



# **Reading and Phonics**

We hope that you will find this information helpful.  
Please feel free to speak to your child's class teacher if you would like to  
know more.

## INTRODUCTION

At The Avenue we aim to make reading an **enjoyable and positive experience** for all the children in the school. As a working partnership, we all want the best for our children. Reading is an essential life skill and is the foundation of future learning across the whole curriculum. As a result we have asked all parents to commit to the school's reading pledge when signing the home-school agreement at the start of the year. The idea of the reading pledge is that we will read to your child for at least 10 minutes every day and you will reflect this at home by reading to your child for 10 minutes too. Research has shown that a child's reading ability has a massive impact on their overall attainment in education, and as a result their life prospects. We want to work with you to ensure that your child has a great foundation of reading skills which will prepare them for future learning.

We hope that you will find the information provided in the booklet useful and that it will help you to participate in your child's reading development in a positive and pleasurable way. In reading we want them to be able to...

- Enjoy books.
- Love language and learn new vocabulary
- Take an interest in the written word.
- Learn the names and sounds that letters make.
- Work out unfamiliar words using different strategies.
- Develop a love of reading both for enjoyment and to find out new things.



By the end of Reception, children should be able to...

- Use their phonic knowledge to read simple, regular words
- Read some common words without needing to sound them out – e.g. the, and, is
- Read and understand simple sentences
- Point to the title, author of a book and turn the pages from beginning to end.
- Talk about the parts of a book they like and dislike
- Tell the story in their own words by using the pictures
- Recognise and read their own first name
- Know the difference between lower and upper case letters
- Know what the difference is between a letter and a word
- Look at the title of a book and make a good guess about what the book is about
- Spot rhyming patterns as they read
- When reading, point to the text as they read from left to right and top to bottom.
- Talk about the characters in a book

By the end of Year 1, most children should be able to do the above, and...

- Read words that have apostrophes representing a missing letter or letters, e.g. I'm, we'll
- Use their phonic skills to confidently blend sounds in unfamiliar words
- Read common words which don't follow an expected phonic pattern, e.g. said, because
- Read words of more than one syllable
- Be prepared to predict what may happen next in a book based on what they have already read
- Read aloud, starting to use expression to show an awareness of punctuation, for example stopping at a full stop
- Follow lots of sentences on the page
- Look at information books to link with their topic work
- Talk about the feelings of characters in a story
- Read to the end of the sentence to help identify the meaning of words they don't know
- Find information in the text to answer questions
- Know the difference between fiction and non-fiction



By the end of Year Two, most children should be able to...

- Apply their phonic knowledge and skills consistently to read age-appropriate texts quickly and accurately
- Sound out unfamiliar words accurately and confidently without hesitation.
- Read fluently and with accurate intonation and expression
- Read most of their book and can talk about what has happened without relying on the pictures
- Correct themselves if they make a mistake
- Find information to explain what they think about characters in a story and how they behave
- Find different examples in the text that help them give their opinions about a story
- Read a story to themselves for more than 10 minutes
- Know the way information books are organised and use this when reading, e.g. using a contents or index page to locate information in a non-fiction text
- Give their opinion about texts confidently using a range of clues such as an experience of books written by the same author, books that are based on a similar theme, the title, cover of the book or the blurb
- Make suggestions about other ways the story might have ended, change the events or extend the story
- Talk about the main characters and events in the story and compare them to others they have read
- Retell a story clearly, describing the beginning, middle and end, without using the pictures



## READING IN CLASS

Your child is reading every day in the classroom. As well as their chosen book, they read labels on displays around the room, work they have written themselves, information provided by the teacher, instructions, whole class teaching texts and school made booklets.

Each class will have time set aside for sharing a story on a daily basis. This is a time for key reading skills to be modelled by the teacher. At this time, the children get to hear and enjoy a range of quality texts while also being shown different skills such as predicting, summarising, inference and sharing opinions.

