Supporting your child at home with Phonics and Reading.



[](http://www.google.co.uk/imgres?imgurl=http://www.pbs.org/parents/education/files/2012/03/467x267-familyreading-ts.jpg&imgrefurl=http://www.pbs.org/parents/education/reading-language/reading-tips/reading-for-two-talking-about-books/&h=267&w=467&tbnid=FonEyotmwIeYoM:&zoom=1&docid=EA1wVKiozXMEgM&ei=bwwrVK6aLcu_ygPw1YCABg&tbm=isch&ved=0CGsQMyhjMGM4ZA&iact=rc&uact=3&dur=656&page=10&start=199&ndsp=26)

Reading at home.

**Reading is a precious gift**

*“The more that you read, the more things you will know. The more that you learn, the more places you'll go.”* Dr. Seuss

As parents you are your child's most influential teacher with a vital and incredibly important role to play in helping your child to learn to read.

Reading is probably the single most important thing you can do to help your child’s education.

**Here are some suggestions on how you can help to make this a positive experience.**

Choose a quiet time

Set aside a quiet time with no distractions. Ten to fifteen minutes is usually long enough.

Make reading enjoyable

Make reading an enjoyable experience. Try acting out stories together – this helps bring the story alive. Sit with your child. Try not to pressurise if he or she is reluctant. If your child loses interest then do something else.

Maintain the flow

If your child mispronounces a word do not interrupt immediately. Instead allow opportunity for self-correction. It is better to tell a child some unknown words to maintain the flow rather than insisting on trying to build them all up from the sounds of the letters. If your child does try to 'sound out' words, encourage the use of letter sounds rather than 'alphabet names'.

Be positive

If your child says something nearly right to start with that is fine. Don't say 'No. That's wrong,' but 'Let's read it together' and point to the words as you say them. Boost your child's confidence with constant praise for even the smallest achievement.

Success is the key

In order to build up children’s confidence in reading we must ensure that they are reading the right level of book. Remember 'Nothing succeeds like success'. Struggling with a book with many unknown words is pointless. Flow is lost, text cannot be understood and children can easily become reluctant readers.

Visit the Library

Encourage your child to use the public library regularly. This provides an alternative reading environment and offers a wide range of books which will cater for all reading interests and broaden your child’s reading experiences. There are often reading challenges to get involved in especially over the summer.

Regular practice

Try to read with your child on most school days. 'Little and often' is best.

Communicate

Your child has a reading record book. Please try to communicate regularly with positive comments and any concerns. Your child will then know that you are interested in their progress and that you value reading.

Talk about the books

There is more to being a good reader than just being able to read the words accurately. Just as important is being able to understand what has been read. Always talk to your child about the book; about the pictures, the characters, how they think the story will end, and their favourite part. You will then be able to see how well they have understood and you will help them to develop good comprehension skills. Just because they can read a word does not mean that they understand what it means.

Variety is important

Remember children need to experience a variety of reading materials eg. picture books, hard backs, poetry, comics, joke books, magazines, poems, information books, game instructions, TV listings and menus.

*There is no such thing as a child who hates to read; there are only children who have not found the right book. Frank Serafini*



**Further activities and strategies to help support your child’s reading**



* 1. year olds

1. Compare events in the books you are reading to similar events which may have happened in your own experiences. This helps children to make connections. ‘Remember when…………..’

2. Sing together – nursery rhymes and songs, as this helps with rhythm and patterned and repeated language.

3. Use phonics to help your child. Make sure you know the sound each letter makes and when your child moves on to digraphs (2 or 3 letters which make 1 sound – sh, ee and igh) encourage them to use these.

4. Play phonic games (high frequency word bingo, snap)

5. Use book talk – who is the author? Who is the illustrator, look at the front cover; does it give us any clues about what might happen in the story? Look at the pictures carefully as they will often give a lot more information about what is going on/how characters are feeling. Also talk about sentences, point out capital letters and full stops, speech bubbles etc.

6. Read new books but also read old favourites too. Children often enjoy hearing the same stories over and over again – they can join in with the story and it builds their confidence.

