



# Sedgefield Primary School

Learning Together for Life



Reading Information Booklet for Parents

# Contents

Page 3	Introduction
Page 4	Working Together Choosing Books
Page 5	Supporting the initial stages of reading development
Page 6	Synthetic Phonics Helping your child read a word
Page 7	As your child becomes a more confident reader The Reading Scheme Reading in School
Page 8	The reading record diary
Page 9	Supporting the confident reader
Page 11	Advice Useful Websites

## INTRODUCTION

Children are natural learners. They are constantly learning about their environment through interaction, exploration, trial and error, and "having a go" at things. Children watch what adults do and then act out what they have seen. This role-play of adult behaviour is an intrinsic component of childhood learning. As a child's world of experience expands, so deeper understandings are constructed. New learning is always built upon existing foundations, and existing structures are constantly being adapted to accommodate fresh insights.

From a very early age children can be encouraged to enjoy books by sharing them with adults. The six-month old child who turns the pages of a board book is beginning to behave like a reader.

As a parent, you can build upon this by giving support and encouragement. By demonstrating how books work, talking about the illustrations and indicating how they relate to print, you are showing your child the meaning and purposes for reading. Your child needs to understand this so that they will be motivated to read. Try to encourage your child to retell stories and value their attempts to make sense of the print. In this way you can foster an enthusiasm for and a positive attitude to reading.

Children also learn from their environment and their interaction with others. In our literate society, environmental print demonstrates the many purposes for reading and encourages children to develop an understanding to the written word. Children, therefore, become literate in the same way as they learn to speak their home language.

By surrounding your child with the printed word (books, magazines, newspapers, signs, shopping lists, etc.), showing the purpose of reading by reading yourself and making sharing books an enjoyable experience, you can lay the foundations for your child becoming a successful reader.

**Children learn to read by reading.**



## WORKING TOGETHER

As a parent, you play a vital role in helping your child learn to read. After all you taught your child to talk. School and home working in partnership together create the perfect setting for encouraging a love of reading. We appreciate the commitment you give in helping your child to become a confident reader.

## CHOOSING BOOKS

At our school we use The Oxford Reading Tree scheme. As well as their reading scheme book, the children are encouraged to choose from our library. They may bring home books which they cannot read alone and favourite books which they have read repeatedly (you may find that a very well loved story like this is the first one that your child learns to read independently).

We believe that children should:

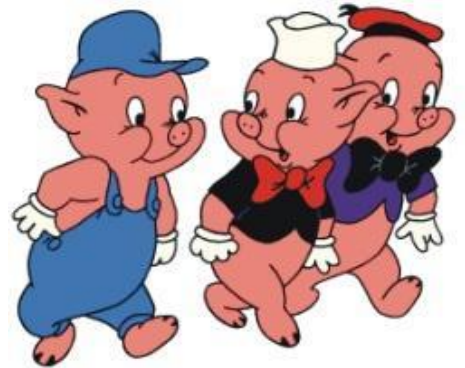
- Behave like readers
- Be confident
- Enjoy books
- Talk about the books they have read
- Acquire a skill, which they will use throughout life



## SUPPORTING THE INITIAL STAGES OF READING DEVELOPMENT

### WHAT CAN YOU DO TO HELP AT HOME?

- Try to choose a quiet time every night with your child, and make yourselves comfortable
- Let your child hold the book
- Point to the words as you read them
- Use the pictures as well; there is often an additional story in them
- Allow plenty of time for discussion before you turn over a page. A valuable question is:  
"What do you think will happen next?"
- Let your child read the story to you afterwards, even if this is reciting by heart, or making the story up from the pictures. This is a very important stage.
- Memorising is not cheating. Make reading fun!
- Children learn to behave like readers by these activities. Praise all their attempts
- If your child is too tired or reluctant to join in, just make it an opportunity for you to read in a relaxed and enjoyable way.



## SYNTHETIC PHONICS

Learning to read is like learning a code and the letters are the symbols for the code. If you know what the symbols mean you can crack the code.

When your child is learning to read there are two crucial things to learn:

- the sounds represented by written letters
- how to blend the sounds together to make words.

Synthetic Phonics is a way of teaching reading.