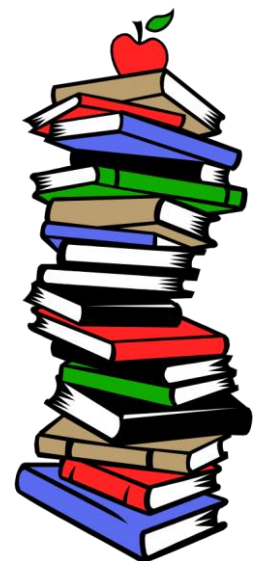
Children listen to poetry, non-fiction and fiction each day and love joining in, giving their opinions and helping to read the text on a daily basis. Sometimes they help to make up stories orally and some children will be confident enough to tell their made up story to the whole class. By listening, predicting, giving opinions, reading and joining in they are developing literacy skills that they will need for writing and talking as well as for reading.

Individual reading with a school adult in class gives a different, more in-depth insight into your child's reading ability. Teachers will assess how your child is progressing and will set targets which will be shared with your child. The teacher will also ensure that your child is accessing books of an appropriate level and interest.



## CHANGING BOOKS

Parents and carers shouldn't feel under pressure to change books that the child feels haven't been thoroughly explored. There is plenty of material in most books to warrant 2, 3 or 4 readings. As children bring home longer and more challenging texts they may need several days or even a week or more to thoroughly explore their books. Children may be asked to read at a level where the text appears simple to them but this is so that they can develop skills of intonation, expression and comprehension without having to concentrate on decoding every word. It is important that children read a book more than once so that they really understand the events of the story. Often the 'first read' of a book is focussed more on decoding the text and further reads allow the child to really understand the sequence of events, character traits and pattern of the story. This is a crucial part of reading development. If you feel that your child is not coming home with enough reading material then please come into the classroom and speak to staff who will help your child choose another book.



## RANGE AND LEVELS OF BOOKS

Within the coloured book bands in school there is a wide range of reading materials so that children have access to a variety of books. We believe that it helps children to develop an early and continuous love of books if they are presented with bright, attractive,

well-written and stimulating materials. We are constantly looking towards adding to our existing stocks of books.

Our book bands progression is as follows:

Lilac -> Pink -> Red -> Yellow -> Blue -> Green -> Orange ->Turquoise -> Purple -> Gold -> White -> Lime

Your child's book band level will change as and when the teacher is happy that your child is able to accurately read a range of books from within their current level and is showing they are ready for a challenge. They will need to show an understanding of what they have read as well as being able to read the words and sentences in the book.

Did you know.....?

A study by the Organisation for Economic Co-Operation and Development found that children who read with their parents every day or even as much as once a week achieved significantly higher later in life.

On average, regular reading with parents at home equates to a child getting the same amount of academic benefit they would receive from having six months extra schooling.

### READING WITH YOUR CHILD AT HOME

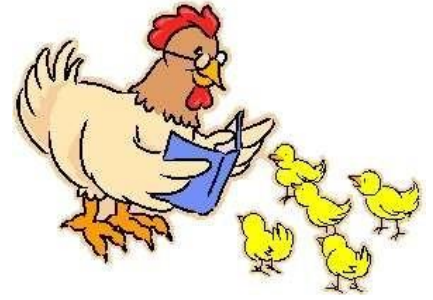


Children develop well as readers if they have plenty of books and other reading materials at home. These may include books that have been bought or made by you and your child or borrowed from the library. Reading with and to your child from a wide range of books is vital in helping to promote the pleasure and importance of reading. Children enjoy the comfort and familiarity of well known and loved texts as well as the challenge of complex, advanced texts. It is vital that they have frequent opportunities to read with adults or older siblings at home who can be enthusiastic about their choice of reading material. It is great if you can establish a regular reading time for you and your child so that reading time can be something to look forward to each day (ideally) or every few days.

### Settling Down To Read Together

1. Find a relatively quiet and comfortable area without too much disturbance and distraction. You might think about having a 'special reading cushion' or a particular lamp which is turned on to indicate that it is a special reading time. Sit close together and try to feel relaxed. Make sure you can both see the book easily.
2. Spend a minute in "settling down" chat, e.g. "Did you have a good day?" This can transform reading time.

