



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. What is happening in the pictures, what might happen next and why.
- When your child first brings home a book with text, don't expect them to know all/any of 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.
- You should keep each book for a few days, allowing children explore the text and pictures and also gives them time to share and "show off" their reading with many family members and friends.
 - Encourage your child to use the pictures to help guess the words
- We'd like you, or whoever shares the book with your child, to fill in a reading record sheet each time you hear your child read. Please be honest with your comments, if your child had problems with certain words/phonemes 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 us to decide whether your child is ready to move on.
- Above all always use plenty of praise and encouragement – small steps!

As their reading progresses encourage your child to:

- Point to each word as it is read.
- Use the sounds that they know, or tricky/common 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 to you.



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 and language 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. 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.