



Ladygrove Park Primary School

A Parents' Guide to Reading

Our Aims for Reading

Our aims at Ladygrove Park Primary are that children:

- ✓ See reading as an enjoyable and worthwhile experience;
- ✓ Become confident and fluent readers;
- ✓ Understand what they are reading;
- ✓ Select appropriately from a wide range of texts;



Parents as Partners

This leaflet is for parents and carers of children at Ladygrove Park Primary School. It sets out some of the main things we know about how children learn to read and describes the ways in which reading is taught at Ladygrove Park. Importantly, it asks for your help in supporting reading at home.

Learning to Read

As a parent or carer, you can help your child learn to read in many ways. Research shows that children whose families read together at home are much more likely to become successful, confident, independent readers.

Here are some general tips for encouraging reading at home:

Be a model reader

It is important that your child sees YOU reading books (be they cookery books, romantic novels, detective mysteries, short stories or computer manuals!), ebooks, newspapers, magazines and other materials on a regular basis.

Fill your house with books, comics and magazines

Having lots of reading materials around helps your child to see how important and enjoyable reading is. Encourage your child to carry these around at all times so they can read whenever they like e.g. on car and train journeys, on holiday, staying with grandparents or in spare moments.

Encourage children to join in

Ask your child to read out the recipe for you as you cook, or the TV listings when you are watching TV, or read signs together when out and about.

Share books

Go to libraries, bookshops or the Story Museum in Oxford (especially when authors are visiting). It's a great way to meet people, have fun and share books. Encourage your child to choose their own book – this will help to develop their individual interests. Encourage your child to swap books with friends.

Give books

And encourage others to give books or book tokens as presents.

Fun, enjoyable, rewarding, difficult, daunting, frustrating...

Helping your child learn to read can be all of these things.

Reading at Home with Younger Children

Don't forget the importance of reading **to** your child. Children love to listen to stories and this is vital to them as a developing reader and writer. Even when your child is able to read, this remains as important as listening to them read.

Try and read to your child every day

If possible, find somewhere quiet and comfortable where you can both enjoy reading together. Make reading a fun part of your daily routine!

Choose books with lots of rhyme and repetition in them

Encourage your child to join in. Point out any words that are repeated so that your child makes links between spoken words and printed words.

Talk about what is happening in the pictures

Encourage your child to notice the details. In children's books, there's often a lot more going on in the pictures than in the words! Talk about the book as you read it and after you've finished.

Read your child's favourite books

Reading a book that your child loves is really valuable, no matter how well you both know it or how often you've read it before. Reading favourite books again and again helps early readers make links between spoken words and written words, builds their vocabulary and fosters that all-important love of reading. Your child may even begin to read their favourite books on their own.

Read information books as well as stories

These are just as helpful in developing your child's literacy skills.

Simple Games to Play at Home

Playing word matching games like Bingo, Snap, or Odd One Out will help your child to recognise common words and word patterns:

- Play word matching games with a selection of **early sight words**, such as: my the and he she
- Play word matching games with simple **rhyming words**, such as: cat, bat, hat; sit, fit, hit; pot, hot, got
- Play word matching games with **words that have the same first or last letter**, such as: sun, sat, sea, sand; hen, sun, down, fan
- Play games that **match simple words and pictures**, such as: cat, swing, house, ball.

Help your Child with their School Reading Books

When your child is in Foundation Stage they will be able to borrow books from the class book corners and the school library. Help your child to choose a book you will both enjoy sharing at home. Your child may not be able to read this and may just enjoy having it read to them. When your child is ready, and has acquired the appropriate level of fluency and confidence with a wide enough range of phonics sounds, then they will be given a phonics reading book pitched at the right level for them every week, so that they can practise applying the sounds they have learnt and not overly struggle with sounds they are yet to learn.

From Year 1 onwards your child will still have the opportunity to borrow a book from the class book corners or the school library as well as a phonics reading book. The phonics reading books are located outside the classrooms. These books are colour banded and each class teacher will advise you of the colour appropriate to your child. Please help your child to change their reading books regularly.