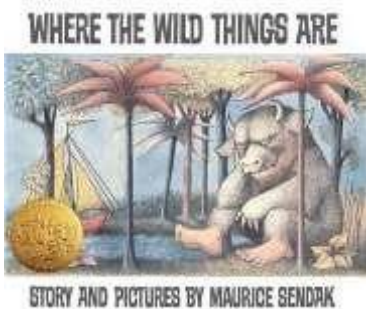
3. Please don't just open the book and start reading. Take a few moments to have a look through the book and see what sort of things are inside.
4. Ask your child what they think the book is going to be about. If it is fiction, are the characters animals or people.
5. Look at the format of the book. Is it an unusual format? Does it have speech bubbles? Are there any flaps or is it in comic strip form?
6. Talk about the cover. Discuss the title, author and illustrator. Establish whether the book is a story, non-fiction, a play or poetry. Ask "Have we ever had a book by this author/poet before?"
7. Are there any different words that need to be pointed out e.g. names or places?



#### Remember...

- ✓ Try to read every day for about 10 to 15 minutes – little and often is best.
- ✓ Find a quiet time for reading when you and your child are not too tired.
- ✓ Read things which your child is interested in reading.
- ✓ Give lots of praise.

#### Reading a book to your child



1. Before even opening the book it is a good idea to look at and talk about the pictures on the cover. Read the title, pointing to each word as you read it aloud.
2. Look through at some or all of the pictures so that your child gains an understanding about what might happen in the book. This involves them straightaway and makes them keen for you to read on to find out exactly what does happen.

3. As you approach each new page it is important to explore the pictures first, as they give your child huge amounts of clues about the story/text. This is really important as your child starts to have a go at words themselves – applying their knowledge of letter sounds initially but also children need to be armed with as many clues as possible as they embark upon the tricky business of learning to read. 'Reading' the pictures is very important – even if your child does not guess accurately – they need to use their imaginations to guess or make up things about the characters featured in the illustration.





4. As you are reading to your child, point to the words as you read (in a constant, fluid motion, not jabbing at individual words) – this helps children learn about the way the English print system works i.e. front to back, top to bottom and left to right. Let them have a go sometimes too. They won't be accurate always but it starts a good habit.



5. Sometimes re-read parts of the books and encourage your child to join in with you on certain words and phrases particularly if it is a book with a repetitive refrain e.g. "Fee fi fo fum!"
6. Point out any letters or words that your child may know already e.g. letters in their name.
7. Sometimes stop and ask your child to guess the next word – where this is obvious. This helps to check their prediction skills and to see if they are listening!
8. Ask some general questions as you go along. e.g. "What do you think will happen next?"
9. Did you think that was going to happen?" "Can you see that in the picture?"



10. Occasionally point out the punctuation so that your child becomes aware that there are different types of marks on the page that they have to learn in order for the text to make sense. Important punctuation marks are:

Full stops at the end of every sentence – .

Exclamation marks for excitement or surprise– !

Commas for lists and to break sentences – ,

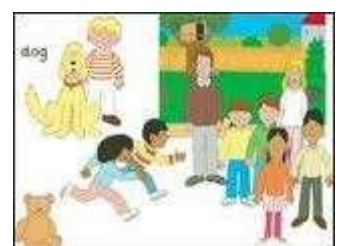
Question marks – ?

Speech marks – “ \_ ”

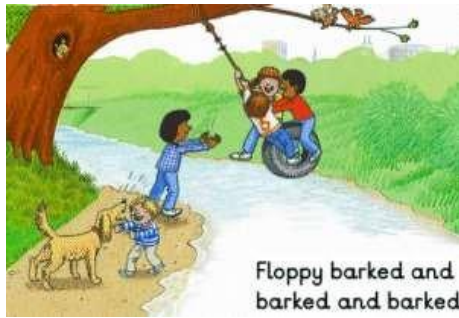


### Helping your child to start reading their own books.

1. To begin with your child will bring home books with no words just pictures. Help your child to explore these books, get them to make up a story about the pages, ask them questions about what they can see as well as about what could be happening and what they think about the action in the pictures.



