



Alderman Pounder Infant and Nursery School

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Head Teacher: Miss J. Hemsley

Friday 5th October 2018

Dear Parents/Carers,

By now your child will be well into their reading activity both in school and at home with you. Inside the diary there is a page for each week to record comments about any reading that your child has done. Each page is divided into **Monday – Sunday** on the left and **notes/messages** on the right.

The **Monday – Sunday** rows are for any adult, at home or in school, to comment about your child's reading on that particular day. The **notes/messages** page is for the teacher to inform parents about the focus of the small group or whole class reading lesson. This comment will also let you know how your child has done within that session. A group read stamp will be used to let you know if your child has participated in a small group read.

In the front of the reading diary are **book band information boxes** which outline the objectives (.), dos (✓) and don'ts (x) for each particular reading band/level. Each time your child moves up to the next book band it would be useful for you to take a look at this information to support you when helping your child with their reading.

We encourage the children to change their reading books **at least once a week** and this is usually done on set days within classes.

Year 2 children **will change their own books**. Please ensure you have written a comment in the reading diary before they change their books to enable us to keep track of what and how they are reading.

Year 1 children **will be supported initially** by staff to change their books during the day. As the children become more independent, they too can change their own books.

If your child is forgetting to change their books, please tell the class teacher as messages in the diaries may only be picked up on a weekly basis.

Your child will engage in a reading lesson with their teacher or TA at least once a week during **whole class/group reading sessions**. Other opportunities for 1-1 reads may occur throughout the week.

This ensures that:

- we keep a close track of your child's progress within their reading level/band and teach the necessary reading skills appropriate to them
- we are up-to-date with any of your comments in the diary about your child's reading

Some of the children in Year 2 become more competent and fluent readers and are ready for the challenge of **reading beyond the word and getting at the meaning within the text**. We do this by encouraging the children to respond to the text through simple questioning (*What, When, Where, How, Why type questions*) that **gets at their understanding and feelings about what they have just read**.

We would welcome your help and support with this as your child reads to you at home.

Phonics

In addition to the above, you will also find **information about phonics** (letters and sounds) in the reading diary.

Phonics is very important in developing reading and writing (spelling). To meet the learning needs of all, children are grouped within their class which allow them to work at a 'phonics level' appropriate to them, based on previous teacher assessments. It is common for some children to repeat a phonics phase and this is done through specific target grouping. For some children, it is better that they repeat a phase and consolidate prior learning rather than race ahead and struggle. You may hear your child use words like **phoneme** (sound) and **grapheme** (letter) as they talk about their learning. This is the kind of vocabulary that we use as we are teaching the children during phonics lessons.

Words to spell

These are sometimes referred to as the common exception words. They are words that are not usually easy to segment to spell using phonics.

Towards the front of the reading diary, you will find a list of spellings that your child will be expected to learn by the end of their school year. These lists (bookmarks) will also be sent home as a hard copy; Y1s is green and Y2s is blue. Please try to practise these regularly and in small steps (a few words at a time). Once you feel that your child is able to independently and confidently spell the first few words, progress onto the next few. Remember to recap those that they have already achieved to ensure consistency. From time to time, spelling assessments will happen in class to ensure that your child gets the appropriate practise activities in school, matched to their learning needs. Regular practise in class is planned for and your child's spelling success is celebrated.

How can you help with spelling?

Everyone knows that practise makes perfect!

Your child needs to practise as often as possible, especially with the trickiest words.

The best method is the **look – say – cover – write – check** method.

- **Look** at the shape of the word and any spelling pattern. Look for the part that is tricky!
- **Say** /read the word.
- **Cover** the word up and try to **write** it.
- **Check** if you got it right. If yes, well done! If you spelt it incorrectly, **look** again.

Spelling the words out loud can also help, together with writing them within simple sentences.

Learning to spell a few words correctly every week will have a huge impact on your child's writing ability by the end of the year.

We really do appreciate the support that you give in helping us to improve your child's reading and writing. Regular reading practise is vital if your child is to reach their full potential. 5 Dojo points are on offer for all children who are reading 4 or more times a week. We do appreciate your support in hearing them read as often as you can and we look forward to reading your comments in the diary as we work together during this school year.

Additional one-to-one reading in class always makes a massive difference to children's progress. If you have any spare time and would like to come in to school and help children with their reading please visit the school office and let us know.

Thank you for taking the time to read this letter.

Miss Hall (Literacy Lead on behalf of all KS1 staff)

P.S. Look out for our '**Loving Literacy**' evening (Thursday 11th October 2018, 5 – 6pm) and come along to find out more about the teaching of reading and writing in school.