

How to help your child with Reading and Writing

Some ideas for home

Why read?

- It's fun!
- Reading with your child provides time with a loved adult in a safe space.
- It's a chance to have some quality time together.
- It provides an imaginary escape.
- It helps children understand the world around them.
- It builds vocabulary and curiosity.
- It's a key life skill.

Reading

It is crucial for children to develop a life-long love of reading.

DFE – Development Matters...

Regular sharing of books and discussion of children's ideas and responses (dialogic reading) helps children to develop their early enjoyment and understanding of books. Simple picture books, including those with no text, can be powerful ways of learning new vocabulary (for example, naming what's in the picture). More complex stories will help children to learn a wider range of vocabulary. This type of vocabulary is not in everyday use but occurs frequently in books and other contexts. Examples include: 'caterpillar', 'enormous', 'forest', 'roar' and 'invitation'.

Shared Reading – what to do at home

Share a book together, it might be a story, a rhyme or a non-fiction book.

Look at the front cover and talk about what the book might be about.

Read the book to your child. Point to the words as you read.

Half way through, ask what might happen at the end.

When the book is finished, ask what picture did you like? What was your favourite character?

You might have a book/rhyme that you can miss a word from for the child to join in with.

Read the same book often. It builds confidence.

Phonics

Phonics is the relationship between letters and the sounds that letters make.

The correct pronunciation of sounds is important. Keep the sound pure. [\(link on school website\)](#)

Reading books that come home should be matched to the child's phonic level. They should be able to read this book independently and fluently.

If your child cannot read a word, encourage them to 'sound it out'. Break the word down (segment), then put back together (blend). Eg – goat – g oa t – goat

Children should be reading books at 95% accuracy – if there are more than a couple of words they can't read, the book may be too hard.

'Tricky' words. Words that you cannot sound out or names, technical vocabulary. Tell your child what these words say to keep the flow of the book going.

What to read

Anything!

It could be the book your child brings home from school.

It could be Bug Club or other online materials.

Comics.

Joke books.

Graphic novels.

Books/leaflets related to their interests.

TV/Film books.

Audiobooks.

Many children go through stages of not wanting to read. Don't panic!
Read to them if you can, they do come back to it.

Writing

Writing begins with mark making. This may include writing cards, invitations, shopping lists. It's important that children understand that marks convey meaning and that they can tell someone what it says, even if it has not been written in recognisable letters.

Motor skills are really important for developing strength and co-ordination. Activities to help develop these skills might include climbing, swinging, threading beads, doing buttons, colouring.

Another key element of writing is speech. To be able to write in sentences, children need to be able to speak in sentences. In school we always speak before we write.

Writing

Holding a pencil correctly is important. Ensure a 'tripod' grip is used.

Letter formation is taught in reception but if your child shows an interest in writing before this, we would teach them the correct formation. [\(link on website\)](#)

For many children, the first thing they learn to write is their name. It is only the first letter that should be a capital.

When children are learning to write, we encourage them to 'sound out' words. This begins with the first and last sound of a word and then goes on to middle sounds and further phonic knowledge.

Writing at home

Learning log homework may include writing. Support your child with this in a way that fits in with your family. It might be that your child works independently and you read it together afterwards.

They can be done creatively e.g. In flour with fingers and then photographed. It might be that you agree sentences together and work together to write them. It might be that you agree sentences together and write them for your child to copy.

What's important is that your child understands what they have written and can explain it.

Writing at home

If your child wants to write at home, lots of things can be fun for them.

Writing letters or emails to family.

Writing cards or invitations.

Having a little book to write stories in.

Making cartoons with speech bubbles.

Writing instructions for a game.

Writing a postcard about a day out.

Making posters.

Mark making in creative ways – in sand, with water

Have fun!

- Helping your child at home is great but it needs to be fun for everyone.
- Don't let it become a battle – home is busy enough.
- Seize 'sneaky' opportunities. Reading a title of a TV show, an advert, a recipe, a label on food, spotting road signs, writing an invitation or a Christmas wish list.
- Thank you!