2. Eventually your child will bring home books with just one or a few words on each page. These will be directly related to the pictures. Gradually the pages will fill with more and more words – depending on your child's ability.



informative for a reason....it helps children in the process of learning to read. The pictures are vital.



3. As your child develops as a reader it is just as important that he/she uses the pictures. Children need all the help/clues they can get at this stage. It is very important to talk about the stories, about what has happened and what might happen and about what your child thinks about how characters behave. Please never be tempted to cover up the pictures. Publishers go to great lengths to make their illustrations exciting and clear and
4. Try to be as “CALM” as you can when reading with your child. SMILE and try to enjoy the experience! If you do start to feel impatient, take a break.
5. Give plenty of praise and encouragement (every few words) or after a difficult word. This promotes confidence and a willingness to have a go. Give the child time to correct errors and praise them if they self-correct. Don't intervene or interrupt as soon as an error has been made. Allow your child some time to think about the meaning. Try to keep the flow going but don't wait forever – if they don't know a word, ask them which part is the tricky part, help them with that bit and encourage them to blend the rest. Sometimes you will need to just tell them a word – especially if they are getting frustrated or anxious.
6. Sounding out irregular words using the most common spelling sounds with words such as ‘said’, ‘there’, ‘you’ does not work. Children need to know the rules of spelling, blending and segmenting words which they learn each day in their phonics lessons. Sometimes it is easier for adults at home to supply the irregular word when the child becomes stuck. However, if you feel confident enough you could explain to your child that the tricky part of a word; i.e. the ‘ai’ part of ‘said’ is actually the spelling of the ‘e’ sound in this word. Then ask them to have another go and ask them to build the word using the sound that will help them to build and read the word correctly. Spend some time helping your child to remember these words. Maybe look at the word again the next day before reading the same or another book, or write the word onto pieces of paper and put them up around the house!
7. Remember what was said in the previous section about not pointing to the words in a rigid way. This encourages “word-by-word” reading rather than a more fluid delivery. Try to run your finger smoothly underneath the words and encourage them to do this themselves. Using a chopstick or end of a pen will also help with this. Your child could decorate a lolly stick and use it as their reading “buddy”, giving it eyes and other interesting details.



8. It is best not to use an opaque bookmark as a guideline. This hides the rest of the text and prevents scanning forward. This is a strategy that can be used, if necessary, once your child is a proficient reader and is tackling long sections of text.

As your child develops more as a reader:

1. Ensure that he/she doesn't become too dependent on just one strategy e.g. pictures or phonics. Use a mixture of these as well as sensible guessing, talking about the story, reminding them about tricky letter blends and reading forwards then coming back to have another go.
2. Encourage them to think for themselves and not to rely on you too much.
3. Encourage the child to read on beyond an unknown word. Clues can often be found in the rest of the sentence. Ask, "What could it be?" "What does it begin with?" "Don't make the activity too long. Try splitting up words to help them recognise endings or words within words that they already know, e.g. think/ing, talk/ed.
4. Encourage the child to use all these strategies in combination when working out words. Encourage reading for meaning. We are not simply looking for decoding skills. If what is read does not make sense, then ask the child to re-read it or read it to the child as he/she reads it to you. "Does that make sense?" "Does that sound right?"
5. Ask open questions which begin with the words how, what, when, why, who, where – as these will encourage children to give thoughtful answers.

Not all children are natural readers and some children need additional support and understanding if they find reading tricky. It is vital that you try to remain relaxed even if you are feeling worried that your child is not taking off as a reader. Your tension and frustration will easily be transferred to the child and this will inhibit them in having a go and they will not want to read with you. Sometimes a relative or another adult may be the better person to read with your child for a few weeks if you are feeling tense and frustrated. Try again when you feel more relaxed. If you are worried please ensure that you speak to the class teacher.