Children are taught to read letters or groups of letters by saying the sound(s) they represent - so, they are taught that the letter / sounds like / / / / / when we say it. Children can then start to read words by blending (synthesising) the sounds together to make a word.

At school, you will probably hear teachers talking about blending, but you might also hear them refer to sounding out too. All these terms focus on the same point - synthesising sounds.

There are 26 letters of the alphabet but they make 44 sounds.

The Oxford Reading Tree website <http://www.oxfordowl.co.uk> has a very useful section within the reading pages on phonics, including a short film and the sounds being correctly pronounced so that blending is easier (e.g. 'mmm' not 'muh').

## HELPING YOUR CHILD READ A WORD

Ask your child.....

- Which letters do you recognise? Can you blend them together?
- Does the word make sense? Read the sentence again to check.
- Is there another word that would make sense?
- Is it a word you know?
- Have you read the word before? Is it on another page?
- Are there any bits of the word you recognise?
- Miss out the word, say 'mmmm', finish the sentence. Then go back and work out what the word was.
- In a rhyming book, think of a word that rhymes.
- Do the pictures give any clues?
- Use the first 1 or 2 sounds with another strategy

Always go back and read the sentence again!

## AS YOUR CHILD BECOMES A MORE CONFIDENT READER

It is still important to read with your child even when they have become a more confident reader.

### CONTINUING TO SUPPORT AND GUIDE YOUR CHILD

Do not worry if your child's reading is not word perfect. If they are making sense of the text, this does not matter e.g. "house" instead of "home", "Good dog, Spot" instead of "Good boy, Spot". It would matter, however, if they read: "He got on his house and rode away", as this would have changed the meaning. Always be ready to take over if your child is struggling. With your help they will succeed and will want to read more and more as a result.

### THE READING SCHEME

The following levels are a guide. Children progress at different rates and will move through the levels when they are ready.

Reception	Levels 1, 1+ and 2	
Year 1	Levels 2 - 5	
Year 2	Levels 5 - 8	(also books to challenge more able readers)
Year 3	Levels 8 - 11	(also Wolf Hill for reluctant readers who need to gain confidence and motivation)
Year 4	Levels 11 - 14	
Year 5	Levels 14 - 16	
Year 6	Free Reading	

For children to fully understand what they are reading they must read fluently. That is why rereading a book is important and why your child will not be rushed onto the next level just because they can decode what it says. They must develop comprehension skills at the same time.

### READING IN SCHOOL

In Reception, Year 1 and Year 2 children are heard to read individually from their reading books. From Year 3 onwards the children are in guided reading groups and once a week they will work with their teacher using a group set of books. This will involve reading and discussing aspects of the text.

## WHAT DO I WRITE IN THE READING RECORD?

The Reading Record records what your child has read. Regular comments from you, linked to the questions below, are also needed to show that your child is extending his/her reading through questioning and interaction with an adult.

The following list is not an exhaustive list but offers suggestions that may be appropriate. It is very important to remember that the enjoyment factor is always worth commenting on. Parents are not expected to comment on each of the following areas after each reading session!

- How enthusiastic is your child about the choice of book?
- Can your child remember the story so far?
- Is your child reading using only the pictures for clues?
- Does your child understand that the words they are reading mean something?
- Can your child read words out of context e.g. when you point to a word without reading the whole sentence?
- Is your child confident to attempt new words?
- What reading strategies is your child using e.g. sounds, use of the picture, use of the context?
- Can your child follow the text without using a finger or marker?
- Is there a pattern to the mistakes your child is making e.g. words ending in "ed" or starting in "sh"?
- Does your child recognise mistakes and self correct?
- Is your child recognising many key words?
- Is your child aware of punctuation?
- Is your child reading with expression?
- How long is your child able to sustain reading?





## SUPPORTING THE CONFIDENT READER

Confident readers have reached the stage where they no longer wish to read to an adult and want to read silently to themselves. The interaction between you and your child changes at this stage. To ensure that your child's reading development continues to move forward, we would encourage you to question them about what they are reading, at an appropriate time, to extend their reading and share their enjoyment of the book.

The following questions will provide ideas that you can extend to suit individual needs.

Questions to ask...

