



Parent Mini Guide

The Three Schools

Reading EYFS

We believe that it is very important for children in the Foundation Stage to develop a love of books and enthusiasm for promoting their reading skills to enable them to gain knowledge and enjoyment from reading. As a parent you are their first teacher and once your child starts school you can play a vital role in the partnership between home and school by supporting your child's learning. The aim of this booklet is to explain how we teach reading in school and how you can help your child at home.

What we do in school

The children in the Foundation Stage class are exposed to a 'print-rich' environment of signs, labels, books, key words, displays and role play areas that give opportunities for reading, all of which the children are encouraged to notice and learn to read. There is a book area of picture books, or 'real' books which the children can enjoy sharing and listening to during story time. In this way children's enjoyment and a sense of purpose for reading is fostered. More formal teaching of reading is carried out through a number of activities, as follows:

Daily Phonics Teaching

Through Jolly Phonics and the 'Letters and Sounds' structured programme of teaching, children are taught in 15-20 minute sessions each day, through games, actions and use of flashcards and magnetic letters, to link letters and sounds, by learning how to say the sound (phoneme) for each letter (grapheme) and groups of letters like sh, ch, igh (digraphs and trigraphs). They learn to hear and say the sounds in words like c-a-t by pulling them apart (segmenting) and putting them back together (blending). In school we use the vocabulary of sound-talk or robot-talk to help with segmenting. These vital skills help them to read words that are phonetically spelled but some words, that cannot be easily decoded, are learnt as 'tricky words' such as 'come' and 'the'. These skills are then applied to learning to spell and to write sentences.

Shared Reading

In the literacy lessons children will share with the class teacher an enlarged text, on the Interactive Whiteboard or from a Big Book, learning how books work, about different genres of books, about authors and illustrators, discussing sequences of events and practising their reading skills. Play-based activities to support this learning are carried out following the reading such as role play, using puppets, sequencing pictures and also guided activities such as writing. The text may become the focus of a topic and the children will become very familiar with it.

Story Time

This is a time for sustained listening and enjoyment of a picture book that may be chosen by the teacher or a child, such as those in the book area, when children can experience the richness of children's literature and learn to love books. The text will probably be beyond the reading capability of the children but may have phrases to join in with and will enrich the children's imagination, supplying them with ideas and phrases that they may use themselves in their play or writing.

Individual Reading

In the Autumn term, your child will be given a first reading book, appropriate to their stage of reading development, to bring home in their reading bag. Initially this may be pictures only. They will have a blue reading record book in which the school will record the titles and space for comments each time they read with an adult. This may include ideas for elements to focus on at home. Individual reading provides the teacher with an opportunity to monitor the child's independent reading skills, the suitability of the book they are reading and their readiness to progress to the next one. The class teacher, or a teaching assistant, will hear children read two or three times a week. In some cases we may ask you to keep the book for further practice and enrichment activities, but generally books will be changed by a member of staff at least once a week. In addition, a parent helper may hear your child read.

Re-visiting texts

Repetition of reading a book leads to greater learning of vocabulary because the children pick up new information with each reading. Children are given individual reading books that may contain few words and they may seem to 'finish' them quickly. There are many skills that your child needs to develop as a reader and with repeated readings you can focus on these different skills (see further guidance below). In this way children will become fluent readers who can not only decode words but understand and enjoy a variety of texts. The Rose Report, an independent review of the teaching of reading, describes this as a journey from 'learning to read' to 'reading to learn, for pleasure and purpose'

What you can do to help:

We hope that you will be able to help your child with their reading at home through a number of activities. It is important that your child enjoys reading with you and that it is not a chore. There are many activities that you can do together to help them. Try and use a variety throughout the week. The skills that they are developing are as follows:

! Reading the School Reading Book Together

- Let the reading time be short (about 5-10 minutes), enjoyable, and stress free for both you and your child.
- Choose a time when your child is willing and not too tired.
- Sit close together in a relaxed atmosphere and let your child take their time.
- Talk about the book and the pictures
- When your child first brings home a reading book, do not expect them to know all the words.
 - Model the reading by reading it to them at first or taking it in turns. Many first books have a repeated phrase which you can help them to anticipate by reading up to the word that varies, for example 'I like to paint', 'I like toswim'.
- Remember that much of the early reading your child does is memorising. It is more important that they read the whole book remembering the sequence of the story than that they should recognise each word and what it says. With repeated readings the memorised words will start to become familiar as text.
- Encourage your child to use the pictures to help guess the words
- You will be asked to fill in the blue reading record book each time you hear your child read. Please be honest with your comments, if your child had problems with certain words or found the book very difficult, please say so. Perhaps they have mastered the vocabulary but still cannot tell you what the story is about.