*“If one cannot enjoy reading a book over and over again, there is no use in reading it at all.” Oscar Wilde*

Websites

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

[www.familylearning.org.uk/phonics](http://www.familylearning.org.uk/phonics)

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/ks1/literacy/phonics/play/>

<http://www.topmarks.co.uk/english-games/5-7-years/letters-and-sounds>

 Ipad Apps (all free)

Hooked on Phonics

Phonics island

BBC Cbeebies storytime

First words sampler

Phonics fun farm games

Meet the alphablocks

Phonics alien adventure

Other activities:

Look for sounds and recognise them when reading signs etc.

Write words in chalk outside and jump on each sound as you segment and blend the words.

Using phonics flashcards (or make your own) - Play splat! Using a fly swat see who can swat the sounds first.

Write phonics sounds or make words in sand, glitter, soil or shaving foam.

Go on a phonics/sound hunt around the house or garden.

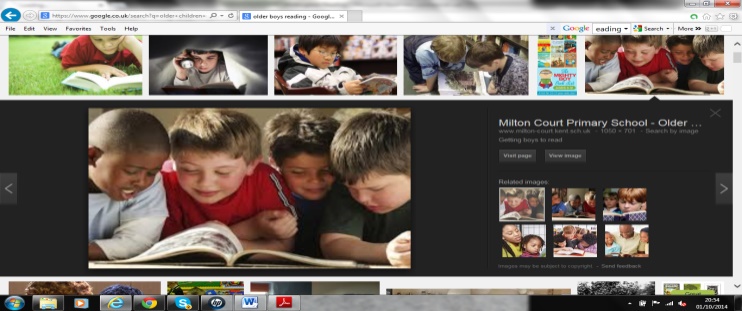
**Other places you could find information about reading include:**

The Literacy Trust

Oxford Owl

Springboard Life-changing Literacy

http://www.ruthmiskin.com/en/parents/



7-11 Year olds

1. Talk together – older children continue to need opportunities to talk about what they are reading as well as their reading interests. They may also enjoy talking to you about what you are reading.

2. Read together – There is never an age when it is not enjoyable and useful to spend ten minutes a day reading together (even with an 11 year old). There will still be many words which they come across which need explaining.

3. Revisiting favourites and memories – even if it seems like easy reading there’s no mad rush to keep moving on and pushing up through levels and we all take comfort from reading old favourites. (There is always something you missed, a phrase, a description, something which sparks a different memory). Compare and share memories from real life and books as this will help your child to develop empathy.

4. Sing together – Why Not! Rhythm, rhyme, raps, advertising jingles, latest hit song – they all help with patterns of language.

5. Making Choices – Visit book shops, libraries, Barter Books etc. Let your child browse and chat as they need to learn how to make their own choices about what they read.

7. If children want to read something they really will try if you want children to read it has to be about things that interest them. So don’t choose for them choose with them.

8. Phonics and Spelling - Children will still need to use phonics to tackle new or unknown words. This also helps them to learn about spelling pattern and rules.

9. Play Games – Many games are really useful for developing skills that children need as developing readers eg. Scrabble, Boggle, Crosswords.

10. Listen to your child read – It is really important to still do this. You can check for fluency, expression, intonation. Your child will need help to understand more complex plots and vocabulary as well as building an understanding of how punctuation and grammar work.

11. Check understanding – Ask questions like, why did that happen? How does that work? Can you retell me the story/what happened in the last chapter? Explain a specific section and explore words and vocabulary/ use a dictionary.

12. Book Talk – Talk about favourite authors and illustrators, series. Talk about poetry books, fiction, non-fiction, plays, magazines and reference materials.

**Read Write Inc (RWI)**

**Phonics**

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The following section of the booklet is designed to support you with how the RWI programme works and includes some activities for you to do with your child at home.

What is phonics?

Phonics is a method of teaching reading and writing of the English language by developing learners’ ability to hear, identify, and manipulate letter sounds.

The goal of phonics is to enable beginner readers to decode new written words by sounding them out, or in phonics terms, ‘blending’ the sound-spelling patterns.