Towards The End of Your Reading Time:

1. The time spent after reading is just as important. At the end of every reading time with you, ask your child some questions about the book. Ask what they thought of it – get them to explain why they thought that. It is important to encourage children to talk to develop their spoken vocabulary as well as their reading vocabulary, as these will help when your child begins to spell words in their writing.

2. Asking your child questions before, during and after reading will show that they;

- have understood the main events or ideas in the book;
- are able to express opinions or feelings about main characters or ideas;
- have responded to the way the book is written or presented;
- are able to comment on reasons why the book was enjoyable;
- are able to deduce the meaning of words from the text.



You could ask...

How do you think the story will end?	What do you think will happen next? Can you explain why you think that? What clues are there?
Why do you think the book is called...?	Would you have done the same thing as the character in the story? What might you have done differently?
Which part of the story is the funniest/saddest/most interesting? Why do you think that?	Is this book one of your favourites? Have you read any other books by this author?
Did the book make you think of something that has happened to you?	What did you like about the story? Was there anything that you didn't like? Why?

General questions that ask for an opinion from the reader, e.g.

- Why did the character say that?
- Why is the character sad/ happy/worried etc?
- How did one character's behaviour affect other characters?



Questions specific to the language/ layout used e.g.

- Why is ...written in bold/italics/capitals?
- Why is ... repeated in the story?
- How are the captions next to the picture helpful?
- Which words describe the ...?
- What word could you use instead of...? What is the opposite of...?

3. Children often form a strong attachment to a book and may decide to bring a particular book home on several occasions. Just as adults re-visit favourite books again and again over the years, so children re-visit favourite titles but within shorter periods of time. A child who does this may feel that they can read such a book confidently and comfortably

and with understanding. All are important reasons and will help your child to develop as a reader. If we or you notice that this is happening we can ensure that the child has an additional book to take home that they can explore and become familiar with too.

4. As children become more confident and proficient readers they need to develop reading stamina and need to be encouraged to tackle books providing a longer read.

Let your child see you read. Talk about what you have read, e.g. book, the TV guide, newspaper or magazine.



Visit the library together! It is a free resource that is so often underused! Children are very keen to use our school library to choose new books so they would love the choice on offer at the town library! Plus they can take home up to 10 books at a time!!!













What a great way to inspire interest and enjoyment in books and reading!














Sometimes read alternate pages of a book with your child. This maintains the flow of the story and gives them a chance to hear a good example of reading.

Demonstrate expressive reading to your child. Try different types of voices (frightened, happy, angry) when reading speech.

## PHONICS

One of the most important methods for teaching children to read is phonics. Below is the range of letters/combinations of letters that make up the sounds in English that we will teach your child in our phonics sessions. They will be expected to have a good understanding of most of these sounds by the time they leave school at the end of Year One. Children will have a phonics session every day. These are the sounds that children use to read and write new words.

 The Alphabetic Code						
sounds + picture prompts	PI simple code Units 1-5	complex code graphemes (spelling alternatives) which are code for the sounds				
/s/ 	<b>s</b> snake	<b>-ce</b> palace	<b>-se</b> house	<b>ce</b> cents	<b>ci</b> city	<b>cy</b> bicycle
	<b>-ss</b> glass	<b>sc</b> scissors	<b>-st-</b> castle	<b>ps</b> pseudonym		
/a/ 	<b>a</b> apple					
/t/ 	<b>t</b> tent	<b>-tt</b> letter	<b>-ed</b> skipped			
/i/ 	<b>i</b> insect	<b>-y</b> cymbals				
/p/ 	<b>p</b> pan	<b>-pp</b> puppet				
/n/ 	<b>n</b> net	<b>-nn</b> bonnet	<b>kn</b> knot	<b>gn</b> gnome	<b>-ne</b> engine	
/k/ 	<b>k</b> kit	<b>c</b> cat	<b>-ck</b> duck	<b>ch</b> chameleon	<b>qu</b> bouquet	<b>que</b> plaque
/e/ 	<b>e</b> egg	<b>-ea</b> head	<b>-ai</b> said again			
/h/ 	<b>h</b> hat	<b>wh</b> who				
/r/ 	<b>r</b> rat	<b>-rr</b> arrow	<b>wr</b> write	<b>rh</b> rhinoceros		
/m/ 	<b>m</b> map	<b>-mm</b> hammer	<b>-me</b> welcome	<b>-mb</b> thumb	<b>-mn</b> column	

