



Home/School Reading policy

Aims: *To encourage children to read for pleasure at home.*

To enable Parents to understand the process of learning to read and their part in helping their child.

To ensure that reading, as a Basic skill, is integrated at the heart of the learning process.

Learning to read is different for everyone, but we believe it begins with sharing a love of books. Children who are introduced to books from an early age and who are frequently read to are more likely to learn to read easily.

Here at Parsonage we have a "core" Reading scheme called the Oxford Reading Tree. It is a carefully constructed set of books which take children from the earliest stages of talking about books to full fluency in reading. The stories are fun, exciting and closely match the children's experiences of life. The illustrations are detailed and witty, giving Parents the opportunity to enjoy them too!

Throughout the year, Teachers will choose a variety of different books to send home, which may not always appear to be in a logical order: sometimes books will be from a different published scheme. This technique enables skills to be consolidated and interest levels maintained. If your child is not enjoying the book, please tell your teacher rather than plough on through it – this applies particularly after stage 7, when children are expecting more interest and story line from their reading material.

In each corridor, there is a section labelled "Extension Readers". Parents may choose any books from this selection to extend their children's reading at home. Most of the books are from structured schemes and are age-related in terms of content, interest and reading level. There is a "Book Challenge" leaflet for children to record the books they read at home. Every ten books read earns a Golden Teddy.

Reading should always be an enjoyable time for Parent and child - if at any time the child is reluctant to continue, come back at a later time. Inevitably, children will want to read at times that do not suit you - early morning is a favourite time, when they wake full of enthusiasm and expect you to respond! It does help if you can have a routine of an "agreed" time that suits both parties. (See the guidelines on the back of the red Home/School Reading book).

To make reading together a special time, choose your location carefully (the car is not to be recommended!) and make sure the TV or radio is switched off. Try to sit slightly at an angle so that you can point to the book from the top of the page whilst the child points from the bottom of the page. This becomes "paired reading" by you pointing to each word from the top as you read and the child pointing from underneath each word. Read

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the book together like this and then gradually leave the child to read by themselves, prompting with an initial sound if you feel the child just needs a little reminder, but supplying the word readily to ensure confidence in reading is established. In the early stages, the child will remember the phrases that match the picture. As you become more confident, you will know when to help and when to leave your child to read. Keep your finger (and theirs) pointing to each separate word. Gradually, you can play games such as "let's find this word". Initially, only look for nouns - "simple" words like "it", "and", "for", "at", "with", are actually very difficult for children to remember, because they have no shape or meaning- are best left until confidence levels are higher. These words are taught as "high frequency" within the classroom setting.

We start the children on the scheme at the "conversation" level. The entire story is told through the pictures and allows each child to tell their own version of what they see happening. From the earliest, we encourage the child to point to the various parts of the picture and move freely through the book, backwards and forwards, in order to enjoy the story. Gradually the story appears as simple phrases and then more sophisticated text, but keep to the same format of talking, sharing ideas and predictions about and paired reading.

The paired reading technique, once developed, can be transferred to any text that the child wants to read. Believing in themselves and their own capabilities is the key to success - by giving help, a child operates on the "I can" level. As the children's skills develop, extend the sorts of questions that are asked about the text. "What do you think will happen next?", "Can you think of a different way to end the story?", "What would have happened if....."?

Your child's teacher will be happy to keep you informed of the skills your child is currently working on. The home/school book will contain a record of what has been read at school together with a target for you to work towards at home. Please remember to add a comment about your child's response and/or where they have read to in a book – this saves arguments in school later, when the children insist they have read a book at home all through but there is no record!

Children are actively taught the skills they will need to read in a very structured programme at school. Reading at home is for fun, interest and skills practice. Each teacher will read individually with children on a specific day. All other days, the children read together and in groups, practicing the skills they have been taught.

When your child is reading well, choose challenging books to read together that require different voices for characters, or have an unfamiliar format - cartoons for example. Read a page of the story each, take a character each, agree to read a paragraph, a sentence - the variations are endless.

As with everything, come and talk about what you are doing - everything you can do at home reinforces our work with the children in school.

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