- What is the title of the book?
- What kind of book is it? (Fiction, non fiction, poetry, short story etc.)
- Who is the author/illustrator?
- Have you read any other books by the same author?
- What made you choose this book? (Author, cover, illustration, recommendation etc.)
- Did you read the blurb before selecting the book?
- Could you tell anything about the book before you started reading it? What were the clues?
- Have you read this book before? Why have you chosen it again?



Questions to ask before your child begins or resumes their book...

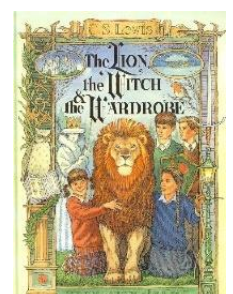
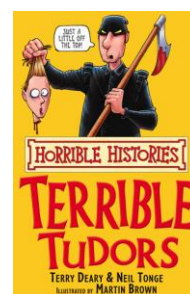
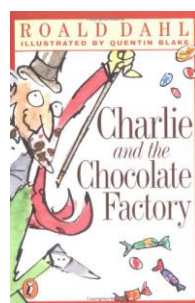
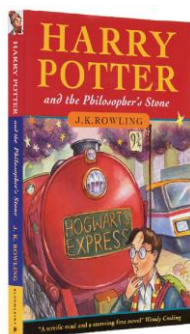
- What has happened so far?
- What do you think will happen next?
- What are the clues that make you think this?
- How would you like the story to end?
- Are you involved in the story? Why?
- Where is the story set? Is there a description?
- When is the story set? (past, present, future)
- Who are the characters in the story? Who do you like/dislike? Why?
- Do you feel similar to any of the characters? Tell me what is similar?

Questions to ask when your child has finished their book...

- Was the book as you expected?
- Was there anything you disliked about the story?
- At what point did you decide you liked/disliked the story?
- If you have read this book before, did you enjoy it more this time?
- Did you notice anything special about the way language is used in this book?
- (dialect, descriptive writing etc.)
- If you had written this book, how would you have made it better?
- Has anything that happens in this book ever happened to you?
- Can you describe an exciting moment or favourite part of the story?
- Is the story straightforward? Is there more than one story happening at the same time?
- Was this the most important character in the story?
- Do we get to know the characters quickly or do they build up slowly through the book?
- Was the ending as you expected? Did you like the way the story ended?
- Do you like the illustrations? Do you have a favourite?
- Would you recommend this book to your friends? Tell me what you would say to a friend?

Older children should still read out loud occasionally even when they are confident and fluent. It is a different skill to master and ensures they give greater attention to the effect of punctuation.

Once your child is happy to read, try to encourage them to read a range of genres (as well as a mixture of fiction and non-fiction) and not get too specialised. Inevitably, just as we do as adults, they will develop preferences and seek out types of books they like (or a particular author) however, if they haven't experienced a genre they won't know if they like it or not if they don't try it out.



## ADVICE IF READING BECOMES A CHALLENGE AT HOME

We would like all of our children to enjoy reading rather than see it as an effort/hard work/something they don't enjoy.

- Try to avoid confrontation
- Offer alternative reading material, e.g. internet access, magazines, non-fiction etc.
- Encourage reading at different times of the day or week
- Buy/borrow books on tapes from the local library and then you can listen whilst in the car or before bed
- Share reading activities and interact with the text together
- Share the problem with your child's teacher, we are here to help!

### USEFUL WEBSITES

<http://www.oxfordowl.co.uk>

<http://www.oup.com/oxed/pdf/ORTGuideForParents.pdf>

[http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/Parents/Schoolslearninganddevelopment/HelpingYourChildToLearn/DG\\_4016579](http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/Parents/Schoolslearninganddevelopment/HelpingYourChildToLearn/DG_4016579)

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/>

<http://www.phonicsplay.co.uk/>

<http://www.wordsforlife.org.uk/>

<http://www.crickweb.co.uk/ks2literacy.html>

<http://www.woodlands-junior.kent.sch.uk/literacy/index.htm>

<http://www.woodlands-junior.kent.sch.uk/interactive/onlinestory.htm>

<http://www.snaithprimary.eril.net/rindex.htm> (nursery rhymes)

<http://www.schooljotter.com/showpage.php?id=55495> (online books)