/d/ 	<b>d</b> dig	<b>-dd</b> puddle	<b>-ed</b> rained			
/g/ 	<b>g</b> girl	<b>-gg</b> juggle	<b>gu</b> guitar	<b>gh</b> ghost	<b>-gue</b> catalogue	
/o/ 	<b>o</b> octopus	<b>wa</b> watch	<b>qua</b> qualify	<b>alt</b> salt		
/u/ 	<b>u</b> umbrella	<b>o</b> son	<b>-ou</b> touch	<b>-ough</b> thoroughfare		
/l/ 	<b>l</b> ladder	<b>-ll</b> shell				
/u/ 	<b>-le</b> kettle	<b>-il</b> pencil	<b>-al</b> hospital	<b>-el</b> camel		
/f/ 	<b>f</b> feathers	<b>-ff</b> cliff	<b>ph</b> photograph	<b>-gh</b> laugh		
/b/ 	<b>b</b> bat	<b>-bb</b> rabbit	<b>bu</b> building			
/j/ 	<b>j</b> jug	<b>-ge</b> cabbage	<b>ge</b> gerbil	<b>gi</b> giraffe	<b>gy</b> gymnast	<b>-dge</b> fridge
/y/ 	<b>y</b> yawn					
/ai/ 	<b>ai</b> aid	<b>a</b> table	<b>-ae</b> sundae	<b>a-e</b> cakes		
	<b>-ay</b> tray	<b>-ey</b> prey	<b>eigh</b> eight	<b>-ea</b> break	<b>-aigh</b> straight	
/w/ 	<b>w</b> web	<b>wh</b> wheel	<b>-u</b> penguin			
/igh/ 	<b>-igh</b> night	<b>-ie</b> tie	<b>i</b> behind	<b>-y</b> shy	<b>i-e</b> bike	<b>ei</b> elder duck

## Saying the sounds

It is important that the sounds are pronounced correctly, and where possible without an “uh” sound at the end of them, for example “s” is sssssssssssssss like a snake rather than “suh.” If you would like to hear the phonemes pronounced, go to our school website at [www.theavenueinfantschool.co.uk](http://www.theavenueinfantschool.co.uk), click on ‘Our Learning’ and look at the ‘Reading and Phonics’ page.

## How will my child learn phonics?

Children will be taught to use sounds within whole words to blend and build, e.g.

d     o     g                   dog

They are encouraged to look at the word and say the sounds and read back the whole word. They will eventually learn more complex sounds which contain 2 or 3 letters.... e.g

ch   ur   ch       church

—   —   —

Children will be taught to break up the sounds in words in order to spell, e.g. cat becomes ca-t. The children are encouraged to hear all of the sounds in words. This is practised even before they learn to recognise sounds and will continue throughout the school.

Please encourage your child to read and spell words independently where possible. English is a very difficult language that has lots of exceptions to rules that children have to learn about.

## Activities and games to play at home to support reading and phonics

### Pairs

Make two sets of letter/word cards. Lay them face down in a square shape. Take it in turns to turn over two at a time and say the sound or word each time to see if anyone can make a pair. The winner is the person with the most pairs at the end of the game.

### Lotto

Make a base board for each player, usually a grid with six spaces in is about the right size. Make matching cards for the words/ sounds that are on the base board. Turn them face down and jumble them up, each player takes it in turns to choose a card and see if they can match it to their base board.

### Treasure Hunt

Choose a sound and give a time limit for your child to find as many things as they can beginning/ containing that sound.

Segment the sounds in items for your child to go and find and bring back to you, e.g. f-or-k. Ask them to repeat the segmented word and then say what it is that they are going to go and find.