Less confident readers in Years 3 and 4 will choose banded reading books that are available for independent selection.

Once your child is reading confidently, they will probably only choose one book at a time from the class collection, one book from the school library and have the opportunity to borrow books from Didcot library once a term.

Each child will be given a school reading diary. Children have guided reading with a teacher at least once a week and the teacher will record in the reading diaries which books the children have read. It is really useful if you can record the books you read at home with a brief note to let the teacher know how they got on.

Ways you can help:

- Encourage your child to point to the words as they read. This helps early readers to match the words they say to the words they see.
- If the book is a bit difficult, take turns reading a page each. This will help the flow of the reading, and you can begin to model to your child how to read with expression.
- Talk about the book as you read it, and after you've finished. Ask your child what he liked or disliked about the book, or what he found difficult.
- Each child will have a school reading diary. Please write a short note to the teacher. You don't need to do this every time, but it's useful for your child's teacher to know what they enjoyed and what they found difficult.
- Encourage your child to sound out simple words. They are introduced to phonics from Foundation Stage and are very familiar with doing this. Look at the sound each letter makes in the word and blend the sounds together e.g. cat = c-a-t. Your class teacher will be able to let you know the sounds your child is learning in school.
- There are 'tricky words' that cannot be sounded out such as 'the, go, are'. If your child gets stuck on a word that does not make sense when blending the sounds together, tell the child what the word says.

Don't worry if the book seems too easy - all of us enjoy an easy read sometimes, and it can help your child to consolidate their skills and develop their comprehension.

What NOT to do!

A common mistake made by many parents is to cover up the pictures or the rest of the text when a child is reading. Parents often do this because they think it will help focus on the words they need to read. In fact, it's one of the least helpful things you can do! The pictures and the rest of the words on a page give vital clues to the words your child is reading - so make sure your child can see them!

Also please do not rush ahead of the sounds that your child is learning in school with their Phonics Teachers as Read Write Inc. Phonics is a highly structured programme with a clear order and pace for teaching the sounds; if we try to rush the children ahead before we assess that they are secure then their confidence and fluency will suffer. This also means not trying expecting your child to read something that is too hard for them under the misconception that this will make them better readers.

What should I do if my child gets stuck?

You could:

- Help them with the initial sound.
- Help them to blend the individual sounds within the word together.
- Let them read on – they may be able to work out the word from the context.
- Read the word for them (especially if it cannot be sounded out or is a character's name, etc.).
- *Pause* first, to give them time to work it out, *prompt* as suggested above and then *praise* them for trying even if they don't quite get it right.

It's not *just* about reading...

It is really important that children understand what they are reading and begin to form and express their own opinions about books.

- **Talk about a book before reading it.** Involve your child in choosing books in the library or bookshop – encourage them to look at the back cover and say what the book is about, and why they might like or dislike it.
- **Talk about stories together.** Ask your child to tell you the story and to explain what happened and why. Encourage them to express their own feelings about particular characters or events. It is important that your child discusses how the story made them feel, and whether they like or dislike it.
- **Make connections to real life.** Make connections between things that happened in the book and things that have happened to your child or people you know.
- **Talk about information books.** Ask your child to tell you what they have learned, or what they want to find out next. Encourage them to evaluate the book – was the information clear and easy to find?

Reading for a Purpose

Reading for a purpose helps your child to see that reading is not only entertaining, but is an important and useful skill for life:

- Use a recipe, read a film review, find something in a catalogue, or make something following the instructions.
- Use **information books** and **encyclopaedias** to look things up or find things out.

Reading to Older Children is still Important

Reading to older children is still important. Even as children grow in confidence as readers, it is important to continue reading to them. This helps children to understand the special language of stories, builds their vocabulary and supports their writing skills.

- Take a lively interest in your child's reading and the books they bring home. If possible, set aside a quiet time each day for reading books together. Some children will begin to read silently at this age and this should be encouraged. Try to make sure they have some quiet time for reading on their own.
- When a child chooses a book to read, it is important that they develop their own preferences and interests in books. Encourage your child to talk about their choices.