

A Reading Partnership

Our aim is to work together with home to:

- create an environment where all children enjoy sharing reading material
- develop children as enthusiastic, independent and reflective readers
- demonstrate that reading is an enjoyable experience to be shared by all taking part
- provide suggestions so that home and school can support and promote reading and learning

It is important to remember that children are individuals and therefore make progress in all subjects including reading at different rates.

Where and when shall we read?

Reading is most successful when carried out in a quiet comfortable environment where there are not too many distractions. The amount of time spent reading will vary according to the needs and interest of your child, but it is important to set aside a few minutes of quiet time on a regular basis to read together. Reading together should be viewed as a pleasurable activity and both partners should be willing participants. Reading should take place when both partners have time to enjoy it. STOP when your child shows signs of tiredness and continue at another time. Many children enjoy listening to bedtime stories or poems.

What shall we read?

Words don't just belong in books. When we look around, print is everywhere. Encourage your child to look at print on -

- signs and posters
- shop windows
- newspapers
- food labels
- T.V. programmes

Children quickly learn that the printed word conveys meaning. Encourage your child to choose and experience a wide range of print e.g. catalogues, timetables, information leaflets, advertisements, newspapers, instructions, labels and signs, comics and magazines, bath books, maps, one word a page books, food wrappers, recipes, games.

Reading is more likely to be an enjoyable activity for your child if he/she is involved in the choice of reading material. Ideally the material being read should be appropriate to the reader so that they enjoy it, maintain interest and are successful. Some children (and adults) enjoy reading the same book more than once. Some successful readers enjoy reading 'easy' material. Sometimes children choose reading material in which the text is too difficult. Respect their choice and aim for a balance. You could say, "Tonight we will read this, but tomorrow can we start or continue with....."

How can parents help?

A child who is at the earlier stages of reading can be helped by the following: choose a time to read when your child and you are not too tired;

- ensure it is quiet - turn off the T.V.
- encourage your child to choose a variety of books that he/she might want to hear or read;
- encourage the reading of familiar stories and rhymes. Memorising parts of the story is an important stage in learning to read and gives a child confidence. It is not cheating!
- allow your child to take an active part in the reading session i.e. holding the book, turning the pages, discussing what interests them;

- look at the cover and title, can your child predict what the story is about?
- read the story to your child first, it helps him/her to understand the story and predict the text;
- talk about the story, helping your child to understand opinions and ideas are an important part of reading. Encouraging discussion shows that you are interested in and value what your child has to say;
- use the pictures as they can help make sense of the text, add to the story or tell a different story;
- show your child the way words go from left to right on the page by pointing to them with your fingers, yours first, then theirs. This will help them to understand that the words being said aloud are the same words you can both see on the page.
- Allow time before turning the page. You could ask "what do you think will happen next?"
- When your child comes to an unknown word, leave time to see if he/she can work it out from the sense of the story, or by using the initial sound. If not, give the word and carry on so that the flow of the story is not interrupted;
- Praise your child when they work out a new word for themselves or when they go back and put right a word they get wrong the first time.

Activities to encourage reading

Read to your child as often as possible, bringing the story to life. Children love to hear dramatic reading of stories. Parents generate enthusiasm for books and stories:

- re-read favourite stories chosen by your child even when you become bored and want a change;
- sing and say rhymes, songs and jingles with your child and encourage him/her to join in so that they know them by heart. Rhymes help children to see how letters make the same pattern in different words. Play odd one out games e.g. which word is the odd one out "cat, hat, dog, mat";
- play alphabet and sound games for example, I spy. This shows children that every word begins with a letter;
- point out print and talk about signs, shop names, advertisements and packaging;
- when possible buy books for your child from jumble and car boot sales as well as bookshops. Choosing and owning a book can give great pleasure;
- make use of the local library, choose some books and let your child choose others. Sometimes your child will choose books you might not have selected, but learning to make choices is part of becoming a reader;
- when you watch television with your child, chat about the characters, plot etc;
- provide opportunities for your child to listen to taped stories or watch a video of a story;
- make sure your child sees you reading. Newspapers, letters, cookery books, instruction manuals and magazines are all varieties of reading material and demonstrate to your child that reading is not limited to reading a story.

