They begin to see a beginning, middle and end to a story.

In school we build on these early comprehension skills. It's essential to see reading as not only "problem solving" the words but as a "message giving" activity. We use different types of questions to develop complete understanding of a book. These are known as VIPERS.

V = Vocabulary (what do you think that word means?)

I = Inference (which pieces of information tell you something that's not actually written?)

P = Predict (Can you say what might happen next?)

E = Explain (Tell me why that happened?)

R = Retrieve (Find me the sentence that showed how he was feeling)

S = Sequence or Summarise (Tell me what happened at the beginning, in the middle and at the end).

This acronym covers the comprehension areas set out in the "Reading Domains" for key stages 1 and 2.

We also spend the first fifteen minutes of the morning or afternoon (a few days a week) doing DIAL. We put a picture/ short piece of writing up and the children consider a few questions about the picture or passage which are then discussed together.

Our aim is that children will want to read for enjoyment, to learn facts and to question what they read. It's a lifetime skill that **opens the door** to future learning in every area of the curriculum and every area of life.



