



Supporting your child's reading

Information for Parents and Carers



Why is reading so important?

Reading is a vital tool for learning and for life. Research shows that children who enjoy reading, achieve better at school. Reading, not only helps us to widen our knowledge and experiences, but also allows us to increase our confidence in many aspects of our lives.

Helping children to make progress in reading is most successful when it is done in partnership between home and school. Any support you can give will improve your child's progress. We appreciate that parents and other adults are more than willing to offer this support, but may sometimes be unsure how to go about it. Therefore we offer here some tips and advice which we hope you will find useful. Please remember, teachers are available to give advice whenever it's needed.

How do we teach reading in school?

In school we teach reading in a variety of ways. In Early Years and for Key Stage 1 (as well as any children who need catch-up programmes) the children are '**Learning to read**'.

A range of methods are used, including daily phonics lessons and regular *Guided Reading* sessions. Guided Reading is where small groups of children read aloud in turn, the same text that they all have a copy of. The texts are carefully selected to suit their ability and the assessment focus for the session. The children will then discuss specific points with the group and the Teacher/TA who is working with them. This may include strategies for decoding words, understanding of vocabulary and comprehension of the text.



One to one reading with an adult takes place whenever possible or necessary. Any areas of concern, achievement or progress would be passed onto parents and carers accordingly. We very much value our parent/volunteer reading support - if you can help please see your child's class teacher.

Teachers/TAs will also assess children's reading progress in *phonic sessions*, based on the 'Letters and Sounds' phases using the 'Songs of Sounds' scheme and materials (KS1). In these regular sessions the children learn to decode, segment and blend letter sounds. This not only teaches reading, also spelling and writing.

In all these ways the teacher is constantly assessing each child's reading progress according to the approved assessment procedures.



In the Key Stage 2 the children are '**Reading to Learn**'. As they increase in their ability to read independently the children use texts as a resource to develop their knowledge and understanding of the world around them. Reading a range of texts also helps them improve their writing style. Again, *guided reading* is the main way reading skills are taught, but with an increasing emphasis on the skills of comprehension, prediction, deduction and inference. Year 5 and 6 children will have guided reading or comprehension homework as a norm.

Children will still be heard to read on a *one to one* basis by the teacher as necessary. Parent and governor volunteers also hear children read regularly and will support them in their choice of books - if you think you can help with this please contact your child's teacher. It is more usual for your child to be reading aloud in class and groups within KS2, either sharing their ideas or their work or taking a turn to read from a text. A range of materials are used to support catch up reading, such as the audio book range, 'Rainbow Reading', 'Boosting

Reading' and other specially designed schemes.

How can you help at home?

Before they come to school your child will have begun to explore the world of reading through sharing and exploring books with you - continuing this throughout their childhood and adolescence remains vitally important. **We recommend listening to your child read regularly - this could include reading recipes, comics, newspapers, magazines and letters - even shopping lists, instructions and sign posts.** Helping your child to master the lifelong skill of reading and therefore become a fluent, independent reader, who develops a love for reading, is one of the most important ways you can support your child's learning at home.



From Reception (Woodside class) onwards, your child will be sent home with a '**reading book**'. This will be a **colour banded book** from our selection of various schemes - the majority of our school collection is the Oxford Reading Tree materials. We try to give the children a range of reading books so that they are exposed to fiction and non-fiction genres from an early age. Each class operates their own system of changing these books and the curriculum letters that teachers send home at the beginning of each year will explain the class system, just as your child will be shown by their teacher as necessary. New books and any movement in colour banded level will be recorded in the reading record book (KS1) or on their reading record card at KS2.

We do not publicise the colour banded levels within the school to minimise comparison of one child's reading progress with that of another. Natural competitiveness amongst children can diminish other children's self-esteem - this works contrary to our aim as a school to develop each child to be the best that they can be, achieving and progressing at a rate that secures their own learning development. If a child moves levels at the wrong time it can damage their reading confidence.

Listening to your child read their reading book several times a week is the main way you can support your child. This is just as important for a child in Woodside, Oaks or Pines as it is for Lyburn, Langley, Hamptworth or Brambles. However, as children become independent readers they may prefer to read more on their own. Please sign their reading record book/card for times when you have heard them AND for times when you know they have read to themselves.

**READING RECORD CARDS THIS YEAR HAVE A MINIMUM 3 TIMES A WEEK
ADULT SUPERVISION REQUIREMENT TO EARN REWARDS/PRAISE IN SCHOOL
AND MEET THE HOME-LEARNING EXPECTATIONS**



Library books at KS1 and 'Own Choice' reading books can be shared in the same way. The own choice book could be their own book from home or the local library that they are reading for enjoyment, but **this should NOT replace the role of the colour banded reading book which is monitored by their teacher**, rather serve as additional enjoyment of reading. However, whilst we work hard to continue to expand our selection of books in the colour banded levels and try to stock children's favourites we know that there will always be some books that the children in the older year groups ask to read as their own choice reader instead of a banded book - this just requires a simple discussion with their teacher as to the appropriateness of the book temporarily replacing the banded book as their reading book.