- Do not be afraid to leave a message to ask us to send home the same book again; this is not a race and moving on too quickly may result in difficulties at a later stage.
- In the very early stages, it is fine to simply tell your child an unknown word and explain what it means. As he/she progresses you may encourage him/her to use the picture or the first letter of a word to help them •

Do not let your child struggle with trying to sound out words that are not phonetically decodable, for example 'tricky words' such as 'come' and 'who' which cannot be sounded out as c-o-m-e and w-h-o.

- Do not make your child think that they are in competition with anyone else. Children reach different levels at different stages and many factors play a part. Your child's reading will be regularly assessed by myself, enabling me to decide whether your child is ready to move on.
- Above all always use plenty of praise and encouragement!

As their reading progresses encourage your child to:

- Point to each word as it is read
- Use the sounds that they know, or tricky words, to piece together words and sentences.
- Suggest how the story might end, alternative endings, how it could be improved
- Cover a word and think of another that would make sense
- Discuss characters; what are they like, how are they feeling
- Make links to other books, for example by the same author or on the same subject, and to their own experiences

Pay attention to the punctuation, speech bubbles and so on, using different voices for different characters and reading for meaning

- Use the correct terminology such as author, illustrator, contents, index.
- Express opinions about the book and who they would recommend it to
- Use the theme of the book to write own version, perhaps using a different setting or characters
- Keep a diary on holiday. Encourage your child to use their phonic knowledge to spell words and 'have a go'. Ask them to read it back

Reading a story book or 'real book' together

Part of learning to read is developing a love of books because it creates the motivation to learn. Reading schemes help a child towards independent reading but 'real books' give them a flavour of the wealth of literature that they will one day be able to access independently and, as mentioned above, repeated readings can lead to greater learning. It is very important to read to your child as well as listen to them reading. This can be a cosy, bedtime activity for sharing and enjoyment of a book. The child can be the listener and will learn a great deal from hearing an experienced reader read aloud, such as seeing how the pages are turned, how expression is used and different voices used for different characters, how the plot develops and so on. You may find that your child will begin to join in with a favourite book. With a new book you may want to ask your child how they think the story will end, about whether they liked the story or particular characters. By joining the library your child can enjoy reading and choosing their own books, CDs, DVDs and use the internet and there are often activities run in the holidays. Charity shops and car boot sales are another source of inexpensive books or maybe your child could swap favourite books with a friend.

Reading in real-life contexts

Let your child see you read, and share it with them, for example reading a recipe, reading the newspaper headlines, reading the destination on the bus, reading shop signs and labels on items in the shop. Choose a word that they may have been learning in their book, or from their high frequency words, to notice. Some children may prefer to read a comic, non-fiction book or use an internet game. Variety is very important.

Use the internet

There are many sites available where children can play phonic games, such as <http://www.bbc.co.uk/cbeebies/alphablocks/> and read audio books. There are also useful sites for parents with advice for helping your child with reading.

http://rwp.excellencegateway.org.uk/readwriteplus/family_reading_campaign campaign to encourage reading at home with advice for parents

<http://www.readingforlife.org.uk/reading-can-be-fun> family-friendly website that includes a guide that has 'big ideas, top tips and pearls of wisdom' from children's author Michael Rosen and activities based on popular books.

http://www.literacytrust.org.uk/resources/information_pages/families information about projects with families and research into early literacy

Play games

Children love to learn new skills through a game. Here are some suggestions:

- I-Spy: for early readers use the letter sound but once the children are confident with the sounds use the letter names.
- Make up silly rhymes and phrases using alliteration.

- Choose a category and think of items for each letter of the alphabet, for example: apple, banana, cherry and so on.
- Put the high frequency or tricky words on cards and play bingo, lotto and memory games with them.
- Use 'robot-talk' to talk to each other, for example 'T-i-me f-or b-ed!'

We hope that you will find this booklet useful in understanding how you can be a partner in helping your child to learn to read. Please always feel free to ask one of us if you have any concerns or questions.