In our school we use the Ruth Miskin’s Read Write Inc. Phonics programme to teach children to read and write.

***“Reading opens the door to learning, a child who reads a lot will become a good reader. The more a child reads the more they will learn. The more a child learns the more they will want to find out.”***

***Ruth Miskin.***

The first steps of reading

Before your child can read words they need to learn the sounds which letters make. In RWI these sounds are divided into sets (see letter sounds handout).

In phonics, the individual sounds are called ‘speed sounds’ – because we want your child to read them effortlessly. Set 1 sounds are the initial letter sounds and are taught in the following order: m, a, s, d, t, i, n, p, g, o, c, k, u, b, f, e, l, h, sh, r, j, v, y, w, th, z, ch, qu, x, ng, nk.

The rhyme we teach the children helps them to understand how these sounds are written. The rhymes are also shown in the letter sounds handout.

In school, we divide the Set 1 sounds into ‘bouncy’ or ‘stretchy’ sounds.

Examples of ‘bouncy’ sounds include:

a - a-a-a-a

b - b-b-b-b

c - c-c-c-c

and examples of ‘stretchy’ sounds include:

m - mmmm

f - ffff

l - llll

n - nnnn

This means that the ‘stretchy’ sounds are **pure** sounds and are pronounced ‘mmm’ and not ‘muh’, ‘ssss’ and not ‘suh’ and ‘ffff’ and not ‘fuh’. It is important to use pure sounds as this will enable your child to blend sounds into words more easily.

Please refer to the following video link for further guidance:

<http://www.ruthmiskin.com/en/resources/sound-pronunciation-guide/>

Green words and Red words

Once your child knows the letter sounds they can begin blending words. Your child may be sent home ‘green words’. Green words are made up of sounds that your child already knows, they will say the sounds and then blend them together to help them read the word e.g. m-a-t = mat.

Red words are words we use often in the English language such as: my, I, the and you. These are words that children are unable to blend but must be able to recognise.

High Frequency Words (HFW)

High Frequency Words are words children are expected to recognise. They are words that are commonly used in everyday print. This includes words such as ‘it’, ‘on’ and ‘mum’. Some of these words can be sounded out but many are not phonetically regular and are therefore hard to read in the early stages. These words are sometimes called ‘tricky words’ or ‘sight words’. Your child will be given a list of high frequency words which they are expected to know by the end of their year group. Please help your child to learn these at home, for example, when out and about in a shop.

Decoding

As your child begins to read they will be using ‘decoding’ skills. This means that your child will be starting to use their knowledge of the letter sounds to help read a word. Such as identifying that ‘mat’ is made up of three sounds: m-a-t. This allows them to accurately read a word.

Blending

Blending occurs when the child has decoded a word, such as ‘m-a-t’, and then they pull the sounds together in order to say the full word ‘mat’.

Phoneme and Grapheme

A phoneme is the smallest single identifiable sound e.g. the smallest unit of sound is ‘m’, ‘a’ and ‘t’ in mat.

A grapheme is a letter or group of letters representing one sound. For example, letters such as ‘sh’ in ‘ship’ and ‘ch’ in ‘chip’.

Alien words

These are words such as ‘vap’ or ‘jound’. Children cannot read these words by using their memory or vocabulary; they have to use their decoding skills.

‘Fred fingers’ and ‘Fred in your head’.

‘Fred fingers’ is the terminology we use to help children sound out words. We do this by counting the sounds on our fingers, for example, c-a-t (cat) has three sounds.

As children become more confident sounding out the words using their Fred fingers we encourage them to begin to ‘Fred in their head’ which means saying the sounds they can see in their head before blending them together and saying the word out loud.

Digraph

A digraph is two letters (oa, ai) which together make one sound.

Split digraph

When a digraph is split by a consonant it becomes a split digraph. For example, in the word ‘make’ the ‘ae’ digraph has been split by the ‘k’. So, the ‘e’ reaches backwards over the consonant to change the sound of the vowel before it. It makes the vowel say its name.

***School and home working in partnership together create the perfect setting for encouraging a love of reading. We appreciate the commitment Parents give in helping their children to become confident readers.***