



HOW TO HELP YOUR CHILD BECOME A BETTER READER

Introduction

We believe that reading is the key to successful learning in all areas of the curriculum. Our aim is for children to be able to read for information and pleasure.

To encourage children to become independent readers, we use a range of activities and pupils receive individual, small and class group tuition. We would really appreciate your co-operation and support in encouraging your child to become a better reader. This leaflet gives some practical ideas and explains how you can help your child at home.

How children learn to read

Learning to read is like trying to crack code. Children should be encouraged to look for different clues to help them understand what they are reading. Learning individual words is important, but they are really aiming to work out the full message.

How can you help?

When you hear your child read encourage them to use the following strategies to work words out:

- Pictures
- Length of word
- Sound words out
- Meaning of the text
- Word knowledge

It is important not to confuse your child so concentrate on developing a few skills at a time. You might say: "Remember to use the pictures as clues". Remember your child will already use some of the clues mentioned.

Reading practice

The aim is to make reading an enjoyable experience, but consistency is essential if progress is to be made. Try to:

- Practice regularly
- Use a comfortable and quiet area
- Allocate a specific time for reading (20 minutes per evening if possible)
- Make activities fun and interesting

Confidence and motivation

These can be developed through:

- Re-reading familiar books
- Reading children's own pieces of writing
- Listening to taped stories
- Listening to adults reading aloud
- Taping children reading aloud
- Lots of praise – be specific

Things to do

- Talk about books and pictures
- Explain what the book is about
- Ask children to predict – "What might happen next"?
- Ask children to talk about what has happened – "Which words/sentences did you like?" or "What did you think about?" or "What did you think about?" or "Tell me about"
- Encourage children to use expression in their voice
- If children have difficulty with certain words write the words on a card so they can be practised
- Make a game out of the common words used in reading

Phrases to use

- "Well done, you had a go"
- "Good, you corrected yourself"
- "Good try, but did that sound right?"
- "Let's try reading that word again"
- "Listen and I will demonstrate this sentence"
- "Well done, you used expression"
- "Good try, but did it make sense?"
- "I like how you re-read that bit to check you understood it/got it right"
- "Don't forget to follow the punctuation"

Remember to give lots of praise and be specific