Reading in School

The National Curriculum for English states that to develop as effective readers pupils should be taught to:

- read accurately, fluently and with understanding
- understand and respond to the texts they read i.e. they can discuss what they have read
- read, analyse and evaluate a wide range of texts, including literature from the English literacy heritage and from other cultures and traditions.

Your child will be given a book from school to read to him/her self. He/she should be able to read about 90% of the words in these books. Frequently these books will be from our core reading scheme, Oxford Reading Tree (ORT) and will occasionally be supplemented with books from other schemes and the school library. Please do not hesitate to write a comment in the Home-School Reading diary when your child has read some or all of their book.

Reading in school may be whole class, group reading or individual. Children are taught a range of reading strategies to help them develop their reading skills. These strategies include grammatical knowledge, phonics (sounds and

spelling), knowledge of context, word recognition and graphic knowledge i.e. recognising the visual pattern of the new word. The phonics scheme used by the school is Read, Write, Inc.

In addition, children are also encouraged to share and discuss books with a partner and read quietly. Individual children are heard read by staff, voluntary reading helpers and trained parent helpers.

All the children have a home/school reading diary which is used to record comments when a child is heard read either individually or in a group reading session. Parents are encouraged to comment in these also at all stages in their child's school life. Children start recording their own comments about their reading on a regular basis when this is suggested by their class teacher. Suggestions of what to observe and comment on are provided in the diaries.

Enjoyment of reading is also encouraged through the use of the school library, visits from the mobile library, visits from authors, book fairs and involvement in World Book Day and Book Week events.

Reading for meaning

Reading is only successful when children have understood what they have read. Questioning is vital. When reading fiction texts, use questions such as:

- Why do you think this story is called...?
- Which part of the story did you like / dislike? Why?
- What did the author use to help tell the story?
- What will happen next? Why do you think that?
- Do you know any other stories like this one?
- How would you feel if it happened to you?
- How have the pictures helped you?
- Can you think of a different ending?

When reading non-fiction texts, use questions such as:

- What is this book about?
- Where is the contents page? How do we use it?
- What is the difference between the contents page and the index?
- Can you describe the layout of the text?
- What did you learn from reading this book?
- Did you think that the pictures made the book more interesting?
- Can you find out about... in this book?

Reading with Reception and KS1 Children

Many of the activities that you enjoyed with your child before they started school need to be continued to help your child develop as an early reader, e.g.

- saying nursery rhymes
- doing puzzles
- playing matching games
- playing memory games e.g. Kim's game. Put out a selection of objects on a tray. Ask your child to close his/her eyes. Remove one item and ask him/her to tell you what is missing, when he/she opens his/her eyes
- songs
- pairing games
- re-telling favourite stories

Reading with KS1 and KS2 Children

As your child becomes more fluent and confident at reading, he/she may prefer to read to him/herself. Parents still have an important role to play. You can still enjoy sharing the reading of a text for example taking on the reading of a part in a play script or reading alternate pages. When your child has finished reading to the end of a chapter, ask him/her to tell you about the story. Some questions you may wish to ask are;

- What has happened so far?
- What do you think is going to happen next?
- What do you think of the main character?
- Why do you think the characters behaved as they did?
- Would you recommend this book to a friend? Why?
- Encourage discussion through comments e.g. tell me about the author and illustrator's style.

When your child brings home a book to share, they want to show how well they can read so may often choose a book which may appear to you to be too easy. Use this as an opportunity to praise them for;

- reading a whole book fluently
- reflecting on and discussing what they have read with understanding. This will be a much more valuable reading experience, than struggling through a more difficult read. Next time you can encourage them to read something more challenging.