



# Reading at Home

A booklet for  
parents



## **Reading at Home**

Reading has been a success at Highwood for many years. Much of this success can be attributed to the support and encouragement that children are given from reading with parents at home. Strong home-school partnerships are highly beneficial to reading development throughout a child's time at primary school. This document offers ideas and suggestions to help you and your child gain the most from your reading experiences.

### **Reading material**

At school pupils are given access to a wide range of reading material and books are regularly taken home. Pupils will read a mixture of 'real' books and those from our reading schemes. Sometimes a book will be chosen by the class teacher and at other times children will make their own selections especially when visiting the library. Children may sometimes choose a book that they have read before or that you may consider too easy for them, but it is important that they are given these opportunities to build confidence and allow them to show off what they can do!

It is also important to remember that reading opportunities are all around us, everywhere. Children should be encouraged to engage in these as fully as possible in everyday life. These include choosing from a menu, choosing and checking times from a TV or cinema guide, reading advertisements, looking at sign posts and directions, reading emails and letters, sport reports, reading instructions from a recipe, making a model or rules for a game ... the list is endless!



### **Supporting your child at home**

In the early years, children learn a vast amount through play. At school, play areas are equipped with resources for reading and writing, which means that literacy is readily available to pupils. At home, play with your child and encourage them to make use of the literacy materials that you have (calendars, diaries, telephone directories, recipe books, newspapers, magazines, cards, postcards, letters, bills).



Choose a time and a place that is comfortable for you and your child. All readers make mistakes and it is sometimes necessary to prompt if the child is losing the flow of a story. However, it is not always advantageous to provide words too quickly as this prevents the child re-reading and correcting the mistake spontaneously. It is also sometimes more useful to encourage young readers to guess at the meaning by using the context of the passage or pictures. This helps the child to develop useful strategies, which will lead to greater fluency and independence with reading.

When it is necessary to prompt, establish the initial letter and see if you can 'sound out' the word together. Are there any patterns similar to those found in known words? Try reading the whole sentence and think about what could fit and make sense. Don't spend hours struggling with one word! You may need to give the word and move on. If your child is struggling with so many words that it disrupts the flow, this indicates that the text is too challenging at that time. If this is the case it may provide encouragement and support to read the text aloud in unison with your child.

Above all, reading should be an enjoyable experience. Adults can become a lot more involved with their child's reading by being interested in not only the child's performance, but also in the material that they are reading. Adults who laugh at humorous stories, or make guesses about what will happen next, are modelling behaviour that carries important messages about reading to children. As well as helping to develop an interest and enjoyment of reading, discussing a book with your child will also help comprehension. For example, examine characters in a story, discuss how illustrations enhance the text, predict endings and discuss any other similar stories or work by the same author. This interaction will also increase your child's involvement with the text.

As children become older reading habits tend to change and the emphasis may move away from 'reading aloud' to parents. It is still important, however, that children are encouraged to regularly read at home and that this parent-child interaction continues throughout their primary years and beyond.

**At Highwood we request the children read a minimum of three times a week.**

## Other ways to support Reading

### HELPING YOUR CHILD READ A WORD...

- Which letter phonemes do you recognise? Can you blend them together?
  - Does the word make sense? Read the sentence again to check.
  - Is there another word that would make sense?
  - Is it a word you know?
  - Have you read the word before? Is it on another page?
  - Are there any bits of the word you recognise?
  - Miss out the word, say 'mmm', finish the sentence. Then go back and work out what the word was.
  - In a rhyming book, think of a word that rhymes.
  - Use the first 1 or 2 sounds with another strategy
- Always go back and read the sentence again!



### AS THE CHILD BECOMES A MORE CONFIDENT READER

It is still important to read with your child even when they have become a more confident reader.

### CONTINUING TO SUPPORT AND GUIDE YOUR CHILD

Do not worry if your child's reading is not word perfect. If they are making sense of the text, this does not matter e.g. "house" instead of "home", "Good dog, Spot" instead of "Good boy, Spot". It would matter, however, if they read: "He got on his house and rode away", as this would have changed the meaning. Always be ready to take over if your child is struggling. With your help they will succeed and will want to read more and more as a result.

### SUPPORTING THE CONFIDENT READER

Confident readers have reached the stage where they no longer wish to read to an adult and want to read silently to themselves. The interaction between the parent and child changes at this stage. To ensure that the child's reading development continues to move forward, we would encourage parents to question the child about what they are reading, at an appropriate time, to extend their reading and share their enjoyment of the book.