### Magnetic/ Foam letters.

Use magnetic letters on the fridge or foam letters in the bath and make simple words together. Take it in turns for you to say the sounds in the words for your child to make for you and saying a whole word for your child to segment into sounds and find the correct ones. Post-it notes with letters (lower case, not capital) written on them work just the same.

### I spy

The old favourite 'I Spy' is still really useful for children to identify and hear the sounds in words. Just ensure that you are using the sound of the letter rather than the name. You could extend the game by saying all of the sounds in a word, e.g. "I spy with my little eye something with the sounds of b-e-d."

### Kim's Game

Use 3 or 4 single word cards, face up. Read the words together first. Ask your child to turn away while you remove one of the words. Which word is missing? Give clues as necessary; it starts with ... , it has ... letters, etc.. Take it in turns, with your child removing a word and you having to remember what word is missing!

### Washing Line Game

Make a washing line with string and take it in turns to peg a word on it, reading them as you do. Can your child read all the words on the line? Now it's your turn!



### Musical Statues

Play a game of musical statues; when the music stops you show a word or sound for your child to read. Alternatively you say a word and they could tell you the sounds that are in the word.

The BBC website <https://www.bbc.co.uk/iplayer/episodes/b01cz0p1/alphablocks> has a range of videos and activities that will help your child to learn and practise reading skills.



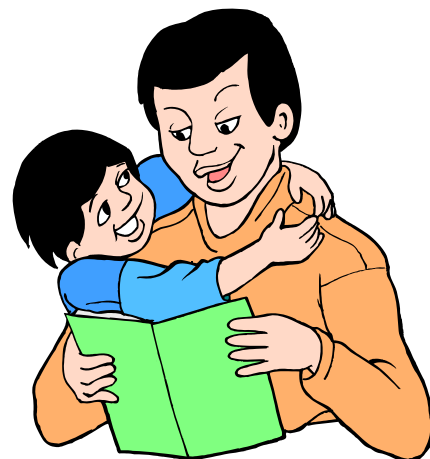
### Remember to:

- Read signs and labels with your child when you are out and about.
- Put the subtitles on when your child is watching a DVD occasionally.
- Read recipes and make them together.
- Download e-books from the internet – especially good for engaging boys in reading.
- Use audio books as fun way to interest children in stories – encourage them to follow the text along with the CD.
- Visit the library– it is free and has a wealth of books which will interest and excite children.



## SOME FINAL TIPS

- ★ PLEASE make reading fun and enjoyable. NOT confrontational and a battle of wills.
- ★ Parental interest is vital. Pressure is not!
- ★ Tell stories from memory or make them up, as well as reading them.
- ★ Be a good reading role model and talk about what you are reading....even if it is only the gas bill.
- ★ Visit the library and borrow some books.
- ★ Use everyday activities as a stimulus for reading and discussion e.g. looking at road signs, shop names, playing I-Spy.
- ★ Have lots of books as well as other reading material around. Encourage the reading of any printed text e.g. books, comics, newspapers, on-screen, catalogues, manuals and maps.
- ★ Encourage a repertoire of favourites that can be read and re-read.
- ★ Emphasise the positive aspects of your child's reading.
- ★ Read a little and often with your child. 5 or 10 minutes every day is much more beneficial than a block of 30 minutes at the weekend. Your child is unlikely to sustain a 30 minutes session of reading and may even be turned off reading as a result.
- ★ Enjoy your reading times together and all the gorgeous infant level reading materials out there! It won't be long before your child is a successful reader and is on his/her way to junior school and doesn't want you to share in their reading books any longer. Cherish these next few years – they never come back!



HELP YOUR CHILD DEVELOP A LIFELONG LOVE OF READING!

Some helpful internet sites that have online word games and books for children to access are:– [www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/ks1/literacy](http://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/ks1/literacy) and [www.oxfordowl.co.uk](http://www.oxfordowl.co.uk), as well as [www.phonicsplay.co.uk](http://www.phonicsplay.co.uk)