One way to enjoy books that interest your child but are too hard for them to read is to read it with them/to them or to get one of the great **audio books** available from bookshops and libraries. Even the independent readers of year 6 love to hear a good story read aloud!

In addition to books:

From Reception onwards children will be given sets of '**tricky words**' to practice reading (and possibly spelling). Tricky words are usually not decodable using their phonic rule knowledge - they just have to be learnt by sight recognition! In addition '**high frequency words**' (common words in the English language) also need to be practiced for sight recognition - and possibly for spelling practice as per your child's teacher's advice. Once they have started to learn the skills required to read for themselves they need to practise frequently. We recommend little and often, see below for some do and don'ts!

Oxford Publishers have a range of **e-books** available on their website

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

Some of our guided readers are also supported on websites for children to do follow up games and activities - we will notify you if this is the case.

Older children really do need to expose themselves to as many types of text as possible to improve both their reading and writing styles. We try to do this in school through literacy lessons and use of the internet and reference materials, but this can easily be supplemented at home with magazines/comics, internet research and information texts.

School currently subscribe to 'First News' newspaper copies and the online iHUB resource. In addition we also use the First News worksheets which cover a range of comprehension and vocabulary tasks.

In order for children to become able and independent readers they need to have:

Fluency - reading at a comfortable speed with appropriate expression. Make sure your child is aware of the role of punctuation as they read, this will lead to an improvement in their writing.

Accuracy - ability to 'decode' the words they are reading, without the process interrupting the flow. Challenge their understanding of vocabulary - they can often read the word but do not understand what the word means. Get them used to using a dictionary to look up meanings.

Understanding - children need to comprehend/follow the content of what they read. Discuss

with your child what they have read and any 'issues' and morals that may be raised.

Enjoyment and confidence - children will become lifelong readers because it is a useful and pleasurable thing to do.



How to help your child when reading at home:

- ✓ Find a quiet place away from other interruptions and the distraction of technology
- ✓ Get comfy and prepare to read
- ✓ Spend a few minutes discussing the blurb and front cover before you even open the book - "What do you think this book is about?" = the skill of prediction
- ✓ Help and support your child if they get stuck on any words. DO NOT simply tell them the words, encourage them to work it out by:
 - Sounding out the phonemes (units of sound) e.g. ch ai n
 - Using any picture clues (Oxford Reading Tree books in particular often have 'randomly' hard words in but the pictures always give the clue)
 - Using the context of the sentence to work out the word
 - What would sensibly fit?
 - Re-reading to check for meaning
- ✓ Ask your child questions to check their understanding of the text e.g. What was your favourite part? How did you feel about the main character? Which words show you that the character is happy etc? What might happen next? Would you do/feel the same as the character in that situation? Why do you think the author wrote that bit like this? When does the story take place?
- ✓ Give your child lots of praise and encouragement.
- ✓ Encourage your child to join the local library to widen their choice of books.



A Few Don'ts!!

- × DO NOT be impatient with your child if they do not know/remember a word that they have read easily before, simply encourage and help them to work it out.
- × Do not read with your child whilst you are trying to help their younger/older siblings with other tasks or not able to give them your full attention.

- * Do not make your child read if they are really not in the mood -it will not be a very productive session for either you or your child! Suggest that you do it in ten minutes, after tea etc instead.

In 2016, we invited parents, carers and staff to train on **Paired Reading** - clips on this subject can be found on You Tube for you to watch the strategy in action. Paired reading is easy to do and sounds like a combination of hearing the child read and reading a bedtime story.



Here are a few notes we made from our training:

- The person in charge is the reader! The adult/older child is the helper.
- The key is that the child is in control- they choose what they want to read. Maybe a book that they really want to read, but they can't access on their own.
- You read together at the same time. When you start off get the child to use their finger under the words to indicate the speed they wish to read at.
- If the child makes a mistake, continue reading the word correctly then get the child to copy the correction. Re-read the sentence with the correction made.
- When (if) your child is ready, they tap the book to signal that they are ready to take over reading independently.
- If they make a mistake, you support them making the correction then return to the beginning of that sentence to re-read again. This supports comprehension development - making sure it makes sense.

Try paired reading with a more challenging book the child **WANTS** to read and leave independent reading to the school books.



Reading to, and with your child, is an enjoyable and positive experience. Talking about the things you read, whatever the text may be, demonstrates that reading is a useful meaningful activity. Ensure your child knows you value reading - let them see you reading too! Being able to read opens the doorway to learning and exploring the world in which we live. It will allow your child to become a successful and happy adult.

Thank you for your continued support