



Learning and growing in the love of God

(John 4:16)

At Wetwang CE (VC) Primary School we believe that it is very important for children in the Foundation Stage to develop a love of books and enthusiasm for reading. As a parent you are their first teacher and now your child has started school you can play a vital role in the partnership between home and school by supporting your child's learning. The aim of this booklet is to explain how you can help your child at home.

Individual Reading

In Term 1 your child will be given a first reading book, appropriate to their stage of reading development, to bring home in their reading bag. Initially this may be pictures only. They will have a reading record book to record the title of each book they bring home which has a space for comments for each time they read with an adult. This may include ideas for elements to focus on at home.

Individual reading provides the teacher with an opportunity to monitor the child's independent reading skills, the suitability of the book they are reading and their readiness to progress to the next level of the school's reading scheme. The class teacher, or a teaching assistant, will hear your child read at least once a week. In addition, a volunteer helper may hear your child read.

What you can do to help?

We hope that you will be able to help your child with their reading at home through a number of activities. It is important that your child enjoys reading with you and that it is not a chore. There are many activities that you can do together to help them. Try and use a variety throughout the week. The skills that they are developing are as follows:

Reading Skills to Develop

(taken from the Early Years Foundation Stage practice guidance arranged in developmental order from 30 months to the Early Learning Goals)

- Listen to and join in with stories and poems
- Begin to be aware of the way stories are structured
- Suggest how the story might end
- Show interest in illustrations and print in books and print in the environment
- Handle books carefully
- Know information can be relayed in the form of print

- Hold books the correct way up and turn pages
- Understand the concept of a word
- Enjoy an increasing range of books
- Know that information can be retrieved from books and computers
- Explore and experiment with sounds, words and texts
- Retell narratives in the correct sequence, drawing on language patterns of stories
- Read a range of familiar and common words and simple sentences independently
- Know that print carries meaning and, in English, is read from left to right and top to bottom
- Show an understanding of the elements of stories, such as main character, sequence of events and openings, and how information can be found in non-fiction texts to answer questions about where, who, why and how.

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

When your child first brings home a reading book, do not expect them to know all the words.

Model the reading by reading it to them at first or taking it in turns. Talk about the pictures and the title to give the children the context of what they are about to read. Link the events to the child's experience. You will be asked to fill in a reading record book each time you hear your child read.

Please be honest with your comments, if your child had problems with certain words 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. It is important that children have opportunities to read the same book more than once to develop fluency in reading.

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 say the sounds in the word (Fred Talk) and then blend them together. They may also be able to use the pictures to support them with this too.

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.

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 words, to piece together words and sentences.
- Suggest how the story might end, alternative endings, how it could be improved
- Choose 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

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.

You may find that your child will begin to join in with a favourite book. With a new book you may want to ask your child how they think the story will end,

Reading in real-life contexts

Let your child see you read, and share it with them, for example reading a recipe, reading the newspaper headlines, reading the destination on the bus, reading shop signs and labels on items in the shop. Choose a word that they may have been learning in their book, or from their high frequency words, to notice. Some children may prefer to read a comic, non-fiction book or use an internet game. Variety is very important.

We hope that you will find this booklet useful in understanding how you can be a partner in helping your child to learn to read. Please always feel free to ask one of us if you have any concerns or questions.

Thank you for your support,

Mrs Gunn and Mrs Lang