**The following questions will provide ideas that you can extend to suit individual needs.**

**Questions to ask...**

- What is the title of the book?
- What kind of book is it? (Fiction, non fiction, poetry, short story etc)
- Who is the author/illustrator?
- Have you read any other books by the same author?
- What made you choose this book? (Author, cover, illustration, recommendation etc)
- Did you read the blurb before selecting the book?
- Could you tell anything about the book before you started reading it? What were the clues?
- Have you read this book before? Why have you chosen it again?



**Questions to ask before your child begins or resumes their book...**

- What has happened so far?
- What do you think will happen next?
- What are the clues that make you think this?
- How would you like the story to end?
- Are you involved in the story? Why?
- Where is the story set? Is there a description?
- When is the story set? (Past, present, future)
- Who are the characters in the story? Who do you like/dislike? Why?
- Do you feel similar to any of the characters? Tell me what is similar?

**Questions to ask when your child has finished their book...**

- Was the book as you expected?
- Was there anything you disliked about the story?
- At what point did you decide you liked/disliked the story?
- If you have read this book before, did you enjoy it more this time?
- Did you notice anything special about the way language is used in this book? (dialect, descriptive writing etc)
- If you had written this book, how would you have made it better?
- Has anything that happens in this book ever happened to you?



- Can you describe an exciting moment or favourite part of the story?
- Is the story straightforward? Is there more than one story happening at the same time?
- Who was telling the story?
- Was this the most important character in the story?
- Do we get to know the characters quickly or do they build up slowly through the book?
- Was the ending as you expected? Did you like the way the story ended?
- Do you like the illustrations? Do you have a favourite?
- Would you recommend this book to your friends? Tell me what you would say to a friend?

#### **ADVICE IF READING BECOMES A CHALLENGE AT HOME**

- We would like all of our children to enjoy reading rather than see it as a an effort/hardwork/something they don't enjoy.
- Try to avoid confrontation
- Offer alternative reading material, e.g. internet access, magazines, non - fiction etc...
- Encourage reading at different times of the day or week
- Buy/borrow books on tapes from the local library and then you can listen whilst in the car or before bed
- Share reading activities and interact with the text together
- Share the problem with your child's teacher, we are here to help!

#### **WHAT DO I WRITE IN THE READING RECORD?**

It is important that the Reading Record reflects the child's reading patterns. Regular comments from the parent, linked to the questions below, are also needed to show that the child is extending his/her reading through questioning and interaction with an adult.

The following list is not an exhaustive list but offers suggestions that may be appropriate. It is very important to remember that the enjoyment factor is always worth commenting on. Parents are not expected to comment on each of the following areas after each reading session!

- How enthusiastic is the child about the choice of book?
- Can the child remember the story so far?
- Is the child reading using only the pictures for clues?

- Does your child understand that the words they are reading mean something?
- Can the child read words out of context e.g. when you point to a word without reading the whole sentence?
- Is the child confident to attempt new words?
- What reading strategies is your child using e.g. sounds, use of the picture, use of the context?
- Can the child follow the text without using a finger or marker?
- Is there a pattern to the mistakes your child is making e.g. words ending in "ed" or starting in "sh"?
- Does the child recognise mistakes and self correct?
- Is the child recognising many key words?
- Is the child aware of punctuation?
- Is the child reading with expression?
- How long is the child able to sustain reading?



**REMEMBER TO SIGN THE RECORD 3 TIMES PER WEEK.**

### **Reading to your child**

Remember that it is also important for children to be read to. There is almost universal agreement that listening to stories is 'good' for children who are learning to read. You can motivate your child to read by regularly sharing a book with them. Your child will sense your love of books, your enjoyment of a good story and your appreciation of good illustrations. With younger children it can be fun to read familiar stories together, pointing at the words and allowing children to enjoy the stories, join in with well-known stories and develop ideas of the relationship between sound and print. With children of any age it will help to develop imagination and enrich vocabulary development.

### **Some useful websites for you:**

[www.jollylearning.co.uk](http://www.jollylearning.co.uk) - Jolly Phonics

[www.parentlink.co.uk](http://www.parentlink.co.uk) - contains ideas to help at home

[www.bbc.co.uk](http://www.bbc.co.uk) - school section (words and pictures for phonic activities)

[www.phonicsplay.co.uk](http://www.phonicsplay.co.uk)

[www.literacytrust.org.uk](http://www.literacytrust.org.uk)

[www.crickweb.co.uk/assets/resources/flash.php?&file=ww](http://www.crickweb.co.uk/assets/resources/flash.php?&file=ww)

[www.woodlands-junior.kent.sch.uk/interactive/onlinestory.htm](http://www.woodlands-junior.kent.sch.uk/interactive/onlinestory.htm)

[www.snaithprimary.eril.net/rindex.htm](http://www.snaithprimary.eril.net/rindex.htm)—nursery rhymes



ymes